

**Sri S. Ramasamy Naidu Memorial College
Sattur 626203, Tamilnadu, India**



**Select Papers of the National Conference on
Teaching of English Language and Literature**

Dr. S. Jayanthi, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D., Editor

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Sri S. Ramasamy Naidu Memorial College
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Greetings from the Secretary Dr. T. R. Dhinakaran



I note with great pleasure the efforts of the Department of English in exposing the students and the teaching fraternity of colleges in Tamilnadu and other Indian states to the latest developments and methods in the teaching and learning of English Language and Literature. They have proved again that they can conduct conferences and seminars which are on a par with the best in the literary and language teaching fields.

The Two-Day **National Conference on Teaching of English Language and Literature** provided the right platform for the academic circle and the researchers to share their ideas and views on teaching of English Language and Literature. The conference attracted scholars from the fields of education and teaching English from all over India. This has enabled the students from a remote region down South to feast on the deliberations of intellectuals in the field.

Any work of literature, if unrecorded, would be of no use for the future generation. Thus the effort of the faculty to publish select papers, from the conference, as a volume in the International Online Journal *Language in India* is commendable. I congratulate the members of the Department of English for their venture and wish them success in all future efforts. I assure my support to them in all prospective meaningful and socially relevant projects.

Dr. T. R. Dhinakaran
Secretary

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Greetings from the Principal Dr. S. Ganeshram



English language today has become essential for branding oneself in the global setting. It accentuates one's persona to the outer world and serves in establishing an identity for oneself. The Department of English has achieved yet another milestone through this Two-day **National Conference on Teaching of English Language and Literature**. The joint venture with the *English Language Teachers' Interaction Forum (ELTIF)* began in February 2017 and the department of English hopes to establish a long term relationship with the organization to guide the teacher fraternity to utilize their potential to the utmost for the benefit of the society.

The theme of the Conference and the ensuing activities conform to the ideals of the Patrons of this college, who designed this institution to bring the best to the rural masses. The conference provided a platform for the academics to have a discussion and arrive at a consensus on a perfect and viable method to reach the young minds and provide them with ample knowledge to begin their maiden flight.

Select scholastic papers presented in the conference are now published in the Online International Journal *Language in India* www.languageinindia.com. My best wishes to the Members of the Department of English and the staff of *Language in India*. I am sure that the Department of English will continue with their tireless efforts to offer effective English learning experience and practice to our students from the southern districts of Tamilnadu and elsewhere.

Dr. S. Ganeshram

PRINCIPAL

Editor's Note



Conferences and seminars have become part of the academic timetable of the higher education sector. Then, what is so much special about the **Two-day National Conference on Teaching of English Language and Literature** hosted by Sri S. Ramasamy Naidu Memorial College? The answer can be ‘something is special’, because here we have many things which reach the grassroots such as Communicative English courses (though short) for students of all disciplines which are meant exclusively to show students and demonstrate to novice teachers that there are many other non-conventional ways of learning and teaching English. Such programs are basically meant for helping learners to get rid of the fear towards English, which got instilled in their mind.

Secondly, something special about the college: The majority of the students of this college have a first language other than their mother tongue. Students speak their mother tongue Telugu at home and in close circles, and Tamil outside as the native language—both fluently. But, when it comes to their ‘academic language’ namely, English, they fail to approximate their proficiency they have in the other two languages—Telugu and Tamil. These rural students really ‘fail’ in achieving their ambition of mastering English. Why? Who is at fault? If they are the ‘perfect masters’ of two languages from infancy, why can’t they have a grip on, if not mastery of, a third language (English) after struggling through fifteen or even twenty years? Who is the real villain in this tragedy? Can students be blamed for their inadequate proficiency in English? We firmly believe and answer: “Never”. Therefore, young and novice college faculty, school

teachers, teacher trainees of B.Ed. and D.Ed. programs also must be given orientation on classroom communication, second language pedagogy and language socialization.

Thirdly, it is high time we demolished the wall between language and literature within the departments of English across the country. The higher the level we go up in the hierarchy to the university departments, the stronger this divide is felt. Thus the need of the day is to understand that Language and Literature have to be studied and understood in unison. Conferences in English have to declare aloud that you can't teach the literature of a foreign language to learners who don't have the adequate level of mastery over that language.

Finally, as Dr. P. Bhaskaran Nair, the Secretary, *English Language Teachers' Interaction Forum* and Chief Advisor of the Conference said, the ELTIF-assisted Sri S. Ramasamy Naidu Memorial College Conference empowers rural India through English language education. "India lives in her villages", said Mahatma Gandhi. Within this broad strong framework, let me place the reference to English as 'a language of opportunity' (a cliché, still no better substitute). Here is English language education as tool for providing better living conditions and opportunities for the villages. Those who are willing to work for rural India, we hope, would have acquired some insights, orientation and guidelines by being a part of this conference-cum series of workshops and orientation programs.

A large number of college teachers and students attended the conference and many scholars presented papers on the various issues concerning the teaching and learning of English language and literature. We thank the *Language in India* team for help in editing the papers efficiently for publication. We wholeheartedly thank the Secretary of the college and the Principal who have always encouraged us in all our efforts towards the enhancement of the calibre of the students.

Dr. S. Jayanthi

Editor

Teaching and Learning English as Second Language through Podcasting

Abdunnazar P.T.

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Introduction

Rapid development in information and communication technology affects all areas of our life including effective advancement in redefining and modifying new learning and its environment. Technology is the backbone of teaching and learning in ELT in current educational scenario as it is very much part of language learning throughout the world. The integration of latest technologies including tools and resources from web 2.0 generation ensures and encourages good academic and communication development for language learning. Podcasting is one of powerful and efficient tool for English language teaching and learning as it is incorporated by most of the current EFL methodologies for effective transaction of teaching and learning process. Many research studies are carried out to analyse the effectiveness of Podcasting in teaching and learning English as Second language learning as how best it can be to incorporated into L2 classes (Abdous, Camarena, & Facer, 2009; Craig, Paraiso, & Patten, 2007; Schmidt, 2008), podcasts for the purpose of improving their pronunciation skills (Lord, 2008) and podcasts for teaching Academic listening skills (O'Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007).

Podcasting and Its Educational Implications

The term *podcast* is now a buzz word which is a combination of the words broadcasting and iPod. It refers to a series of digital media files (either audio or video) that are released episodically and often downloaded through web spaces. The term is a play on the words pod (playable on demand) which was later used by the *Apple* for its brand of portable media player iPod and broadcasting. Podcast as a digital audio and video files system nowadays has become widespread and commonplace to all facilitating by its wide access of

resources and the increase in availability and affordability of portable media devices. Podcasting has high-level potential for educational practices as it brings easy and convenient access to teaching and learning materials in and outside the classroom.

‘Apple’s ‘iTunes’ can be considered as the main and prime move and revolution in podcasting media source which is launched in 2003. Consequently in 2007, Apple released its ‘iTunes U’ as a repository for educational teaching and learning content provided by universities and higher level educational institutes. The access for content is restricted to the institutions’ own students, and some is made publicly available as open source material. It has now become spread and established itself as the main source of educational podcasting materials, with over 1 billion downloads between 2007 and 2013 (Rosell-Aguilar, 2013).

Three Trends

Three trends can be seen in favour of growing the popularity of podcasting. First, it is being used mostly as a supplementary or alternative means of delivering content by various industries such as media, entertainment and journalism. Nowadays podcasting is greatly offered by broadcasters and news publishers. The second supportive trend for podcasting is the increase in MP3 player ownership and the use of MP3 players to listen to digital sound. A third favouring trend for popularity of podcasting is the availability of free software and other web tools to create podcasts and distribute them on the internet, and easy access to download and use effectively (Edirisingha, Rizzi & Rothwell 2007). The main advantage of podcasts is that it can be used as a resource created by others including experts, a resource created by the teacher, or as a project created by students (Preston, 2008, Rowe, 2006). The effectiveness of using technologies like podcasting in the classroom does not rely so much on the technology itself but on the ways it can be used to deliver a quality learning experience. The NSW Quality Teaching Model gives the outline of generic qualities of pedagogy that have been successfully applied in a range of school contexts and are shown to lead to improved student learning. It can be categorised into the three dimensions of intellectual quality, quality learning environment, and significance for the student. (NSW DET 2003).

Usefulness of Podcast

Hopson, Simms & Knezek (2002) observe that the creation of a podcast is a valuable task as it is a real world experience in teaching and learning process. It can effectively

provide an authentic exposure for learners and an ideal means to immerse students in the process of inquiry in their learning. The important advantage of podcasting is that students are encouraged to actively manipulate information in a variety of contexts from a number of different resources in order to solve meaningful and relevant problems (Hopson, Simms & Knezek, 2002). The emergence of web 2.0 technologies including podcasting enables anyone to be part of the knowledge-access, knowledge-building, and information-exchanging culture at anywhere (Loving, et al., 2007).

Gray, et.al. (2010) suggests that podcasting is attractive in higher education as both students and instructors are actively engaged in the process, each bringing their own perspective. This is summarised in the table below:

Leaner Perspective	Instructor Perspective
Portable audio devices are increasingly ubiquitous and easy to access	Podcasts are straightforward to produce and distribute among learners
These take the form of iPods/MP3 players and mobile phones with audio playback compatibility and students friendly	They provide an opportunity to raise engagement levels in learning materials through a novel and interesting medium.
Resources are accessible when they want it and can be replayed infinitely if needed.	They enable teachers to review their own materials in the process of creating podcasting and monitoring the learning
Audio adds a real exposure of learning not traditionally associated with traditional education styles. If their classes are missed, students have an opportunity to catch up by downloading recordings if available.	Once created, podcasts are easy to update as new resource or teaching methods are adopted, due to being kept it in digital store.

Podcasting and Its Implications in ELT

The emergence of web 2.0 technology gives ample tools and resources for language teaching especially foreign language like English. Podcasts as tool for web.2.0 technology offer students a wide range of possibilities for extra listening inside and outside the classroom at any time. It facilitates more advanced learning by listen to authentic materials as from real

experience from native peoples. Podcasts that can benefit language learners include those that teachers and students develop as a language learning activity, and the use of ‘authentic’ existing, audio resources. These may be language learning courses which use podcasts (either at the core of their teaching or as supplementary materials) or the vast amount of authentic materials available online, from news items to programmes about any subject in the target language. This web-based exposure to students effectively narrows the gap between the formal English which dominates most second language classroom and the informal English used in most real life communication events. Podcasting as latest technology has huge potential in enhancing and promoting second language learning especially listening and speaking skills. (Stanley 2006). Kenneth Beare (2005) rightly points out that podcasting is especially interesting for English language learners as it provides a means for students to get access to ‘authentic’ listening sources about almost any subject that may interest them. The Language learning was quickly identified as a potential beneficiary through technology mediation and podcasting as new technology tool empowers the language learning among current generation (Chinnery, 2006; Godwin-Jones, 2005; Stanley, 2006). Gromik (2008) highlighted that podcasting technology provides learners access to resources which are authentic, free, real exposure and otherwise not available in territories where the target language is not spoken.

Maximizing Language Learning through Podcasting

Podcasting is essential for English language learning as it maximises its target language focusing all language skills. The important difference between the use of podcasting for teaching and learning languages and its use for other disciplines is that listening for language teaching and learning needs a different kind of listening skill set. While in other disciplines the focus is on the content and meaning. The focus of listening also lies to varying degrees on form, through which learners become aware of grammatical, pronunciation, or other features of the language they are using or are exposed in language learning (Long, 2000, Skehan, 2003).

The following are some areas of podcast creation for English language teaching

- Podcasting based on communication and comprehension activities, interviews and vocabulary, conversation and presentation activates.

- Podcasts for idiomatic expressions in English language with their usages and exemplifications.
- Podcasts for conversations and interaction between the native speakers which may give real exposure to the non-native students.
- Podcasts for enhancing listening skill of the learners by giving various communicative tasks and activities.
- Podcasts for giving guidelines how to prepare discourses, and
- Podcasts for vocabulary enrichment with their pronunciation and contextualisation etc.

Some Podcasts

The simplicity of podcasting as web 2.0 tool is that teachers can create their own podcasts or guide their students to produce their own according to their classroom purposes. Podcasting for specific purposes such as language teaching is now easy for teachers and students to produce with the advent of information and communication technology. Using a free podcast sites like Podomatic, ourmedia.org, Libsyn, PodBean, etc. a teacher can set up a podcast page by simple procedures. The podcast page provides a website for learners to post their podcasts among its audience. The teacher or students needs a computer and Internet connection, and a microphone and speakers or a headset to record and create a podcast. The development of podcasts for educational purposes is extremely easy and no specialist technical knowledge is needed for its creation and use. Learners get full exposure to a number of listening activities to enhance their oral proficiency.

Following are some good podcasting sites for language teaching and learning

TEFL Boot Camp

TEFL Boot Camp is an online resource as form of podcast for ESL learners and teachers. it gives a lot of digital resources for enhancing English language communication with fluency and accuracy. They also offer online courses with TEFL certifications for those who want to get mastery in language teaching. Some of their podcast topics include the following:

- Teaching EFL Reading and Comprehension
- Teaching EFL vocabulary enrichment and Pronunciation
- Discipline in the EFL Classroom

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- EFL Lesson Planning and designing classroom strategies, and
- Various types of Demonstration classes in EFL etc.

International House

International House provides an online platform for podcasting to complement their CELTA course. It gives quick, efficient and cover valuable topics all teachers can take something from these podcasts as these are simply are also downloadable. The class's duration may range from five minutes to 20 minutes. The main areas of its episodes cover the following

- Teaching Methodologies for EFL
- Teaching effective EFL Writing
- Teaching international and Business English in EFL
- Correcting and evaluating Errors in the EFL Classroom, and
- Discipline in the EFL Classroom etc.

The TEFL Show

The TEFL Show is another podcasting team which gives efficient and authentic materials for English language teaching and learning especially for ESL instructors. It really brings together very timely material that can be useful and entertaining for teachers of all levels, ages and locations around the world. These podcasts are also available on iTunes, Tune In and Sound Cloud etc. The TEFL Show has abundant video resources too on their site. Some important areas of their podcasts are as following

- Minority Languages and its usages
- Foreign accent in English Language Teaching
- Interview with some EFL experts such as Cecilia Nobre, and
- Standards for teaching pronunciation etc.

TEFLology

TEFLology podcasts also gives authentic materials for teaching and learning. Each episode includes a nice summary of what the learner can expect, as well as contact information for expert instructors who want to follow up with the episode's presentation and

assignment. Their podcasting resources are also available on iTunes enabling them downloadable for that daily commute. Some of their latest podcasts include the following

- Tim Johns, TEFL Exchange, and CAP (a new theoretical model proposed by Jason Anderson.)
- Research Relevance for Teachers, Textbooks, and Lambert Sauveur
- TESOL 2017 Convention & Miguel Mendoza
- Peter Strevens, English Learning Ventures, and Post-human Applied Linguistics, and
- TEFL Interviews 26: Ryuko Kubota etc.

Masters of TESOL

Masters of TESOL has a lot of podcasting resources for ESL teachers and these are certainly authentic materials for non-native speakers. Masters of TESOL provides lesson plans for ESL, ice breakers and various proficiency levels in EFL. It also serves an entertaining section for edutainment with funny ESL stories and narratives. The following are some titles covering by their podcasting

- The Student Becomes The Teacher
- What the way you speak says about you –(Sociolinguistics with Andrew Euan MacFarlane)
- Babies and First Language Acquisition, and
- How fair is your English test? – QUICKIE etc,

TEFL Training Institute

TEFL Training Institute keeps good website to come with their informative and entertaining ESL podcasts. It also gives TEFL certification to all those who want to join their courses. TEFL Training Institute has abundant videos podcasting resources that can give real exposure in ESL. These are some important of podcast topics covered by TEFL Training Institute

- TEFL Podcast
- Classroom Management in EFL Classroom
- Teacher Development and EFL Strategies
- Academic Management , and
- Teaching and Learning in EFL etc.

The Advantages of Creating and Listening English Podcasts in the Classroom

There are various advantages of creating and utilising podcasts for English language teaching and learning purposes and its effective implementation in the in the classroom. The prime focus is that it can give real exposure in target language and effectively maintain the interest and motivation in students. Some advantages of integrating podcasting for language teaching are following:

Self-Directed Learning

Podcasts material gives the learners opportunities for self directed learning according to their interest. They were given prompt support to upload podcasts from the web, and the best search engines available to them were Google for wide searches over a large database of websites and Yahoo for a more theme-based approach. Seema Jain & Farha Hashmi (2013) found that most of the students keenly liked the idea of using ELT podcasts on provided websites for their language learning.

Maximises Exposure in Target Language

The main advantage of podcasting in language teaching is that it gives maximum exposure to target language by giving real life experience from native peoples. Using podcasting, teacher can give specific and authentic material for language teaching and teacher can evaluate the material prepared by students (Stanley, 2006).

Encourage Engaged Learning

Engaged learning is the hall mark of current pedagogical practices as it ensures students centeredness in teaching and learning process. Podcast can provide the learners the effective means to listen to authentic materials and to speak and prepare their own materials. Students can enjoy their English language learning by gaining confidence in with new technology.

Platform for Interaction and Collaboration

Podcasting as a web 2.0 tool gives effective platform to interact and collaborate among its members including teachers and students. It helps to respond the podcasting materials prepared by teacher and to student's podcasting materials. Teacher can give

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effectively the feedback to the podcasting resources created by students. The interaction and collaboration among its members ensures the development of language skills.

Students Centred Learning

The students of current generation are rightly ‘digital native’ as they prefer digital life in their teaching and learning. Podcasting as technology resources can arouse the interest in learners to learn new things as it is linked with their digital experience. If teachers are standing away from these technological resources, they cannot motivate and bring the learners in to the mainstream of language teaching. Seema Jain & Farha Hashmi (2013) reported from their study on podcasting for language teaching that most of the students expressed their full satisfaction on using podcasts and showed improvement in their communication and language skills and students learned new expressions in web-enabled environment and simultaneously jotted down the vocabulary they found difficult to understand.

Learning at Any time and Any Where

The creation and maintenance of podcasting is very simple process as advanced technological skills are not essential for its implementation in classroom process. A teacher can create podcasting with simple procedure and students can get access to these materials at any time and any place. Teacher can give authentic learning materials via podcasting from expert sources. The students can really experience learning English language easily, quickly and naturally through effective podcasting.

Conclusion

Podcasting is a powerful web 2.0 tools that can be used for English language teaching for better result and it can be incorporated for effective language teaching. Podcasting is current trend in online language teaching as teachers can simply utilise it and learners can get access at anytime and anywhere. Teachers can prepare podcasting as their own materials in accordance with the cultural and social background of learners. It can be created by simple procedure and it is also economical as a digital learning aid. It is most suitable that students of current generation are ‘digital natives’ so as podcasting in language learning can maximize their interest, motivation and digital exposure.

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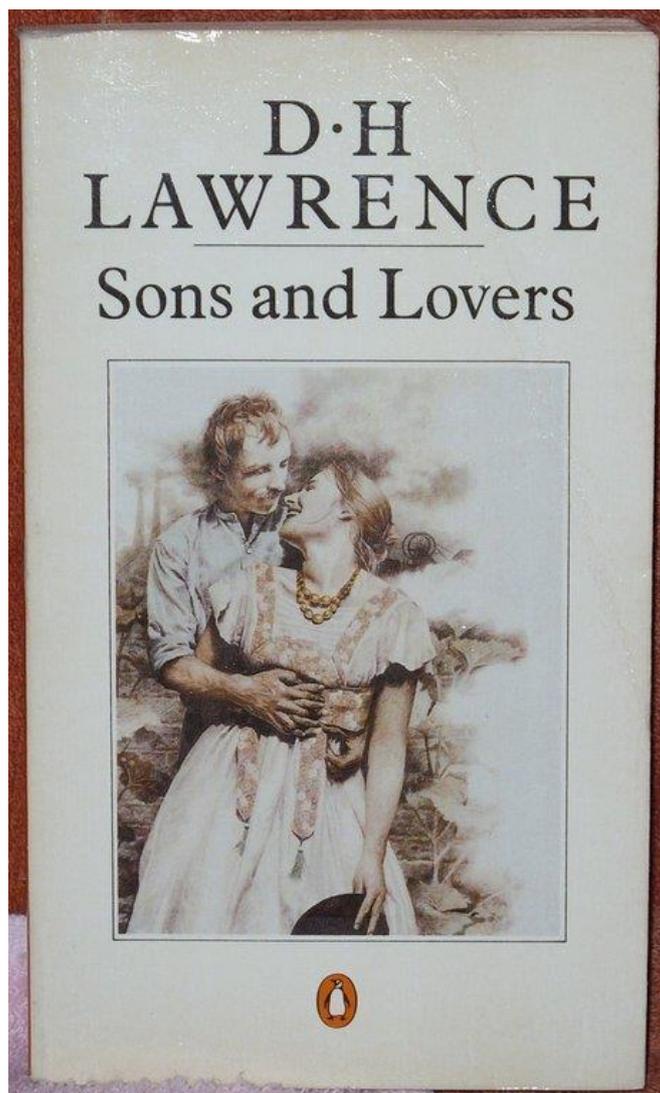
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Gender Discrimination in D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*

K. Aarthi and M. Lakshmi Prabha



Abstract

The story centres on the worldly problem of gender discrimination. Lawrence's fiction is always marked by the conflict of a duality in the characters. This duality is seen in the division of body and soul. Also this division marks initially a strong preference by the author for soulful women who are always stronger than their partners. He still has doubts

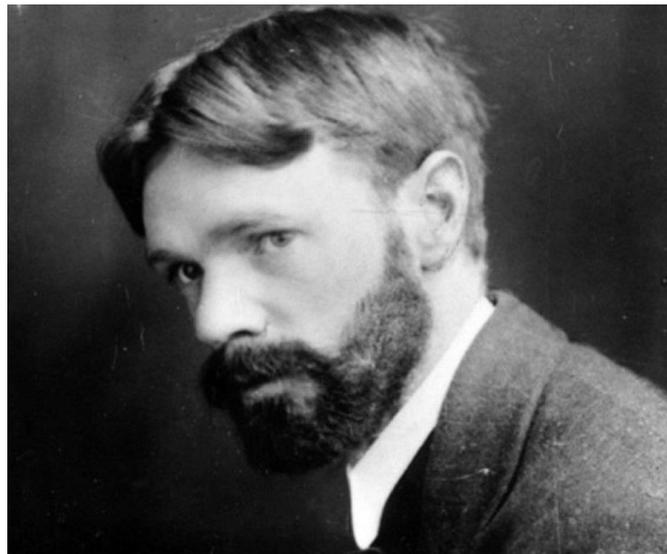
concerning which is the ideal partner, a man or a woman. Soul and body are still divided in the fateful patterns laid down in *Sons and Lovers*.

Keywords: Gender discrimination, masculinity, feminism, culture.

Gender Inequality

Gender inequality is the idea and situation that women and men are not equal. Gender inequality refers to unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals wholly or partly due to their gender. It arises from differences in socially constructed gender roles. Gender systems are often dichotomous and hierarchical; gender binary systems may reflect the inequalities that manifest in numerous dimensions of daily life. Gender inequality stems from distinctions, whether empirically grounded or socially constructed.

D. H. Lawrence



D. H. Lawrence

Courtesy: <https://www.thefamouspeople.com/profiles/david-herbert-richards-lawrence-1116.php>

David Herbert Lawrence (11 September 1885-2 March 1930) was an English novelist, poet playwright, essayist, literary critic and painter. His collected works represent, among other things, an extended reflection upon the dehumanising effects of modernity and industrialisation. Some of the issues Lawrence explores are sexuality, emotional health, vitality, spontaneity and instinct.

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Gender Discrimination in D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*

His notable works are *Sons and lovers*, *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love*, *John Thomas and Lady Jane*, *Lady Thomas and lady Jane*, *Lady Chatterley 's lover* and other short stories are *Odour of chrysan the mums*, *The virgin and the gypsy*, *The rocking-horse winner*.

Cambridge critic F. R. Leavis championed Lawrence's artistic integrity and his moral seriousness, placing much of Lawrence's fiction within the canonical "great tradition of the English novel". Lawrence used "Men and women relationship" theme on most of his works. After he published "*the white peacock*" novel, his mother died of cancer. He is in depression after his mother's death for few months.

Sons and Lovers

It is clear that Lawrence had an extremely close relationship with his mother, and his grief became a major turning point in his life, just as the death of Mrs. Morel is a major turning point in his autobiographical novel *Sons and Lovers*, a work that draws upon much of the writer's provincial upbringing. Essentially concerned with the emotional battle for Lawrence's love between his mother and Miriam, the novel also documents Paul's brief intimate relationship with Miriam that Lawrence had finally initiated in the Christmas of 1909, ending it in August 1910.

The novel focuses on two things:

1. Emotional love between children and mother, and 2. Gender discrimination between Walter Morel and Mrs. Gertrude Morel. After her married life Gertrude Morel suffers a lot physically and mentally.

D. H. Lawrence presents many issues in the novel *Sons and Lovers*. Here, we discuss the gender discrimination in the novel focusing on Mrs. Morel and her sufferings.

The novel *Sons and Lovers* was banned for a number of years because of the complex and complicated relationship of mother and sons portrayed in it. Society has fixed notions how a mother should be in family and in society but D. H. Lawrence attempted to portray the mother figure in a different way.

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Gender Discrimination in D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*

Gender Discrimination and Feminism

This novel not only comes under the topic of gender discrimination but also it deals with Feminism. Society does not give equal rights for men and women. There is a gender inequality still in the world. By using hermeneutics of suspicion, literary critics hope to reveal how women are marginalized in the language of literature.

Victim of Patriarchal Society

Now, in *Sons and Lovers*, Mrs. Morel is a victim of the patriarchal society and places stones in Paul's life road to success, to some extent. Mrs. Morel, who came from a mid-capitalist class, is a woman of knowledge. From very young days, she has been struggling against patriarchal society, longing to become an authoritative, independent and responsible person. In the industrial atmosphere in England, in the man-centred family, her husband treated her sadistically. Mrs. Morel also suffered financially, physically and mentally. So, her love goes to her children side. She wants to make her children more intelligent and give respect to women and she wants to give good future to her children. She believes her dream and ambition would come true.

Son, Paul

Mrs. Morel's existence is the only support to Paul's life road to become an artist. Paul's relationship with Gertrude is disturbingly passionate. He hates his father and dreams of living exclusively with his mother. She encourages his art, education and social advancement. In many ways, Mrs. Morel embodies the Victorian concept of the ideal mother. She lives for her sons and will do anything to see them make their way in the world. Paul's life is just beginning at the novel's end.

Belief in Male Supremacy

D. H. Lawrence believed in male supremacy and that is why he wrote that "as a matter of fact unless a woman is held by man, safe within the bounds of belief, she becomes inevitably a destructive force". Simone de Beauvoir terms this attitude "Bourgeois conception" and states that Lawrence rediscovers this conception that woman should subordinate her existence to that of man. Lawrence defines that Mrs. Morel came from rich

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family after marriage. Walter Morel is a coal miner. So he earns not enough salary but that is not a matter - there is no love between them for long. So, this is the reason of failure of their marriage life. She got disappointed. So, her love turns to children. She wants to bring up her children like a gentleman not like her husband.

Mother's Possessiveness

In one occasion, Paul wants Miriam but Mrs. Morel refuses that he should marry her. She also does the same thing for William. She wants William to be a gentleman unlike his father. Her possessiveness becomes clearer when a girl comes to meet William and Mrs. Morel replies "I don't approve of the girls my son meets at dances"(S&L 83). About Miriam Mrs. Morel states that "she's not like an ordinary woman, who can leave my share on him (Paul) ... she will suck him up"(S&L 296).

Through this possessiveness, Mrs. Morel makes Paul realize that "I never shall meet the right woman while you (Mrs. Morel) live"(S&L376). In this novel, D. H. Lawrence has portrayed women, specially Mrs. Morel with all the weaknesses like nagging, making the sons as husband substitute, etc. After all these discussions, it is quite clear that Mrs. Morel is the victim of one man and therefore can only live out her life through for her son's future. Mrs. Morel is defined by men as their "other" and thus, is marginalized textually as well as socially and sexually.

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Learner-Centred Class: Problems and Solutions

D. Annie, Ph.D. Scholar

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Abstract

Learner-centred class has eradicated rote learning or memorization and enhanced the thinking skills of learners. It gives an ample opportunity to the passive and dependent learners, who lack the skills to think critically and creatively to unfold their latent skills and talents. Learner-centered approach is implemented with the intention of producing competent, independent and life-long learners who can keep pace with global competition. However, due to several reasons, the implementation of this learner-centred approach leaves a number of teachers perplexed about their roles and about the teaching pedagogy. However, continuous use of the method proves this method to be a successful strategy. This article attempts to discuss the apprehensions and also examines several aspects pertinent to the approach.

Keywords: learner-centered, learner, knowledge, motivation, environment.

Introduction

The issue of learner-centred class has received great interest among the educators and school/college teachers in recent years. In fact, the term was not much recognized until the government made it the key concept in the reform of education. This new approach is hoped to maximize the potential of the students to cope with the increasing demands of the knowledge-based economy and the world of information and communication technology.

Apprehensions

However, there arises much confusion and mistrust of the pedagogical movement behind the new model. Some teachers view it as a threat to their long-time teacher-centred or teacher-front orientation, while some fear that the approach will lessen the significant role they play in class. Likewise, some students become sullen and hostile to this approach.

Despite the availability of a substantial body of literature on student-centred learning, many teachers are still skeptical of whether the approach can really enhance student learning quality. Perhaps, teachers are uncertain of how and what they should do to implement the approach. A number of questions regarding the feasibility, viability and applicability of this teaching model are raised widely in the teaching community. This paper attempts to clarify and analyze the principles and aspects of learner -centered class.

What is Learner-centred Class?

Learner-centered class is a model wherein students are placed at the core of the learning process. Here, students' needs, opinions, backgrounds and goals are acknowledged and incorporated within the learning environment. In this model, teachers are guided by what is best for the students when helping them to learn or make decisions.

The concept of learner -centered class derives from several models. It first evolves out of the constructivist learning theory which asserts that knowledge is constructed uniquely and individually in multiple ways (Vygotsky, 1978, cited in Bush & Saye, 2000). It also derives from the experiential model in which teaching is seen as transformation of existing knowledge (Kohonen, 1992) and the active learning model which suggests that all learning activities involve some kind of experience or some kind of dialogue such as dialogue with self and dialogue with others (Fink, 2002).

What Are the Characteristics of Learner-centred Class?

On the basis of the modes from which it derives, learner -centeredness class entails these characteristics:

The focus is on active learning, using an integrated approach to connect new learning to prior learning, stimulating interest and relevance, providing learner's choice and control, adapting to individual developmental differences, and providing a caring and supportive learning environment (Bansberg, 2003).

TM

Knowledge is constructed through authentic learning. It is learnt in real context or the context in which it was first generated. In other words, it links school learning experiences to real world situations.

TM

Learners are active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients. They have opportunities and increased responsibilities to identify and self-direct their own learning needs, locate learning resources, and construct their own knowledge based on those needs.

TM

Class activities and project work are arranged differently to allow learners a variety of choices to select according to the needs of each student. This results from the notion that students have different capabilities and preferences for learning modes and strategies.

TM

The learning environment, where learning may take place anywhere, at any time, in many forms and by diverse means, is created. Such a learning environment enables students to be responsible for and involved in their education. As such, students are provided with substantive out-of-classroom activities that increase students' learning in a number of dimensions.

TM

Students are motivated more intrinsically (self-motivation) than extrinsically (external motivation). For example, they write or colour their assignment because they take pride in their work not because they want people to admire or approve of it.

What Difficulties can Arise in the Implementation of Student-centred Learning?

The difficulties that may arise from implementing this innovative model include:

Some teachers resist changing their old beliefs and usual teaching practices. Such resistance may occur from the deeply rooted “righteous guru” or “imparters of knowledge” image fixed in their head. These teachers view themselves as the authorities whose mission is to teach, direct, instruct, and control students. Therefore, they may fear doing things differently; they may see the change as a threat to their status and profession.

TM

A number of teachers are not willing to implement the approach, for they perceive that the way they teach is already the best and thus there is no need to change. Since these teachers opt to use only one way or method that they feel works best, they are not open to new ideas or other possibilities.

Some teachers are in a rush to implement the approach without a thorough understanding of the principles and a careful plan of teaching. These teachers are too eager to make changes and do not take into consideration the culture and realities of their classroom situation.

TM

Some teachers lack the knowledge and skills to incorporate technology into their own teaching. Unfortunately, many teachers know very little about computers and are not interested in learning; while others may try to seek new uses of technology in the classroom but do not have sufficient technical support. These teachers see the value of technology but they feel frustrated because they are not trained to use these resources in the classroom setting.

TM

It may be the case that while many teachers are personally committed to serving students’ needs, the structure of their organization and policies may not accommodate or, in some cases, hinder the desire to be more learners-centred.

TM

Some students reject the approach because they want evidence that they are being taught something. These students, like some teachers cling to the perception that knowledge must be transferred and thus wait for teachers to spoon-feed them.

Conclusion

Learner-centered class is a model in which students are the focus of the learning process. This model however, does not mean that teachers will step aside, letting students alone run everything. Rather, it means that teachers, when planning their teaching, must take into consideration the views and needs of students and run the classroom to the benefits of students. It also means that teachers would manage their teaching in the way that makes students feel included, value the educational process, and take control of their own learning.

Implementing a learner-centred class is a true challenge but it has proved to be successful in the contemporary era. The process of incorporating it into our education system has demanded hard work and effort from teachers and students alike. The key to the success of implementation requires, on the teacher's part, a careful study and a thorough comprehension of the model's principles, as well as a genuine recognition of its value. Through the new developments in the education, teachers have changed their old beliefs and practices; they have set the new goals and standards, and plan their teaching, taking into account what is best for students. In doing so, teachers have also worked on their self and professional development. On the learner's part, likewise, students who are guided by teachers have adopted a new conception of the learning process. They have now realized that if they are to keep pace with the rapidly changing world, and to compete in the global market place that has a growing demand for educated workers with skills in critical thinking, problem solving and decision making, they must change their long-time practice from passive to active learners. They have understood that they have to empower themselves, gain control over their learning, and become autonomous learners. Finally, it is apparent that teachers and students working in collaboration have gradually made the learning environment more productive and worthwhile. Thus, learner – centered class is not a myth but a concrete development in education.

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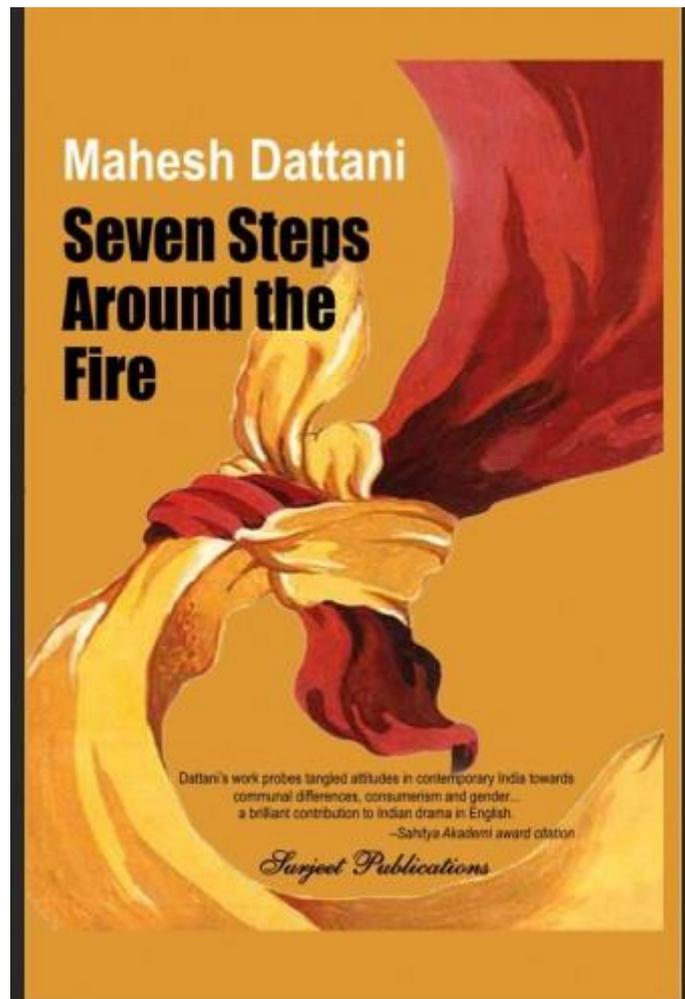
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**Teaching Drama to Undergraduate Students:
Mahesh Dattani's *Seven Steps Around the Fire***

A. Dinakar, M.A., M.Phil.



Abstract

Teaching literature in the 21st century has become a challenge as the students are glued to their technological devices rather than reading books. A teacher is confronted with a student group which is less receptive but more digital savvy. Students often acquire information from social media, which could lack veracity and humane finesse. Hence,

teaching drama in a traditional method with the help of technological devices in a way will help them understand the text better. In this context, Mahesh Dattani's play *Seven Steps Around the Fire* is taken up for study to analyse the teaching methodology with the aid of modern devices through which students can relate to human predicament, suffering and emotions. An important aspect of teaching the play is to make students aware of the social reality and the situations that repress the marginalised community and the economically weaker section. Further, it helps students become conscious of the theme, plot, and characterisation. Teaching such plays will make the students more sensitive to other's need and aspirations and expose them to forces that repress people in the realm of societal power play, politics, and interpersonal relationships. The teaching of the play will also help them develop sensibility and critical thinking, which contributes to their self-awareness, social awareness, and reality.

Key Words: Teaching of Literature, Teaching of Drama, Undergraduate students, digital natives, society, repression, marginalised, reality.

Digital Impact on Teaching Plays and Teachers' Role

Teaching literature to students of the 21st century assumes greater significance with the advent of intrusive technology which has invaded every sphere of a student. Technology is a double-edged sword with both positives and negatives. Today's technology has transcended that and has become more single edged as it influences the student community with such excessive force that the interplay of falsehoods in the guise of truth has greater influence than the literature one reads.

The students of present generation who are digital natives find their love for arts eroded with the disintegration of human interaction and human companions. The teachers who belong to both digital immigrant and digital native categories have a greater task to make the students read books, let alone making them aware of their own innate abilities of showing emotions and relating to each other as fellow human beings. In this scenario, teaching literature becomes a herculean task as students are addicted to social media and cinema related memes that caricature life and distorts reality.

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The reality as experienced by the students through their technological devices is deceptive than the veiled reality expressed in literature. Their grasp of reality is questionable in the post-truth era where information is overloaded on every aspect of human life but the veracity of such information can never be given in a verifiable form. The students may be made aware of the false sense of reality that engulfs and consumes them. Hence, a teacher has a greater role to play in bringing back undistorted reality, truth, humane qualities, and also make students understand, respect, and recognise the existence of others in the universe including nature through the appreciation of arts especially through literature.

Drama and Development of Communication Skills

In the present scenario teaching literature through drama may be a better choice as drama contributes directly to the development of communication skills. Ideas and issues can be easily brought to the students' attention directly. The dialogues will help the students assimilate the situation, and internalise the issues that confront the characters and in effect confront the readers and the audience. Elder Olson in his article "A Letter on Teaching Drama" says that "a play cannot be read in the sense in which fiction is read; for the reader must always construct the real performance in his mind. Unlike a novelist who elaborates his theme and characters and events, a dramatist has to stick to powerful or strong dialogues from which students learn to read between the lines and hear the play resonate with multiple meanings" (p.). Reading drama provides them with multiple perspectives, which make them think and understand the human relationships and conflicts much more directly and vividly by identifying the issues, incidents and characters. The human, social, religious, and political issues can be brought to the direct notice of the students to make them contemplate over the travails of life.

E-textbooks for Undergraduate Classroom

Now-a-days, in an undergraduate classroom, it is easier to make the students get copies of available e-books since they would like to have study materials in a digitised form and that too in their mobiles. Students are adept at reading text on their mobiles through mobile applications. Therefore, the academicians can insist on the publishers to provide digital versions of books included in the syllabi.

Providing e-text does not guarantee reading of the text by the students. Hence, a classroom exercise based on textual reading like conducting a quiz at the beginning of the class or a simple test to assess their familiarity of the text needs to be tried first. An introduction of the author may be given before starting the play.

Seven Steps Around the Fire

The play *Seven Steps Around the Fire* by Mahesh Dattani is taken for study and analysed in the context of teaching drama to students. Students need to have a general background information on the significance of the characters and characterization including the title which, in the play under study, represents the sacred ritual associated with a marriage. The students may be asked to take up different characters and read the play with proper intonations, pauses and stress so the class could understand the significance of the dialogues.

Indefinite Gender and the Reality of Love

This is to make them understand the richness of literature where the theme, plot and dialogues portray the modern day woes of humans in urban India including the marginalised people who suffer at the hands of the powerful and the rich. In the play, the trauma of belonging to an indefinite gender and the reality of love and its vexation in the supposedly progressive world are aptly brought out by the regressive behaviour of the so-called educated and civilised people.

The play revolves around Uma, the wife of chief superintendent, who wants to study about *hijras* for her research work. In the course of her interviewing Anarkali, a *hijra* who is accused of murdering another *hijra* Kamla, discovers something sinister and diabolic in the murder. She unravels the mystery of the murder and realises that the so-called powerful people with the help of law enforcement agencies played an ugly part in crushing the rights of the marginalised. Uma brings out the general social apathy of the disadvantaged groups like *hijras*, who are also known as eunuchs or transgenders.

What the Teacher Needs to Know

Teaching this play requires the teacher to know the basic information about *hijras*, and how these people play a vital role in some of the communities during marriages and deaths. It also requires providing background information on the concept of *hijras*, their sexual orientation, and their occupation and their pathetic existence. Cross-reference may be given to known literary works such as Kamala Das' *Dance of the Eunuchs*. References could also be made to contemporary transgender issues and political activism which appear in print and other visual media which trace their social and cultural practices including the religious festival that takes place once a year in Koovagam, Villupuram district in Tamilnadu.

Discussion Points

Then the exposition can be discussed. The teacher can describe the need for Uma to meet Anarkali and the eventual request of Anarkali to be bailed out may be explained by quoting the appropriate lines from the text. During the exposition, we also get a glimpse of the pathetic condition of the *hijra* community and their treatment both inside and outside of the jail by the ruling class and the society at large. Uma's exposure to Champa and the *hijra*'s dwelling place in a non-descript locale of the city may be discussed. The teacher has to dwell on the life of *Hijras* and explain the treatment meted out to them by the society. The teacher might also discuss the physiological aspects and the psychological trauma that the *hijras* undergo in their life.

The students can be made to understand rather subtly how Anarkali's has been abused sexually in the male prison and the refusal on the part of the jail authorities to lock them up in women's prison because she is of indeterminate sex. Discussion may dwell on the dialogue in the scene which clearly depicts how pitiable the existence of the third or the other sex is, and how even inmates, who spend time behind bars for their criminal actions treat them. Their treatment of the *hijra* goes unquestioned due to lack of awareness in the society.

Subbu, Son of a State Minister

The exposition may also discuss the character of Subbu, son of a state minister Mr. Sharma, who hopelessly falls in love with a *hijra*, Kamla. Subbu defies convention and the idea of marriage by secretly marrying the *hijra* Kamla. This results in the murder of Kamla.

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Though the marriage cannot be consummated, Subbu's emotions, concretised by his marriage to Kamla, tell us volumes of the emotional bonding between the two, irrespective of their sexual orientation. Anarkali, at one point of time, says, "We make our relations with our eyes. With our love..." (CP 11). The students have to understand that love for one another can transcend mere physical pleasures and create a strong bond between them that can last a lifetime.

The Role of the Conflict

Students may be made aware of the conflict which helps the story move on. Examples from real and reel life could be brought in to keep the students' interest alive. The student could be encouraged to identify the conflict in the play just to kindle their imagination and analytical thinking. The actual conflict in the play arises when Uma is hell-bent on solving the murder of Kamla. Uma, in pursuit of the truth, confronts the powerful minister Sharma and his aides, which further provides clues to the murder. The conflict leads to rising action where the suspicion is first focussed on Champa, then Anarkali and then on to the servant Salim, who is believed to have had an affair with Kamla and then finally on his wife for having a strong reason to kill Kamla due to jealousy.

The Climax

The climax comes as a shocker since not even once the suspicion is diverted to the minister's son. Subbu, who shoots himself to death, exposing the minister's role in the murder of Kamla. This heightens the pathetic condition of the lovers whose lives are lost just because of the social conventions and established moral norms which consider their relationship as immoral and out of sync with the perception of marriage which the society has been witnessing from time immemorial. A discussion on the need to follow tradition and culture could be initiated to get divergent views so that the learning process of the students is supplemented by critical thinking.

The denouement captures how rotten the system is as Suresh, Uma's husband, who has his future in mind, invariably helps in hushing up the suicide of Subbu as an accident. Kamla is forgotten, Anarkali becomes the leader of her community, Suresh hopes to become the commissioner of police, but Uma has to suppress the truth and bury her emotional

response for the sake of her husband, and she realises the futility of finding the truth since nothing happens at the end except the loss of two beautiful lives. Uma's voice-over at the end of the play aptly captures her predicament "They knew. Anarkali, Champa and all the *hijra* people knew who was behind the killing of Kamla. They have no voice. The case was hushed up and was not even reported in the newspapers. Champa was right. The police made no arrests. Subbu's suicide was written off as an accident. The photograph was destroyed. So were the lives of two young people..." (CP 42).

Social and Political Issues

The students may be made to understand how the government, media and the people ignore the travails of the marginalised people. They may be made aware also of the fact that prevalence of marginalisation is not restricted to caste alone as portrayed in the public discourse but it happens also due to lack of education, economic opportunities and inequality. The denouement clearly shows how the public machinery hushes up the murder and the suicide. The individuals concerned go about their way having their own self agenda suppressing their conscience, and this, to some extent, includes also Uma who is unable to break the shackles of the web finely woven by the morally corrupt system. The deprived live their existence without much ado as Anarkali becomes the head of the *hijras* continuing the path set by Champa. Uma resigns to her fate compelled by family and societal compulsions.

All Issues Should be Discussed

These issues have to be discussed with students on the need to set right the system which gets corrupted by people who want to serve their own interests first. The lack of empathy that affects the ailing system is due to the emotional drain of the people and the students are no better in understanding the existing depravation. They have to be aware that lack of social sensibility results in them growing up as adults and as part of the system instead of being the change to overhaul the system based on human values and responsibilities.

To a great extent the present predicament is borne out of sophistication and modernisation where the needs of students and people are more on material things. By

teaching plays like these, the teacher can make the students aware of the world around them which their technological devices fail to do so.

The onus of creating awareness and learning process can be shifted to the students if the teacher prepares or compiles textually and socially relevant digital videos or reading materials and use educational platforms like Edmodo <https://www.edmodo.com/> where students could be enrolled and the teacher can share materials. Using these platforms, the teacher can provide extra reading materials with cross references so that they can understand the text much better. Moving a step further, online submission of assignments and conduct of quiz could make the students spend at least some of their time reading instead of wasting on social networks and video games.

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**Teaching Metahistory with Reference to Classical and
Contemporary Historicist Writings**

U. Fathima Farzana

Abstract

The astonishing comeback of historical fiction in the twenty-first century is indeed because of the change in the reading trends of modern readers, re-readers and critical thinkers. Most of these novels are made into TV shows and movies and this has further added to the popularity of the genre. Students lately show a keen interest in learning historical fiction over other genres because first and foremost, these are great reads, and then history is incorporated in such a way as to make learning a ‘fun’tastic experience. History is mixed up with fantasy, surrealism and realism to any reader turn over the pages of these modern relics that portray the past.

Keywords: Historical Fiction, Metahistory, Analyzing History, New Historicism, Fun Learning

Metahistory

Metahistory is a critical tool for analyzing history lying dormant in a historical fiction. A part of New Historicism, Metahistory was popularized by Hayden White, the Johns Hopkins theoretician and historiographer. It has a set of parameters that delve deep into a historical fiction and come out with the truth – what really happened and how history has masqueraded things up all these years. In this way, Metahistory is a derivate of Deconstruction, Semiotics and New Historicism that deals with fact hidden behind the words of fiction. This paper is a research on some of the methods of teaching this exciting and wonderful historical venture produces in a classroom.

Historical Elements

Most readers believe that historical fiction began with Sir Walter Scott. So, students must first be introduced to the historical elements in works which they would have hardly guessed to be historical. For instance, the classic *Iliad* is a depiction of the Trojan War. Archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann has applied Metahistory practically in the field and excavated the remains of Troy on the plains of Hissarlik in modern Turkey. Similarly, historian and BBC anchor Michael Wood has discovered the remains of an ancient Scandinavian ship mentioned in the last part of *Beowulf* in Jarrow, England.

Every Major Book Is a Historical Work

It is surprising to recall that almost every book by every major writer is a historical one - right from the long lost *Gilgamesh Epic* to the contemporary works of Wilbur Smith, Ken Follett and Philippa Gregory. Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, John Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*, Addison and Steele's *The Spectator*, the diaries of Pepys and Evelyn, Lord Byron's *Don Juan*, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, Thomas Hardy's *The Dynasts*, Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* are all historical. Even *Moby Dick* is the history of "The Essex" which was stowed by a white whale off the coast of Nantucket. Likewise, Alexandre Dumas' *The Three Musketeers* and Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* are great historical records. Pieces like Geoffrey of Monmouth's *A History of the Kings of Britain* (1136) and the Welsh *Mabinogion* (1050) are little read today. But they are accounts of post-Roman occupation of Britain and Wales. Other pieces like Torquosso Tasso's *Jerusalem Liberated* (1581) and Murasaki Shikibu's *The Tale of Genji* (1010) remain obscurities for modern readers.

Contemporary Historical Fiction

Contemporary historical fiction works are nothing like Scott's romantic visualizations. Scott, who borrowed copiously from Maria Edgeworth and the Gothic novelists, used very little history and too much imagination. His historical timelines are scrambled and characters vague. Modern novelists are, however, very precise with their research and outrageous with what they present as facts. Dame Hilary Mantel's Anne Boleyn/Thomas Cromwell Trilogy of *Wolf Hall*

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(2009), *Bring up the Bodies* (2012) and *The Mirror and the Light* (2017) are examples of realism, especially that of feministic realism.

Philippa Gregory's *The Red Queen* (2010), *The White Princess* (2013) and *The King's Curse* (2014) are similar and concentrate on the greatest female monarchs of history who have been abandoned or executed for their opinions. History and myths are popularized by Wilbur Smith in his Ancient Egypt Series of *The River God* (1994), *The Seventh Scroll* (1995), *Warlock* (2001), *The Quest* (2007), *Desert God* (2014) and *Pharaoh* (2016). These books bring out the drawbacks and superstition of ancient Egyptians and the monarchs who used culture and legend to enslave their subjects. Paulo Coelho's *The Spy* (2016) is a history of Paris during World War II from the view of exotic dancer Mata Hari. Among all these, Ken Follett's colossal realist narratives are considered the best for their historic accuracy and their vivid portrayals of objects from the medieval Stephen of Blois to President Woodrow Wilson and Adolf Hitler.

How to Introduce Students to Historical Fiction

Introducing students to historical fiction can be a delightful experience if done correctly. They must first be acquainted with history as mentioned in the history books. Then they must be taught to read denotative and connotative meanings in the text. Ambiguity, structural deviances, fragmentary narratives, rearranging of historical events and archaism must be read and critically reread to find out the subtle hints in the fiction. Application of Metahistory and its parameters comes next. Story, chronicle, emplotment through arguments and ideological statements have to be the first layer of Metahistory. Looking for tropes and applying the parameters mentioned by historians like Jules Michelet, Leopold von Ranke, Alexis de Tocqueville and Jacob Burckhardt. Historical applications remain incomplete without the necessary fictional parameters set by Johann Gottfried von Herder, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche and Benedetto Croce. The Base-Superstructure n-d analysis is necessary as;

...any transformation in the Base (comprised of the means of production and the modes of relationship among them), there will be a transformation in the components of the Superstructure (social and cultural institutions)...are usually

involved to explain such a phenomenon as the Great Depression or the Fall of the Roman Empire (White 11).

Formist/Organicist/Mechanistic/Contextualist categorizations of historical narration has to be taught next. The plot must first be deconstructed into historical field (the setting and the atmosphere), historical timeline and historical objects (characters/symbols). Then the events must be analysed to designate one of the four categories mentioned above: Formist (identifying the generic and specific attributes assigned to historical objects), Organicist (searching for laws behind historical processes), Mechanistic (acts of objects originating outside the historical field but contributing to the making of history) and Contextualist (events explained through contexts of their occurrences and through colligative threads that link the objects to the fields).

Ideological Implication

Ideological implication simply labels the objects Apocalypticist (actions based on divine revelation), Reactionary (an eternally valid act) or Fascist. Objects are also named Conservatives and Liberals in a much widely accepted sense.

Researchers have come out with shocking details like the faked murder of Edward II when he actually escaped into France and led a happy life there while the citizens of England mourned over an empty coffin. The Fieschi Letter – supposedly dictated by Edward II to his son from France – is used in the researches of Kathryn Warner and published as *Edward II: The Unconditional King* (2014). Ken Follett’s *World without End* (2001) is also a conspiracy on the same letter changing the lives of ordinary people while the aristocrats fall into intrigues.

Wilbur Smith’s Narratives

Wilbur Smith’s narratives operate in a whole other way – that of myth and legend to mock history. While Follett and Gregory use realism, Smith chooses magic realism. His Ancient Egypt series, especially the last installment *Pharaoh* (2016), are subtle satires on royalty. *Pharaoh* depicts a female hero Serena who overpowers the magnificent Rameses II.

When Rameses' mind is choked with myths of Seth and Bast, Serena fights their enemies with sword and might.

Past, Present and the Future

Historical narratives are records not only of some ancient culture lost and gone but also that of the present. Seeing the present in the past is what the researcher terms *relative history*. Relative is a term borrowed from Einstein's Theory of Relativity – how time and space are not constant but vary with each person. Similarly, history varies with each and every reader's views and culture. History in historical fiction is how the readers/students view history based on their cultural-racial backdrops. All historical novelists - from Scott to Smith - write about the present as much as the past. History is merely a medium that carries the present for them:

History, the past as it really happened, the thing that is the object of study and research, it certainly has something to do with that world, that mental picture which each of us makes of the past...the historical novel is a form of history. It is a way of treating the past (Butterfield 2).

Metahistory Changes the Classroom into a Laboratory

Metahistory changes the classroom into a laboratory and the students into researchers looking for something new in something old. The results can be fascinating while the process remains a fun experience for both learner and teacher. It is a learner-centered approach as most of the work is done by the learners and the teacher's duty is just to guide them. As a recent branch of multidisciplinary approaches to literature, Metahistory can be a tool to instruct history, literature, language and philosophy in a classroom. A whole new world of facts and fictions can operate at a whole other level and instruct many things beyond the domains of any one particular genre. And a teacher needs to be very well versed in history if he or she wants to teach matahistory – also be able to teach what is fact and what is fiction.

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Ways to Equip LSRW Skills

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Abstract

Communication plays a major role in each individual's professional life in this modern era. One has to communicate effectively in order to be successful in any field. For this reason, an individual is in dire need to learn the English language, to become employable. It is in the hands of language teachers to show the way to the individual to familiarize himself/herself with the language. For this purpose, LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) skills have to be taught effectively. The skills will definitely help the individual to get a job opportunity and create a better understanding at the workplace. LSRW skills have not been taught properly for the learner during their twelve years of study. And at the same time, regional medium students consider English as a subject. More importantly, a student learns the foreign language or second language by giving importance only to Reading and Writing. Teachers should provide extensive time to practice all the four skills. The students need a variety of experiences in Listening, Speaking, Writing and Reading. The activities like Videos, Audios, Oral Presentation, Extempore speech, Self Introduction, Reading Comprehension, Picture reading, Newspaper Reading, Movie clips, free writing, grammar worksheets, games, role play, substitution drills, speed reading, storytelling, picture writing etc., will definitely help the learners to be an effective communicator. Most importantly, these four skills give confidence to the learners and help them to get employed, to get a job.

Keywords: English language, LSRW Skills, learner activities, language learners, communication skills

Videos

As English teachers, we can show videos to the students which are available on the internet and also from DVD. From these visuals, students can easily understand the concepts. We can help the students in Pronunciation and rising/falling intonation. We can also guide the students to rewrite the sentence which he/she has seen in the video. Indirectly we help the students to acquire the knowledge of listening, speaking and writing.

Audios

A learner learns any language through listening. So, it is very essential to play the audio tapes to the students. Then only he/she can repeat the sentence structures, words and pronunciation. The Audios from EFLU (English Foreign Language University) and websites like www.agendaweb.com will definitely help the students in listening. If listening is acquired as a second language speaker, speaking can become easy for the students.

Oral Presentation

A language teacher has to help the students acquire vocabulary. He/she can write many number of words on the board and make the students find out the meaning and related words. The teacher can give simple topics to the students as oral presentation based on the vocabulary lists. This type of oral presentation makes the students to be more comfortable and will definitely help them to speak on the topic for few minutes. This indirectly makes the students get rid of his/her stage fear and gain confidence in speaking skills.

Reading Comprehension

Worksheets on reading comprehension have to be given to the students. A teacher has to help them by explaining inductive reading, pre-reading, post-reading and Close reading. After this, students get a clear picture of reading comprehension. 'Comprehend' means 'understanding'. Multiple Choice questions, True or False, Fill ups and open-ended questions will definitely help the students' creative thinking and critical thinking.

Newspaper Reading

In a language learning class, reading newspaper will play a major role in Students learning LSRW skills. A student can be invited to read a favourite passage and others are asked to listen to the passage. After reading the passage, a language teacher can teach the pronunciation, sentence structure and verb pattern. Any students from the class are asked to summarize the passage in five sentences of their own. After that, the students are asked to find out 5 to 10 unknown words daily for meaning and asked to construct sentences on their own. This practice unconsciously helps the students to listen, write and speak.

Games

In this technological world, students are keen and interested in playing games. Games might give satisfaction for them. In order to develop LSRW skills, a language teacher can initiate the students to play games. Through games, Grammar, Basic concepts of English and sentence structure can be taught.

Role Play

A student can be given different roles like doctor-patient, teacher-student, placement officer-students. The dialogues will definitely help the students to frame questions and answers. The role play makes the students to think as a character and talk according to the manner of the character.

Substitution drills, speed reading, storytelling and picture writing help the students to understand the English language. These activities make the students to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing. These activities indirectly help the students to talk, read and write.

Conclusion

A language teacher has the ability to make the students to speak and write. As a teacher, we have to focus on listening and speaking. If it is followed up properly, other skills can be encouraged to develop with some more sessions of reading and writing exercises.

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Three-Dimensional Grammar Framework

Jyothi Hymavathi Devi

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Grammar is an essential part of language teaching, and many a time, a challenging task given the peculiar nature of it. The history of language teaching has witnessed a number of grammar teaching methods which were evolved in line with the broader language teaching methods existing at different points of time. There are various definitions of grammar. Here are some: “Grammar is the business of taking a language to pieces, to see how it works” (David Crystal, 2004). “... the entire system of a language, including its syntax, morphology, semantics and phonology (Chalker & Weiner, 1994, p. 177). “Grammar teaching involves any instructional technique that draws learners’ attention to some specific grammatical form in such a way that it helps them either understand it metalinguistically and/or process it in comprehension and/or production so that they can internalize it” (Ellis, 2006, p. 84).

Questions about Teaching Grammar

Sine long, there have been many questions posed by various people, in relation to grammar teaching, which are worth answering, and quite significant in dealing with English language teaching. While discussing these issues in detail, Ellis himself posed eight seminal questions, and subsequently, answered them. The following are Ellis’ questions (2006); they not only intrigued Ellis but also everybody who are genuinely interested in the present issue.

1. Should we teach grammar, or should we simply create the conditions by which learners learn naturally?
2. What grammar should we teach?
3. When should we teach grammar? Is it best to teach grammar when learners first start to learn an L2 or to wait until later when learners have already acquired some linguistic competence?

4. Should grammar instruction be massed (i.e., the available teaching time be concentrated into a short period) or distributed (i.e., the available teaching time spread over a longer period)?
5. Should grammar instruction be intensive (e.g., cover a single grammatical structure in a single lesson) or extensive (e.g., cover many grammatical structures in a single lesson)?
6. Is there any value in teaching explicit grammatical knowledge?
7. Is there a best way to teach grammar for implicit knowledge?
8. Should grammar be taught in separate lessons or integrated into communicative activities?

(Ellis, 2006, p. 84)

Some Frameworks to Teach Grammar

In the context of discussing ‘how’ grammar is to be taught, it is worth discussing a framework evolved by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999). This paper is an attempt to present their ‘Three-Dimensional Grammar Framework’ and also how that has been employed by the researchers to analyze some of the grammatical aspects. According to Larsen-Freeman, teaching grammar enables language learners to use linguistic forms ‘accurately, meaningfully, and appropriately’ (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). Accordingly, the framework has three components-form/structure, meaning/semantics, and use/pragmatics, which are three important aspects of language. This is in accordance to Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman’s own definition of grammar, “Grammar is not merely a collection of forms but rather involves the three dimensions of (morpho)syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Grammatical structures not only have a morphosyntactic form, they are also used to express meaning (semantics) in context-appropriate use (pragmatics)” (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999, p. 109). Primacy is given to meaning, the semantics and pragmatic aspects of grammar/language, though form and structure are also given considerable importance.

The Three-Dimensional Framework

The Three-Dimensional Framework is a departure from traditional analysis of English grammar as it encompasses the three dimensions of syntax, semantics and pragmatics unlike other approaches to grammar teaching. This has been evolved keeping in view the

communicative aspect of grammar. Larsen-Freeman wanted to ‘encourage a balance between grammar and communication’ (2001, p.251) and therefore came up with the framework of ‘Three-Dimensional Framework of Grammar’ which has been evolved in consonance with the communicative approach to language which encourages language use over imparting rules of language. In this connection, Freeman draws our attention to the research evidence which proves the positive effect of focussing the learners’ attention on linguistic forms in the context of communicative interactions.

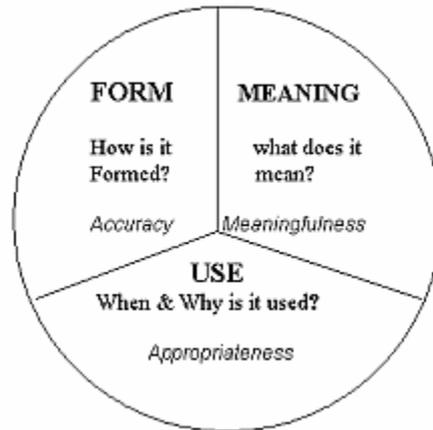
In contrast, research has shown that researchers who focus students’ attention on linguistic form during communicative interactions are more effective than those who never focus on form or who only do so in decontextualized grammar lessons.

Spada and Lightbown 1993; Lightbown 1998
(As cited in Larsen-Freeman, Teaching Grammar, 2001, p. 251)

Here, ‘grammatical form in communication interaction’ is a key phrase which brings up the issue of ‘context’ in teaching grammar. This is looking at ‘form in/with context’ in contrast to ‘form without context’. In this connection, the importance of context in teaching grammar can also be seen in Nunan’s words, “If learners are not given opportunities to explore grammar in context, it will be difficult for them to see how and why alternative forms exist to express different communicative meanings”(1998, p.103).

The Three-Dimensional framework of grammar facilitates the usage of grammar structures with accuracy, meaning and appropriateness (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 2001). Many English grammar text books overlook either of the above aspects which would deprive the learners of successful communication. This framework also considers grammar as a dynamic system rather a static one. The authors of this framework put forward it in the form of a pie chart and the boundaries between these dimensions are permeable, and are indicated by bidirectional arrows. As it was evolved, there is no hierarchy existing among these three dimensions, rather, all the three are interconnected. The following pie chart explains the framework.

Pie diagram depicting the Three-Dimensional Framework of grammar



Courtesy: Ozmen, (undated)

The three dimensions of the framework become three wedges in the diagram and are interconnected by arrows which are not visible in the above diagram. Changes in one wedge would affect changes in other wedges. The first dimension is 'Form/Structure' which indicates Morphosyntactic and lexical patterns, and phonemic and graphemic patterns; the second wedge, 'Meaning/Semantics' indicates lexical and grammatical meaning; and the third wedge, 'Use/Pragmatics', indicates social context, linguistic discourse context, and presuppositions about context.

The above framework can be understood with the help of the authors' analysis of the form of possessive case and phrasal verbs in English grammar. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman went on to explain that the form of the possessive case in English is to be explained in the first section of 'form' where it is explained that inflection is required to form possessives. In the 'meaning' part of the framework, it is required to explain that the possessive or genitive form, apart from its indication of possession, can also indicate descriptions, amounts, relationship, part/whole and origin/agent. The final part of the framework 'use' has to explain the usage of possessive. Here, 'when do we use possessive?' and 'why do we use possessive?' in English are to be explained. The usage of 's, possessive determiner (*his, her, their*), 'of the' are to be discussed. Similarly, the same framework was employed by the authors to explain phrasal verbs in English.

Application Value of Three-Dimensional Framework

The application value of three-dimensional framework can be seen from the way it has been applied to analyze some of the grammar texts. Macias (2010) employed this to analyze grammatical aspects, as discussed by some course book writers. He explored the three dimensions of form, meaning, and use of three-dimensional framework from the perspective of English passive voice in two ELT course books (Macias, 2010, p. 331). The two books selected for the analysis were *Reward* (Greenall, 1995) and *New Headway* (Soars, 1996). His analysis of the two ELT course books revealed that the first book, *Reward* (Greenall, 1995), made explicit reference to form, and made reference to meaning and use to only some extent. He found that more explicit and deductive approach was followed in this course book. Only few activities appeared to focus on contextualized practice. The other book *New Headway* (Greenall, 1995) focused predominantly on meaning and use. The activities in this book were ‘seemingly consciousness-rising’ (Macias, 2010, p. 342). Macias found that this framework is of great relevance in grammar teaching.

In the context of practical teaching of grammar in classrooms too, teachers can use three-dimensional framework and achieve greater success in making grammar teaching more meaningful as this framework contextualizes grammar.

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Communicative Approach in Integrating Language Skills and Soft Skills

S. Hussaini Irfan

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Language Skills

The purpose of the language is to communicate the message to the participants. The communication has to be appropriate to the setting. It is an activity, basically of four kinds:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

These are called the four “language skills”. They are related to each other. When the learners learn the second language they try to communicate in the target language. For their effective communication, they use these language skills either consciously or subconsciously. Byrne states that “one should keep in mind that these skills are normally integrated into real life”. Second language learners must be able “to produce and understand language in different sociolinguistic contexts, taking into consideration such factors as the status of participants, the purpose of interactions and the norms of conventions of interactions” (Freeman & Freeman, 2004).

Integrating Language Skills

Integrating language skills enhances the focus on the communication which develops the students’ competence in English. In integrating language skills the easiest form is to integrate from receptive to productive skills within the same medium: oral or written.

	Receptive Skills	Productive Skills
Oral Medium	Listening	Speaking
Written Medium	Reading	Writing

Oral Medium

In this view, the oral medium helps to improve the students' communicative competence in the second language acquisition. Communicative competence is the central concept of the communicative language teaching. It ensures developing one's language proficiency. It also enhances the learner's ability to understand and use language in an authentic social and school environments.

Communicative Competence

Canale and Swain (1980) divided the communicative competence into four parts:

- 1) Grammatical competence is the ability to use the linguistic code, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary correctly.
- 2) Discourse competence is the ability to maintain cohesion between segments of discourse.
- 3) Strategic competence is the learner's ability to repair communication breakdown and work around gaps in his or her knowledge of the target language.
- 4) Sociolinguistic competence is the learner's ability to use language appropriately in various social contexts. (qtd. in Ann Mizne, 1997)

Focus of This Paper

Communicative competence entails knowing how to use language according to the setting and participants, knowing how to produce and understand different types of text and to maintain communication in spite of the fact that one's language knowledge is limited. This paper gives some basic methods that will help to develop learner's language communication at the secondary level.

Some Processes

The teacher can assign some tasks to carry out a formal and informal conversation, group discussion and enacting skit among the students. The conversation between students will help them to know how to communicate appropriately in different situations and will help them to learn new words. Enacting skit will develop students' fluency in the target language. On the other hand, students will get to listen to each other while doing group discussions and debate. As they listen to others' points, they volunteer themselves to convey their own. This method will develop students' listening skill as well as their speaking skill. Conducting activities like conversation and group discussion among students will improve their vocabulary and fluency. While doing activities that involve listening and speaking skills, it not only builds up the language skills but also the soft skills like teamwork, leadership, and building confidence.

Modern Need for Soft Skills

In the twenty-first century, people started to disconnect from each other which is opposite to the natural phenomenon that every human being is interconnected. Employers are expected to have soft skills for managing situations and handling things appropriately. At this stage, people lack soft skills when they appear in an interview for a job. Many companies train their employees for inter-personal skills. Soft skill is a simple term for a complex system of traits and habits commonly sought by employers. It includes problem-solving, critical thinking, leadership, teamwork, communication, collaboration, building confidence, information management, and adaptability.

Developing Soft Skills of Students

Developing soft skills at the secondary level will help the students to mingle with others outside the classroom and will improve their confidence level. It has become essential for the students for both academic and non-academic purposes. When a student takes part in an activity like formal or informal conversation and group activity, it develops his ability to work in a team. It enables him how to handle people in different situations and how to get along with people in a particular circumstance. The activities involved in communicative approach will improve the students' fluency which in turn builds confidence in them. Being confident, the students will

volunteer themselves and will be interactive in a group. The hypothesis of this paper is that the students' listening and speaking skills involved in the communicative activity will eventually improve their self-confidence, leadership quality, and teamwork.

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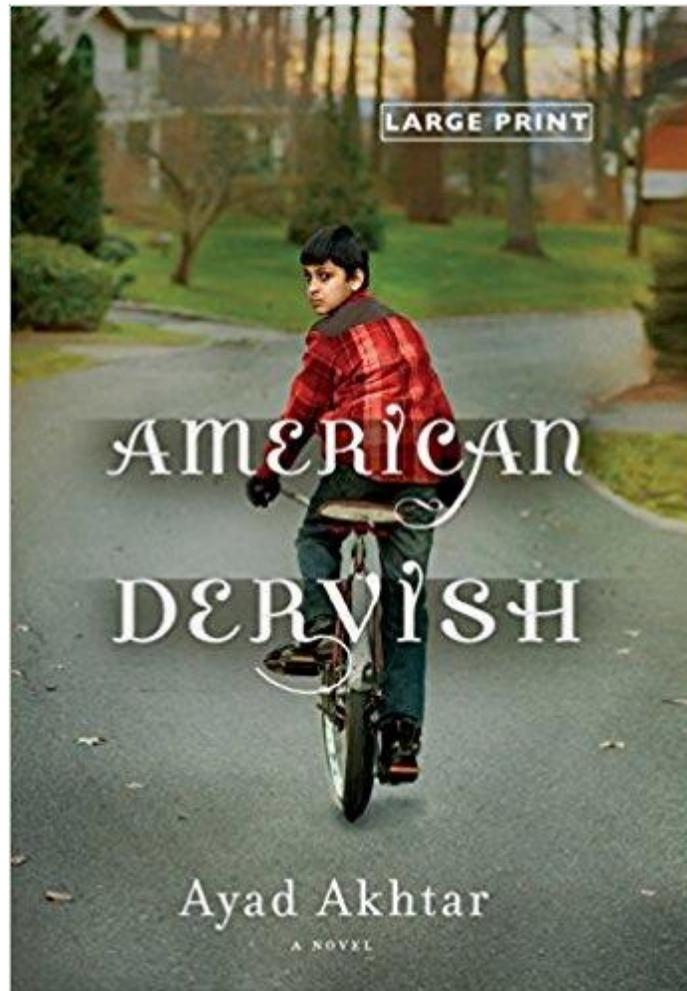
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**Between the Sacred and the Secular: The Process of Assimilation in
Ayad Akhtar's *American Dervish***

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Between the Sacred and the Secular: The process of Assimilation in Ayad Akhtar's *American Dervish*

Abstract

People who migrate to the cosmopolitan centers like America and Europe, especially Muslims, most often find themselves in a quagmire with regard to their cultural and religious identity. Their positioning of themselves in between two cultural polarities of faith and cosmopolitanism sometimes poses difficulties in their efforts to assimilate to the new situation. This paper focusses generally on the challenges faced by the immigrants in a foreign country with a cosmopolitan culture, and particularly in the case of the Pakistani Muslim family in America presented in Ayad Akhtar's *American Dervish*. Ayad Akhtar's novel examines the dilemma of the immigrant family of Hayath Shah thrown between the overbearing influences of their faith on the one hand and the promises of the secular space they have adopted, on the other. In the novel, Akhtar portrays a second generation Pakistani boy's struggle in choosing between his religion and the culture of cosmopolitanism. However, different characters in the novel try to change his attitude towards his religion.

Keywords: Ayad Akhtar, *American Dervish*, migration, diaspora, cosmopolitanism, assimilation, sacred, secular, immigration, foreign country.

Introduction



Ayad Akhtar

Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/American-Dervish-Novel-Ayad-Akhtar/dp/0316183318>

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Between the Sacred and the Secular: The process of Assimilation in Ayad Akhtar's *American Dervish*

Ayad Akhtar's novel *American Dervish* presents the struggle of the immigrants, trying to assimilate themselves with the host culture. There are also people who try to hinge on their faith managing to resist assimilation, and a few others despite their conservative background, easily move on their journey, and try to integrate themselves with the cosmopolitan culture of their host country. In due process they drift away from the religion of their birth, and their faith becomes a matter of chance. The second generation settlers tread a different path; they find themselves in a quandary because of the experience of their parents with the cosmopolitan culture and the uncertainty they face. The protagonist Hayat Shah's comes into this complex world, where he faces hurdles in assimilating to the modern world. Is he able to adapt to the American way of life, does his faith allow him to remain a secular human being? These questions form the basis of our paper.

A Pakistani Immigrant Family

Even the other characters in *American Dervish* face this difficult situation. The novel presents the Pakistani immigrant family of Naveed Shah, consisting of his wife Muneer and their son Hayat, who is in his preteens at the beginning of the novel. Naveed finds more freedom in America than Pakistan; he falters from his faith in the process of trying to adapt to the American Culture, which threatens to ruin his family life. Hayat is a second generation Pakistani immigrant, who finds himself in a tricky situation, because of his mother's influence of Jews and her liking for them. His tutor Mina Ali, who is a childhood friend of his mother, comes to stay with them fearing persecution from her husband. She teaches him the Quran and basic principles of Islam. Hayat is torn between his father's idea about religion and Mina's teachings. His case exemplifies the problems encountered by immigrant communities in general, where they try to grapple with their state of being in between and cosmopolitan.

Hayat's Dilemma in Identifying Himself as a Muslim

Hayat's life is mixture of identities from the beginning of the novel; his relationship with a Jewish girl, Rachel, is a step forward for his getting absorbed in the American society and his mother had always talked about the influence Jews had on her. She was trying to bring him up as

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a Jew, because in her opinion, Jews were at their utmost civility when it comes to treating women; she says this is the reason why she is trying to bring him up like a Jew: “that’s why I’m bringing you up so differently, so that you learn how to respect a woman” (117). Hayat’s mother welcomed Nathan Wolfshon, a Jewish doctor and a friend of her husband, and Mina’s marriage, because she thought that Mina would be respected by Nathan, irrespective of her broken marriage. She says “I keep telling her the fact that Nathan’s Jewish is good thing. They understand how to respect women, behta, they understand how to let a woman be a woman, to let her take care of them. They understand how to give a woman attention” (117). Her liking of the Jews was passed on to her by her father and forefathers who happened to mingle with them during second world war, she clarifies that “I never met my grandfather – he died soon after I was born – but I heard a lot about his respect for Jews, respect which stemmed from his experience living in their midst in England in the years after the second world war” (118). Hayat takes this seriously and develops a relationship with Rachel and he feels liberated and complete in her company. He discovers himself by having an interfaith romance when he says “our wonderful and troubled interfaith romance is tale for another time... it was in Rachel’s arms – and it was with her love – that I finally discovered myself not only as a man, but as an American.” (345). His eating of pork in the college as mentioned in the prologue makes him a full-fledged American. The vendor had mistakenly handed him a bratwurst, he tried to call the vendor but he had already gone away “I turned back to the aisle to call out to the vendor when I stopped. What reason did I have anymore not to eat it? I lifted the sausage to my mouth, closed my eyes, and took a bite. My heart raced as I chewed, my mouth filling with a sweet and smoky, lightly pungent taste that seemed utterly remarkable – perhaps all the more so for having been so long forbidden. I felt at once brave and ridiculous. And as I swallowed, an eerie stillness came over me” (4). He felt that a burden has been removed, that night he had a sound and peaceful sleep, “I slept soundly that night, held in restful sleep like a baby in a mother’s loving arm”. (5). Mina’s attempt to teach him the Qur’an, failed because of Hayat’s father.

Mina tried to revive the faith of her friend’s family who seem to have lost in the American wave. She supervised Hayat’s religious learning. Hayat agreed to learn the Quran

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because of his infatuation towards her physical appearance. He wanted to be near her. Mina narrated the life story of the Prophet to him. All these years he grew up listening only to his father's stories with the "white prostitutes". He memorized the Qur'an in English but his only aim in learning was to free his parents from the hell fire, "Mina said that becoming a hafiz was one of the greatest things a person could do in one's life. It meant not only securing one's own place in Jannat, but a place for one's parents as well" (54). Naveed did not approve of his son learning the Qur'an. He forbade Mina from teaching him, because he felt that the Qur'an deterred him from adopting his cosmopolitan culture and generated differences between Nathan and him. Hayat was confused that Mina was in love with a Jew, whom the scripture mentions as the cursed people. He argued with Mina about the status of Jews, when Mina scolds him not to spread lies against Nathan, "But it was wrong for you to say what you said. It's not what is written in the Qur'an". "Yes it is Auntie... it says in ----"you're too young to understand somethings." "The Qur'an says many things. And some you'll not understand until you're older" (236). His belief that the pages of the scripture will not burn, was shattered when Naveed, in a fit of anger tore the pages, danced on them and burnt them: "It wasn't until the paper actually caught fire that I realized I was surprised. I had expected the pages not to burn" (249) but he continued memorizing the verses, so that he could save his parents from hell fire. That it was futile learning the Qur'an in English was exposed when he was asked to recite a few verses during Mina's *Nikah* ceremony. Farhaz, the fifteen-year-old *hafiz*, was unable to stop laughing when he recited these verses in English. The Iman of the Milwaukee mosque also did not approve of his recitation though he praised him for his effort. Farhaz laughed, "You're a moron. Didn't anybody ever tell you it doesn't count if it's not in Arabic" (317). Hayat was eager to know whether his hard work will bear fruit. He asks the Imam about it. "Farhaz says it doesn't count if I didn't memorize the Quran in Arabic." The Imam replied that "Arabic is our holy language, young man". When Hayat asks, "Does it count in English?" The Imam replies "Count for what?" Hayat says, "To get me and my parents into heaven" (317). He felt as though he was mocked by everyone. He gave up his effort slowly and by the time he met Mina in her death bed after a decade, he was able to realize that he had come away from religion, barely remembering

what he had memorized. In a dream he saw himself walking away from the middle of a prayer which was led by the Prophet, “I walked out of the mosque and left them praying” (229).

Naveed’s Abhorrence of Faith and His Attempts to Assimilate

The loss of identity is explicit in Naveed’s approach towards religion. He tries to assimilate himself in the cosmopolitan culture and thereby loses his Muslim character once he arrives in America. His abhorrence towards religion started from the time his mother enforced a strict rule in their house, waking up her children early and beating them for not following the prayer timings. Hayat says that “Father’s antipathy for the faith came from the fact that his own mother used devotedness to abuse her children, beating them out of bed for their morning prayers, not feeding them if they never put in their hours of religious study” (49). His impact on his wife was so much that she too lost her faith. Hayat sheds light on this point when he says, “Deep down, Mother was a believer, but the years she’d spent with Father – who thought religion was for fools – had trained her, I think, to check her religious impulses” (49). He also believed that religious people like the Chahta’s are hypocrites and he did not approve of their speaking against the Americans or the Jews. He did not mingle with the Pakistani families scattered in Milwaukee, their get-together was referred to as herds by him. Hayat says, “He called them sheep, claiming that they gathered like herd animals as a way of avoiding the fact they were no longer in Pakistan” (80). When Nathan speaks about religion to Mina, he interrupts them saying that this topic is only for fools, “Religion, my friends, is a topic for fools. And this conversation is a living proof” (146). No wonder then that Naveed scorns all aspects of religion, as stressed by Randy Boyagoda when she says: “Hayat’s father is a philandering alcoholic neurologist who wears his atheism proudly, scorns the local immigrant Muslim community, and regards all religions, and Islam in particular, as backward and embarrassingly crude” (Randy Boyagoda *American Dervish*).

The same way he forbids Mina from teaching the Quran to Hayat and also the tenets of Islam. She has to stop teaching because it was a part her getting assimilated to the society and succumbing to her guest’s rules, she says to Hayat “your father asked me not to participate in

your religious study any more. He made me promise and ... I have to honor his promise. I am his guest, after all" (256). Similarly, his family life also is in trouble.

By the time Hayat narrates the story of his parents, their life was already in shambles. Naveed had started cheating his wife, the moment they landed in America. Hayat says about this as, "she was with a man who started cheating on her almost as soon as they arrived in America. In short, by the time I was ten, she'd been miserable for years." (25). As a result, Hayat started to hate his father's behavior, he says, "And at ten, I already knew myself well enough to know that if I listened too closely to what she said, my blood would start to boil." (27). Because of this experience his mother starts bringing him up as a Jew.

Muneer's Fascination for the Jews

A factor which had a great influence on Hayat was his mother's fascination for the Jews. Her grandfather's admiration for the Jews was the reason behind Muneer's decision. The love story of Mina and Nathan was a positive sign for her, as she was of the opinion that Jews respected women and her individuality. When Mina was worried about Nathan's religion she says it is a good thing that he is a Jew, and tells Hayat that, "They understand how to let a woman be a woman, to let her take care of them. They understand how to give a woman attention" (117). She also tells Hayat that this is the reason why she is bringing up as a Jew, "That's why I'm bringing you up differently, so that you can learn how to respect a woman... I'm bringing you up like a little Jew" (117). Her obsession was so much that she did not send Hayat to school during Jewish festivals. Moreover she drove long distances to buy meat from a Jewish butcher and also enjoyed talking to them. Her experience of marital life had given her a bad opinion about Muslim men.

Naveed's behavior was responsible for her approach towards Muslim men. She had given up her studies in Pakistan and came to America to settle there. She considered it as a great mistake not to have completed her degree, Hayat says "... it was always her great regret that she didn't wait to finish her degree" (25). Hayat says that he remembers his father's deception on his

mother from the time he was five years old. “I’d been hearing about Father’s mistresses since the night Mother dragged me through the streets of Milwaukee as a five-year-old, searching for Father, who we eventually found at the apartment of a woman he worked with at the hospital” (27). She also did not approve of the immigrants’ treatment of their wives.

Mina and Nathan, the Perfect Couple Separated by Religion

Hayat’s obsession for Mina and her closeness was threatened when Nathan comes into her life, though they are separated by religion their understanding makes them think about their marriage. When Mina asks Hayat about his opinion on Nathan, he says “How could he be my uncle?” (p155), a Jewish man marrying a Muslim girl? The Qur’an says so many things about the Jews and yet Mina wants to marry one.” According to her, Nathan has understood that “Islam is a wonderful way of life” (p.155). He incites Imran not to accept a white man as his father and also succeeds in stopping her marriage by sending a cable to her parents in Pakistan: “MINA MARRYING A KAHR STOP HIS NAME IS NATHAN” (240). Her father threatens her with dire consequences, and stops the marriage. Nathan was ready to convert, in order to marry her. Her first marriage to Hamed Suahil ended in divorce. She fled Pakistan to save her son Imran from Hamed, who had threatened to take him away. Due to this she had lost her faith in arranged marriages. When her parents asked her to remarry, “she told her parents that not only was she interested, but there was no chance she would ever, ever consider another arranged marriage after what happened with Hamid” (100). She found an alternative in Nathan, but his religion was an obstacle though he was ready to convert for her sake. But the immigrant community and the local mosque did not want to accept a Jew. Thus religion plays a significant role in splitting the lovers.

Conclusion

Though this is Ayad Akhtar’s debut novel, it is “a sensitive coming-of-age story” (David Daley). The novel depicts social, cultural and religious clashes among the immigrant community in general. Akhtar narrates a tale of rich and cultural divide that is prevalent among the characters of his novel. “Mr. Akhtar’s astute observations of the clashes between old world and

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new, between secular and sacred, among immigrants might seem familiar to readers of both contemporary and classical literature (Adam Langer).”

American Dervish is a skillfully written American novel. In his novels Akhtar usually tries to tackle the problems related to immigrants who live among western communities in general and America in particular. He thinks of himself as “a narrative artist. I don’t think of myself as a novelist or screenwriter or playwright. All of those modalities ... are obviously very different, and I’m not sure that I prefer any one to other (Aditi Sriram interviews Ayad Akhtar). The novel tells us that it is almost impossible to hold on to one’s own religious beliefs when living in a cosmopolitan country like America, particularly if they are Muslims. This is the prevalent theme of his novels, particularly in *American Dervish*. In the guise of quenching Rachel’s thirst in listening to Mina’s story, Hayat narrates to her the circumstances which drove him to the present state. Naveed and Muneer’s casual approach to religion left Hayat to depend on Mina to know about his culture. The novel gives an insight into the likely problems faced by those who migrate from mono-religious context into a cosmopolitan country, where they are introduced to different cultures and beliefs.

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The Importance of Dress Code and Body Language for Interview and Group Discussion

N. Karpaha, Prof. L. Lakshmanan & Dr. D. Nagarathinam

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Abstract

It is a universal saying that “**First Impression is the Best Impression**”. First impressions are immediately formed just by our appearance even before we begin to speak. In addition to one’s qualification, knowledge, skills and experience, **Dress code and Body Language** make a huge difference in impressing the interview panel. Dressing smartly is as important as speaking smartly, and so everyone should remember to look well-groomed and professional. The term “body language” includes manner, gesture, or posture and eye contact for conveying meaning to the observers and to those who are involved in the particular context. Dress code and Body Language are the two important aspects of Non-verbal communication. Any interaction process involves both Verbal and Non-verbal communication. A harmonious blend of both **Verbal and Non-verbal communication** assures a win-win situation to the candidates. This paper presents **the importance** of the dress code and body language **of the participants** in the Group Discussion and interview in a detailed manner.

Keywords: Dress Code, Verbal communication, Non-verbal communication, Body Language, Interview, MNCs, Personality.

1. Introduction

In today’s global scenario, the art/engineering students and practitioners need to enhance not only their English communication skills, but also to appear for interviews in a smart manner. Many MNC’s and Govt. organizations select the candidates through the selection

process where the candidate has to face many interviewers individually. Each interviewer submits his report and the reports are compared to arrive at a final decision. In an interview, the candidate's appearance, and clothes play a supporting role in the interview process. While the clothes need not be costly, dazzling, new or of the latest fashion, they should be neat and clean. A well-dressed candidate will also feel confident.

2. Appearance

Appearance is determined by the candidate's conduct and by the manner of his/her movements and action. The candidate's appearance can convey a strong sense of trustworthiness to a prospective employer. It also conveys a sense of self confidence, dependability and professionalism. It is obvious that a great number of people agree that non-verbal language takes up more space in communication than verbal language.

3. Personalities

Various components of the personality are Dress, Body Language, Tone and Voice, Countenance and Manners. The candidate's movements and posture must be active, positive, live and responsive enough to make the group and the examiner take him/her seriously. The candidate's body language should reflect confidence, openness, readiness and a sense of humour. The candidate's eyes should radiate sincerity, friendliness and positive outlook.

In case of a telephonic interview, candidates have the advantage of not being seen. On the flipside, candidates can use only their voice to make an impression. The candidate should make sure that he is in the right environment during the interview. The call must be taken in a quiet room with no distractions. Smoking, eating or chewing must be strictly avoided. The interview call must not be packed within a tight schedule. This is because the call can't be cut short in case of another appointment or meeting. Smiling during the interview helps to keep one's tone friendly for it gives clues to a person's frame of mind, which includes body movements of the head, eyes, neck, hands, arm, feet or other parts of the body to reflect different expressions.

3a. Men

- Regular formal shirts, preferably in solids (no stripes or checks)
- Coordinated and sober/conservative colors
- Belt should be the same color as your shoes. If wearing black or navy blue trousers, wear a black belt, black shoes, and black or navy blue socks
- Formal shoes should be polished and in good condition
- Clothing should not be transparent or form fitting

3b. Women

- Formal shirt or blouse with formal trousers/slacks
- Indian formal wear (salwar kameez/sarees) is fine but should be sober
- If you are wearing a skirt it should be knee-length or longer
- Jewelry should be minimal and subtle
- Neckline should be conservative and not low
- Clothing should not be transparent, nor form fitting
- Handbags should be well-kept, moderate in size, neat in appearance

3c. Both Sexes

- Be on time.
- Carry extra copies of your CV/resume.
- Give a firm handshake.
- Be enthusiastic about yourself, the job and the company.
- Be positive and confident.
- Be honest.
- Speak slowly and clearly, and your voice should be well modulated.
- Take time to think about an answer before giving it. Use phrases such as 'that's an interesting question' to buy some time.
- Never say anything negative about previous employers.

- Make eye contact.
- Control your body language.

3d. What Not To Do

- Scratch or rub your head or back of neck. You'll look disinterested, distracted and uncomfortable.
- Drum with your fingers or fidget with your hands on the table in front of you. It will make you appear nervous, or distracted.
- Rub your nose, eyes or the side of face. It will make you look shifty or dishonest.
- Fold your arms in front of your chest. You'll appear arrogant and unfriendly.
- Rock back and forth or slouch down in on your chair. You'll look lazy and uninterested.
- Cross and re-cross your legs repeatedly. You'll come across as nervous and uncomfortable.

4. Grooming

- Hair – Clean and Neat
- Details – No missing buttons, Lint or tags
- Hands – Clean, manicured figure nail
- Fit of clothing – Clean, pressed and proper fit.
- Smell – little (or) no cologne, no cigarette smell.
- Breath – Fresh, clean breath, use a breath mint.



Fig.1. Dress Code in a Group Discussion

Fig. 1. shows the model for dress code in a group discussion. Today, almost every company, (including **TCS, SATYAM, WIPRO, INFOSYS, INFOTECH, ORACLE, CTS, CANBAY, POLARIS, etc**) both IT and non-IT companies have GD as part of their selection process. Earlier, some of the Pharmaceutical Companies like **Ranbaxy, Glaxo, Cipla, Lupin**, and others used to conduct Group Discussions as a part of their Screening Process for Selection of Medical Representatives. People can have serious problems when interpreting body movements and gestures of people who belong to different cultures, as they might not be aware of the fact that they have different meanings in different cultural situations. What one action means and reflects in a certain culture might be totally different or even offensive in another culture; therefore, problems are likely to occur in these intercultural situations. Be observant, learn other cultural nuances quickly.

5. Body Language in Interview

The term “body language” should reflect on manner, gesture, or posture that conveys meaning to the observer. Most of the researchers agree that the verbal channel is used primarily

for conveying information, while the non-verbal is used for negotiating interpersonal attitudes, and in some cases, is used for verbal messages. Body language is especially meaningful in an interview as the interviewer will be paying as much attention to nonverbal cues as to what the candidates have to say. In an interview, the interviewer might find annoying, certain mannerisms like playing with a button or pen. Constant or bold gesturing is also to be avoided, since some of these mannerisms are often triggered by nervousness. On the other hand, some body language show that the candidate is engaging in the interview. Some positive examples of body language in an interview include leaning forward slightly to show his enthusiasm and nodding whenever appropriate, particularly when their interviewer is making an important point. A candidate's verbal content only provides 7% of the message the interviewer is receiving from the candidate. Both the candidate's body language (55% of the message) and the way the candidate speaks, such as tone of voice (38% of the message), are as important in interview answers.

6. Sitting Posture

A candidate's gesture speaks much louder than the words uttered by his tongue. A sloppy posture indicates a careless attitude and a lack of energy. Sitting on the edge of the chair can come across as being nervous and tense. Keep the back straight. Relax and Lean forward slightly to indicate interest and involvement. The candidates should not recline back into the chair fully; this shows that a candidate seems to be bored or disengaged. The sitting posture reflects high confidence and is a must in cracking any interview.

Fig. 2 shows the right posture of sitting of a candidate while interviewed.



Figure.2: Interview Sitting Posture

7. Eye Contact

Eye contact is the best way to show that a candidate is actually paying attention and engaging with the situation. Eye contact is essential in an interview body language, to establish rapport with your interviewer. With panel interviews it is best to look at and direct your answer to the person asking the question, with a glance periodically at the other interviewers.

8. Leg Postures

Most of the candidates want to avoid nervous or bored body language like repeatedly crossing and uncrossing their legs or arms, fiddling with their hair or clothes, continually touching their face, scratching their head. Be aware of the interview body language message your legs are giving. Lots of leg movement is both distracting and indicates nervousness. Resting one leg or ankle on top of a candidate's other knee makes that candidate look too casual and comes across as arrogant.

Crossing your leg high up conveys a defensive attitude in the one-on-one context of a job interview. Crossing them at the ankles or placing both feet flat on the floor conveys a confident and professional look during the job interview.

9. Conclusion

We know that as per the syllabus of Anna University or any of the other universities, one or two hours is not enough for students to practise not only in English, but also they need to be trained and asked to practice proper dress code and body language. They need hours and days to grasp it, and need every day practice. Communication skills as well as the dress code are an important part of corporate sectors for their recruitment process and their expectations about candidates are high in order for them to withstand in the competitive world. The objective of the dress code isn't to draw attention to what you're wearing, but rather to draw attention away from one's appearance and toward the substance of the candidate's knowledge. If a candidate wants to be dressed neatly and appropriately enough, it provokes the committee members to say to themselves, "OK, this person looks fine".

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Is Learner-Centered Approach a Myth?

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Teacher-Centred Learning

In a traditional method of teacher-centred learning, a student was viewed as one who passively received information. The teacher's role was to provide students with the right answer. Thus, the students were expected to be only passive listeners. For instance, to explain English grammar and to compare the language structures, teacher had to give some questions and answers directly without involving students in the learning process. The main focus was getting the learners to practice repeatedly and perform well in examinations rather than enhancing the communicative skills of the students.

Focus of This Paper

This paper examines some important concepts related to 'teaching' and 'learning'. There has been an enormous push to introduce learner-centred teaching methods to students in both elementary and higher level institutions. There is a worldwide assumption that students will be more successful if they have a chance to enjoy while learning. However, the challenge is how to create that environment inside the classroom. It is a drastic change from Grammar-Translation approach to the Communicative Approach because Grammar-Translation approach didn't focus on the involvement of students.

Grammar-Translation Method

Moreover, Grammar-Translation method was not a scientifically developed teaching theory. In this method, teacher became a master of his own class. We had one way

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communication. In one-way communication, the learner listens to or reads the target language but does not respond. The communication is one-way, towards the learner, not from the learner. Examples: Listening to programs, speeches and radio, watching films and most television programs, and reading books and magazines. Here one should remember the words of Benjamin Franklin,

Tell me, and then I forget,
Teach me, and then I remember,
Involve me, and then I learn.

Learner-centred Approach – Is It Feasible in Our Context

In ELT, over the past five decades, many changes have occurred. Learner centred approach has taken over as it brought the learners to be at the centre of the learning process. In this method, teacher helps each student connect to the subject and pays more attention to their activities rather than his own. In involving the learner, the learner-centered teaching expects the learners to be involved even at the planning stage. How feasible will it be in our context is the question to be answered.

Processes

Students have their role in the choice of the texts to be learnt. In reality student-centred learning does not keep the teachers out of the learning/teaching process. It gives equal importance to both the teacher and the learner. Both have their own contributions to the process of learning. Thus, learner-centred teaching is assumed to be a new strategy to recharge our institutional practices. It is the need of the hour to gear up teaching-learning responsibilities to the learners, instead of having them only on the shoulders of teacher. It always includes feedback from the receiver to the sender and lets the sender know the message has been received accurately. Both sender and receiver listen to each other, gather information and are willing to make changes to work together in harmony.

Attention to Examinations

One should remember that the aim of teaching is to impart knowledge among the students. But we have given up objective of teaching by focusing our attention to exams. We are narrowing down the language learning objectives by focusing on the exams. Learning centred is not a myth. The question arises, whether it is a myth because of the way the teaching methodology is used under this. This paper expresses the anguish because the learner-centred teaching has been interpreted to be the learners' exam-success-oriented teaching. This drastic reduction of the objectives of the course has resulted in a mechanical classroom transaction where neither the teacher nor the student contributes.

Kember and Gow's result suggests that,

The methods of teaching adopted, the learning tasks set, the assessment demands made, and the workload specified are strongly influenced by the orientation to teaching. In departments where the knowledge transmission orientation predominates, the curriculum design and teaching methods are more likely to have undesirable influences on the learning approaches of students. (Weimer 69)

Teachers no longer function as content expert or classroom managers. If the goal of teaching is to promote learning, then the role of the teacher is to accomplish that goal. Nowadays teaching/learner-centred approach is reduced to a success story. It doesn't focus on how much students' learn. Learner-centred approach has a new dimension. It has become exam-centered approach, a pathetic condition.

Contribute to the Learning Process

The purpose of either teacher-centred or learner-centred is to make essential contributions to the learning process. They are significantly different from those contributions most teachers currently make. In many educational institutions, they teach a subject to pass the exam. Unfortunately even some colleges reward some teachers for producing 100% results. They have a wrong notion. Learning doesn't end with exams alone. The words of Kember and Gow are significant here:

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Dr. S. Jayanthi, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D., Editor: *Teaching of English Language and Literature*
Dr. B. Kayalvizhi, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D. and S. Pradeep Kumar, M.A., M.Phil., B.Ed.
Is Learner-Centered Approach a Myth?

Meaningful approaches to learning are discouraged when lecturers believe that their role is restricted to transferring the accumulated knowledge of their discipline to the minds of their students. (Weimer 71)

Life will be discussed in classrooms. Flachhmann says

-that the oracle, the locus and ownership of knowledge, should reside in each student and our principal goal as teachers must be to help our students discover the most important and enduring answers to life's problems within themselves. Only then can they truly possess the knowledge that we are paid to teach them. (Weimer 3)

Krashen and Terrell stress the same point. They argue that the purpose of language instruction is to make learners to understand language outside the classroom. It will lead them to utilize the language in the real world as well as in the classroom for progress. The main purpose of this instruction is to interact effectively with speakers in the target language outside the classroom.

Students' Needs

Teaching should focus on student's needs. The focus on exam success is built on the wrong notion that a creditable pass is the most important 'need' for the student. But in actuality, pass in the exams is a byproduct and the main product is the achievement of language. When we focus on exams the other things to be focused upon get 'out of focus'. Clearly, the teaching should not be exam-centred but learning-centred. Its focus on teaching involves drawing upon students' life experiences, creating opportunities for them to interact and co-operate, and to develop a sense of shared interests and concerns. It makes them 'think' and develops their ability to solve problems. If we handle our students in real sense (learning), we can ensure them with effective learning.

Teachers' Dilemma

Nowadays learner-centred teaching is reduced so as to focus on the success in end-

semester examinations. The teachers are not to be blamed squarely for this situation. Some of the colleges reward staff members for producing 100% result and some others take punitive measures when the results are less than 80%. So the teachers are constantly pressurized to work in terms of examinations. Obviously, this has a negative impact on real learning process. Institutions do not focus on how much students learn in class. Their aim should be focused on learning not on examination based education. Life should also be discussed in classrooms.

To Conclude

The strength of this paper is more in the questions it poses to individual teachers than the answers it provides. In a nutshell, is it really “learner centred” when it is the teacher who decides what students need to take control? Marlin Lewis in “Using student- centered Methods with Teacher-centered ESL Students”, argues that “teacher- centered” is not always the model most appropriate for students, despite its aim.

In essence, this paper is pragmatic in transforming the concept of “learner centredness” from the Western based “learner decision-making” to a method which focuses on the objective of why we teach, i.e., “learning centredness”. The term ‘learning’ gives equal responsibility for both the learner and the teacher for learning to take place within the class room. Classrooms should neither be learner-centred nor teacher-centred, but be learning centered.

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Technology in Teaching English - What, Why and How?

V. Kokila, M.A., M.Phil.

Abstract

Technology has always been a game changer in all areas of human endeavor including the spread of education and knowledge. Right from the millenniums old invention - the woodblock printing , the half a millennia old invention of the Gutenberg press, and the new generation ICT which leverages the usage of computers and relative tech, each discovery has brought about a revolution in the dissemination of ideas , knowledge and language including English. ICT aided methods of teaching have developed rapidly over the past few decades that have improved the standards of English training. ICT has made learning interesting, motivating and more interactive to the students and it expands the knowledge available to them. It has “democratized” English language by providing the latest techniques to teachers and students across all institutions. It has also provided a flexible way of learning to persons who are unable to have a regular education. ICT has brought in online courses under new concepts such as self paced learning, virtual lectures, vlogs and blogs. Each of these concepts provides a unique way of teaching students and has a role to play in the improvement of teaching methods.

This paper discusses the “**What, Why and How**” of a few of the methods that have made their impact in the field of English education and training. These include Audio-visual recordings, CBTs, and online training methodologies like Webinars, Workshops and Seminars. The paper shall also help teachers in analyzing what method suits in reaching out to their students’ best.

Keywords: Technology, ICT, Online learning, CBTs, Webinars, Seminars

Use of the Internet

Many of the main technologies that have influenced the ways of training are based on the internet. One of the major components of the internet - the World Wide Web gives access to knowledge from across the world. This helps students gain knowledge from a huge source of material that has been built to cater to requirements right from the basics to the highly advanced mission specific training material. It also helps gain access to the guidance of native English speakers and helps develop proper pronunciation and accent. Also globally benchmarked courses developed to cater to the needs of the students improve the standard of communication and written skills to match the different and specialized requirements of employment market across the globe. Some courses are useful for testing and distance education, and some for teaching business English, spoken English for marketing, writing skills for specific tasks.

Flexi Timings

Another huge advantage provided by online technologies is the application of “*Flexi timings*” concept in education. Online tools enable the student to study at his/her own pace and timings. The learner is not locked into rigid learning timetables and schedules but has the flexibility to pace the rate of learning to suit his/her abilities and needs. On the other hand, fast learners and people with special requirements have even the option of utilizing the skills of professional trainers online for a customized one on one training schedule. Thus technology provides access to both personalized attention courses, as well as courses which are based on “*Drill and Practice*” software. Depending on one’s requirement the student/trainer can choose his own path for learning/teaching. We shall see the “**What, Why and How**” of some of the many techniques which are applicable in different degree to language learning situation.

A Few Technology Aided Teaching Tools

The What

- Wiki, blog, vlogs and any published materials like any reading material like ppt, pdf files
- CBTs and WBT’s
- Webinars and online workshops

- Customized lessons.
- Complete online courses and training packages

The What, the Why, the How and Where

Published Materials

The content published online provides a vast source of training materials for those who have the self drive and commitment to learn English. Wikis and blogs are sources of free training courses which help improve one's vocabulary and reading skills. Vlogs provide the learner with audio-visual recordings and are highly useful in improving listening and speaking skills. The student listener is trained in proper pronunciations and in getting the right accents.

CBTs and WBTs

Electronic courses (E-Courses) made available to the learners in the form of a CD are called computer-based training (CBT), which can be run on the learner's system. E-courses can also be made available through Web-based training (WBT), which utilizes the internet as a platform like a Learning Management System. The courses are self-paced, and the learner has no interaction with an instructor or fellow learners. This works very well for those adult learners who are motivated to learn, in order to learn new skills, update their resumes and attain professional excellence.

Online Broadcasts like Webinars/Workshops/Seminars

These are online courses delivered by a live instructor. They have interactive sessions at the end of the training broadcasts. They also provide support for the participants to interact with each other in real time. Each Webinar session usually lasts for 2-3 hours and is meant to be a fast track update or a discussion on a specific topic, while Workshops and Seminars are far more extended periods. They usually comprise of multiple sessions held over a few days and focus on skills development with emphasis on relevant examples. They also delve deeper into the subject being taught.

Customized One on One Lessons

These are tailor-made lessons matched to meet individual goals. The student gets more individual time with the mentor/trainer and can even customize his/her learning by focusing on areas he really needs to improve upon. Conversation is the key to effective learning of languages and the one on one lesson with a personal trainer helps achieve goals faster. The student also has greater flexibility in scheduling the learning times. These lessons really work well for people who need to learn or master specific aspects of English language like pronunciation and accents.

Complete Online Courses and Training Packages

Online courses provide the power of the classroom with the convenience of online and the flexibility in study timings of a CBT or a blog. Online courses provide a well rounded development to the students as they get the chance to interact with fellow learners from around the world. The number of courses available is also huge and the student is not restricted by geographic location in choosing his/her course of choice. They are also highly useful for working professionals who want to upgrade their profile and cannot afford to quit their jobs to obtain an extra qualification. The learner also has access to cheaper online resources and study materials prescribed in the course .Discussion forums provided by online courses also ensure that doubts of students are cleared promptly and the answers available to everyone in the course.

A comparison table of the technology aided teaching tools discussed above.

What	How	Why and where to use it
Published materials Blogs and wikis	Online/Of fline	Used in aiding students who are self driven and in improving their reading skills and vocabulary proficiency. It also helps trainers in providing extra practice and reading material to students.
Published materials Vlogs and audio recordings	Online/Of fline	Useful to aid students for self study and improving their listening and spoken skills. It helps trainers

		provide the students training in listening and speaking.
E- courses CBTs	Offline.	Highly useful to trainers for providing interactive and repetitive training to students. It also provides standardization of training to a large number of students. Trainers can use it for evaluating students and to provide customized training to individual students via the same CBT. Very useful to improve specific categories of knowledge like grammar and vocabulary.
E- courses WBTs	Online	WBT has the advantages of CBT along with a few more. Courseware can be updated regularly when the contents are stored online. Students are also not bound to single locations when accessing the material as web based content can be accessed from anywhere. Very useful to improve specific categories of knowledge like grammar and vocabulary.
Online broadcasts like Webinars, Seminars	Online	Give access to good learning materials to students. Trainers can use it when reaching out to large class spread across various locations. Cost effective when utilized to give short term training and knowledge updates. Useful in gaining in depth knowledge on a narrow or specific category of language like Business communications.
Customized one on one lessons	Online	Give access to good learning materials to students. Students gain individual attention from native language trainers. A student strength and weakness can be analyzed more effectively by the trainer and the training can be more focused on the student's needs. Helps gain confidence in speaking skills with the more personal attention provided. These are generally

		costlier than regular course.
Online courses	Online	Highly useful for time constrained students who desire to upgrade their resume with a new course. They are also mostly cheaper to the students. The negative side being that one needs to be highly motivated and self driven to complete a full course online

Conclusion

The tools and technologies discussed above provide new and exciting methodologies to both the trainer and the learner in the dissemination and acquiring of knowledge. Though highly effective, these technologies are but still tools and depend upon the trainer to make the student excel. It's the trainer who has to provide guidance in most of the cases, either directly in form of taking online classes or from the background in the form of preparing course ware and training material in CBTs. Trainers can use digital resources in a variety of ways to support teaching and learning. Technology can also increase educational productivity by accelerating the rate of learning; reducing costs associated with instructional materials or program delivery, providing real-time feedback on student performance and thereby better utilizing teaching time.

Technology has democratized the learning process for students by making the availability of knowledge building global resources cheap and in many cases even free. One of the big changes caused by tech is the demographic shift in language learners. In India learning English has long been associated with the elite, but now people from less privileged backgrounds are finding affordable ways to learn. Also technology has removed the barriers in learning English to many who are restricted by time or location. The widespread growth in the usage of smart phones has made net accessibility easier and cheaper to even students residing in far flung villages. This has led to decreasing access costs and increased access to the latest training videos and online courses. Overall technology has revolutionized English teaching and provides excellent tools for imparting knowledge to trainers. In today's competitive world, taking online courses and online materials help the students to cope with their work environment as well as the needs of the society.

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Technology in Teaching English - What, Why and How?

African American Literature: Discovering Language and Culture

Lohith K. N., M.A., B.Ed.

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Abstract

The highlight of this paper is to focus on the significance of African American Literature, Language and Culture. Language and Culture are understood by the Cultural interaction rather than being misunderstood by the language projections in African American Literature. Language in African American Literature plays a crucial role in influencing the readers, contrary to the weakness of one's Native language. Native language confines social relations to remove limited access to African American literature. English being a global *lingua franca* connects African American Literature slightly to some extent. Language in the cultural context features a new phenomenon in playing a major part in the understanding of African American Literature.

Keywords: English language, African American Literature, Language and Culture, Language use.

Language of African American Literature

Language brings about the works and contributions by limiting the main or major parts of culture in African American literature. African_American_literature is blooming, rather than being withered in terms of growth. Growth is understood more precisely, rather than being misunderstood by the thoughts and works of African American writers. African American writers highlight the use of English in African American literature by playing down the weakness of one's Native language. Native language hinders by its affiliation, rather than being separated from African American literature, due to the differences in language and culture. It is perceived more precisely, than being missed by English because of its use. English being a global *lingua franca* connects easily, rather than being disconnected of African American Literature, compared to Native languages. Native languages need to be

improvised slightly to some extent due to their lack of expansion. It is in fact the opposite to having any theoretical impact on culture through language as related to African American literature. (ed by Henry Louis Gates Jr 1984: 28)

African American Culture Through African American Literature

African American literature brings out the African American culture rooted deeply among the African Americans through their Language. Language highlights the historical identity of African American culture, by playing down African American literature. Literature makes way for language expressions as a more likely alternative to suppressions, irrespective of culture. Culture is distinctive from one's dissimilar situation compared to heterogeneous perspectives. (Henry Louis Gates Jr 1993: 125)

The contributions of African Americans to the culture of America are highly appreciable, not being undervalued as a part of or definitely different from American culture. Its entity is derived accidentally, having been misjudged from the language use and expressions in African American Literature. African American Literature projects English Language and its impact on Culture as different from Native language because of it being a lingua franca. Language teaching helps to understand rather than being misunderstood African American literature through cultural interactions. (Henry Louis Gates Jr 2014: 3)

Theoretical Framework

African American literature draws upon native languages as a more likely alternative to the upsetting of various literary traditions and cultural practices. It is witnessed in the production on the contrary to the withholding of novels, plays, poems, drama etc. in the literary field that correspond contradictorily to cultural practices in art works, namely, painting, photography, drawing, sculpture, video, film making, architecture, printmaking, design, crafts and others. It helps to perceive steadily than being ignored a cultural identity through language. Language projects accurately the African American culture, irrespective of Native language or one's own language. Language highlights African American culture by bringing out perspectives such as values, beliefs, customs, traditions and so on. Culture has survived by interacting agreeably without being interspersed with foreign cultures. Cultures had blended together over time producing a deep impact upon African American identity,

within the society. It became significant, to some extent being an important part of the African American ancestral culture.

Effective Synthesis

The Culture of African American communities continued to prosper with definite traditions and essential creations in literary and cultural practices. Practices and contributions in various fields such as music, art, and literature became part of the American culture as well as world culture. One can analyze subsequently being synthesised in the works of writers namely Henry Louis Gates Jr, Toni Morrison, Langston Hughes, Martin Luther King Jr, Amiri Baraka, and others. It paved the way for African American culture having a changing effect on many components of current American culture. It was from the eternity of oral traditions, Harlem Renaissance, African American Cultural Movement, Music, Contemporary Culture, and the Arts, namely dance, African American art, literature museums, language, fashion and aesthetics such as attire, hair, body image, religion, Christianity and other religions, irreligious beliefs, life events, cuisine, names, family, African American family structure, politics and social issues and so on.

Results and Discussion

African American literature analysis is done by researching historical aspects, scanning of language and cultural subjects. It is judged consistently in the Native and Non-Native contexts in the formation of various subject matters. It enables productive findings through evaluation in terms of various theories. Theories evolved incompatibly being unfolded out of rural and urban southern areas especially in African American communities and neighbourhoods. It viewed African American practices emerging, consistently residing within the African American culture. African American culture closely resembled those used within European American culture. It became part of the American culture, to a large extent through the dramatic shift that took place in America. It inspired deeper cultural significance for several African American generations. It attracts curiously, different people through African American literature. African American literature is understood more precisely through language depicting the cultural context. Cultural context and change is reasoned justifiably as an upshot of using a language different to one's own Native language. Native language limits to some extent the interaction with the foreign cultures in a social manner,

due to the prevailing differences. It is gathered in African American literature by the use of the English language in comparison to Native language, as it is a lingua franca. It is influenced by other languages making rather than being unmade it over the course of time by development. It is in use in international discourse and the lingua franca in many regions of the world, as well as in various subjects such as law, navigation, science and technology etc. English is one of the most widely used languages in the world. It has undergone gradual changes in the course of interaction with other languages, regions, literatures and others around the world making it easy to communicate with one another.

It is growing healthily from country to country for international communication. It helps to connect hastily than being disconnected people of various communities across the world to know cultures through literature. African American Literature makes way to the perception of African American life and their ancestral culture in America with the use of English language unlike the Native tongue of one's ethnicity.

Conclusion

African American literature deals with discovering language and culture, producing accurately conceding literary critics. Literary critics appreciate the configuration of diverse literature, composed of various genres. It leads to debates bitterly being argued upon aesthetics and cultural theories in literary studies. It makes way to the expressing of initial and important questions about African American literature, culture and language. It tries to search different theories about the connection between African American literature, language and culture. It might have a clear vision through the lenses of the literature. It is seen fairly through literature and language, about cultures having artistic or intellectual values. It differs from ordinary usage from contemporary definitions as it is difficult to agree upon its origins. Origins over the time, define generally confusing literature in terms of cultural understanding through language use, irrespective of English and Native language. It makes way for its subject analysis in terms of development, genre and popularity. It is value judged by considering contrast to ignoring the writings in various forms and subjects such as short fiction and poetry, prose, drama, history, essay, novel, philosophical, historical, journalistic and scientific writings of African American writers. African American literature deals carefully with literature of African Americans written by American writers. American writers

wrote about late history to post-independence by linking broader traditions of literary tradition. It is a unique rather than being universal American characteristic in the production of a tradition. A tradition of a unique, more truly common American style in contemporary American literature in terms of distinctive style, it portrays the beauty of reality. Is it for a futuristic portrait of America, this literature needs being assuredly essential to be unquestionable? American literature written by ethnic minorities especially African Americans marks its rise as a new ethnic literature for academic studies.

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Strategies in Teaching English Grammar

Dr. M. Meenadevi

Introduction

Grammar is a description of the structure of a language and the way in which linguistic units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in the language. It takes into account the meanings and functions the sentences have in the overall system of the language. As an important element of language and as the essential part of linguistic competence, grammar has a central role in making up learner's language skills and their communicative competence.

Place of Grammar in Instruction

The debate over the place of grammar in instruction has played a dominant role in the history of language teaching. The debate revolved around the question of whether grammar instruction helped learners gain proficiency in a second language. According to Paul Verghese,

A knowledge of grammar is perhaps more important to a second language learner than to a native speaker. This is because in the process of acquiring the language the native speaker has intuitively internalized the grammar of the language whereas the second language learner has to make a conscious effort to master those aspects of the language which account for grammaticality. It is, therefore, necessary for us, to whom English is a second language, to learn the grammar of the language. (41)

Teaching English grammar should result in the students being able to use the language to express themselves. 'Use the language' refers not only to the students' using the language in oral discourse where creativity and anomalies are accepted, as long as the language is intelligible, that is, understood by the listener, but also to their using the language in written form where ideas are more rule-governed than freely expressed.

Challenges and Problems

One of the challenges before the teachers of grammar is the selection of suitable examples to teach grammatical rules and forms. In the old traditional grammar, examples used for illustrating rules are of alien context for the Indian students. For example, a few examples in Wren and Martin's *High School English Grammar and Composition* in page numbers 1 and 2 have the literary flavor but do not have any bearing to the native environment of the Indian students.

Eg. Hampty Dumpty sat on a wall.

Tubal Cain was a man of might.

Ascham taught Latin to Queen Elizabeth.

So the challenges before a teacher of grammar is to make the teaching meaningful and relevant to the needs of the learners by contextualizing it using examples derived from the socio-cultural situations of the learners. An important part of grammar instruction is to provide examples but the examples should be accurate and appropriate. But the examples should focus on a particular theme or topic so that students have more contact with specific information and vocabulary.

Another challenge before the teacher is to decide the amount of rules to be taught to the learners. A teacher should select those grammatical rules and patterns which have greater communicative potential. Overtaxing of learners with rules which do not exist or do not facilitate the learning of a language has a retarding effect on the learners. For example, only two forms of nouns 'John' and 'John's' exist in the case system but the old grammar unnecessarily teach five cases, namely, i) Nominative ii) Vocative iii) Genitive iv) Accusative and v) Dative to the students, as mentioned in Nesfield's *English Grammar, Composition and Usage*. Therefore it depends on the teachers to make a selection of only those grammatical items and patterns which have wide communicative range and could cover a number of speech situations.

One of the problems generally faced by most of the teachers of English is the poor standard of the students. Students are even ignorant of the basic rules and structural patterns which they are supposed to have learnt at the lower level. If a teacher directly starts his teaching at the graduate level without trying to know the level of the students, his efforts will not bear any fruits as he will not be able to raise a structure over a feeble foundation. A teacher should begin from the simple grammatical terms and proceed towards the complex ones. Thus by carefully selecting the frequently recurring grammatical items and by grading them as per the background of the learners, a teacher should provide constant practice to the students in creating and using sentences based on the grammatical forms and structures in various day to day situations of their lives.

Identification of Core Rules and Structures

The teacher should identify the core rules and structures of English grammar and to provide practice in their use. The rules which have greater frequency in use should be taught first and emphasized by a teacher and the rules of peripheral nature which represent the exceptions, irregularities and anomalies should be taught at a later stage, when a learner acquires competency in the use of core rules and structures. One of the dilemmas of a teacher is to decide whether the aim of teaching grammar is to teach rules or to help the learners in learning a language. The aim of teaching grammar is to provide necessary exposure to the learners in the learning of a language. Teaching of only rules without providing sufficient practice in their use

will not contribute to the learning of a second language. Rules should be taught simultaneously with their uses. Both grammatical rules and their situational uses should be taught side by side, and then only communicative competence which is the ultimate aim of teaching can be achieved.

Grammar-based Teaching

The teachers, through grammar, can help students use the language correctly and appropriately. The teacher should help the students understand the different tenses and how to use them. In English, there are so many present, past, future, past participle, present progressive etc., and also gerunds which can act as nouns. Drawing out a timeline and giving examples with specific times work the best in teaching tenses. The teacher should constantly remind the students to use proper verb conjugation and make a list of all the exceptions (e.g. everyone/someone/everybody/somebody ‘is’, not ‘are’). English prepositions are a problem. Too many prepositions should not be taught at one time. The teacher should help the student to put the prepositions in context (in a situation where the use is natural). Using prepositions can also be very difficult for ESL students, so it is best to have a list of what each preposition is usually used for and practise fill in the blank ones (e.g. in July, at 8.00 a.m., on 6th September, etc.).

Teaching Grammar and Topics Integrated

Grammar-based teaching is the teaching of a language built-around the linguistic components of the language (e.g. past tense, gerund etc.,) English treated this way is put as a subject, rather than a skill. It is taught and learned as parts, not as a whole. So the problem associated with grammar-based teaching is that language items taught are given in isolation, not in context.

So if topic-based teaching is integrated into grammar teaching, it will be of much use. Topic-based teaching is teaching built around topics. What is taught is topics, not linguistic components. While the teacher teaches a linguistic form, he has to think of a good topic (eg. childhood experiences, values, family etc.,) to serve as the context in which the form is going to be used. This method covers both grammar and topic integrated with each other.

While teaching past tense, ask the students to describe the past events by using past forms such as “Past ‘be’ forms: was, were, past modals: could, would etc., past verbs: regular-ed forms: walked, played etc., irregular forms: sang, wrote etc.,”

Eg.

When I was 5, I could sing very well.

I would sing a lot at school.

I would sing in the bathroom too.

I used to participate in singing contests and I won most of them.

My parents were very happy.

This strategy is useful when both grammar and topics are equally important to master.

Diagramming Sentences

In the past, memorization-based techniques that relied on repetition slowly gave way to more creative methods. One of the older forms of teaching grammar, diagramming sentences, involves visually mapping the structures of and relationships between different aspects of a sentence.

Learning through Writing

The method of learning through writing encourages the students to explore language through creative writing and reading, picking up correct grammar usage along the way. An emphasis is placed upon language acquisition over language learning, as learning grammar by memorization only does not work well and that students are better able to recognize and understand grammatical rules when lessons are more interactive (i.e., they have to apply these rules in their own writing). Repeated practice is also important and easily achieved through creative or personal writing exercises.

Inductive Teaching

The inductive method of teaching grammar involves presenting several examples that illustrate a specific concept and expecting students to notice how the concept works from these examples. No explanation of the concept is given beforehand and the expectation is that students learn to recognize the rules of grammar in a more natural way during their own reading and writing. Discovering grammar and visualizing how ruleswork in a sentence allow for easier retention of the concept than if the students were given an explanation that was disconnected from examples of the concept. The main goal of the inductive teaching method is the retention of grammar concepts, with teachers using techniques that are known to make an impression on students' contextual memory.

Deductive Teaching

The deductive method of teaching grammar is an approach that focuses on instruction before practice. A teacher gives students an in-depth explanation of a grammatical concept before they encounter the same grammatical concept in their own writing. After the lesson, students are expected to practise what they have just been shown in a mechanical way through worksheets and exercises. But the method has its shortcomings, as it is more of teacher-centred approach.

Interactive Teaching

Another method of teaching grammar is to incorporate interactivity into lessons-using games to teach grammar not only engages students but also helps them to remember what they have learned. This method allows the teachers to prepare their lessons to the different learning

styles of students. For instance, each student can be given a large flash card with a word on it and the students must physically arrange themselves into a proper sentence. Other games include word puzzles, picture stories, expanding texts etc.,

The Language Experience Approach

The language experience approach, as pointed out by Larsen Freeman, is a technique in which the learners dictate to the instructor, in English, something they would like to be able to say. The instructor then writes students' messages in correct, grammatical English and gives them to the students. For example, a student might say or write, "I late the work for the bad traffic". The teacher would write the sentence as "I was late for work because the traffic was bad". With the corrected text in hand, students have the opportunity to compare what they said or wrote with the correct form of the messages they wished to convey, ask questions and learn. In English, word order is more important. Very often ESL students produce sentences that sound strange to the native's ear because the order of the words in the sentences is wrong. Teachers should help the students to rearrange words to form meaningful sentences and the teachers should also encourage students to speak and write about their daily events freely.

Structure-based Task

Structure-based task is a strategy in which the students are asked to compare two cities. A pair of students should tell each other about the features of familiar cities and record the information on task sheets. They are then instructed to write sentences comparing the cities according to the features they had described (e.g. Chennai is bigger than Madurai). Students are not explicitly taught comparative structures at any point during the task, but they have to use comparative forms to complete it. Afterwards, the teacher should teach a lesson on comparatives and students should rewrite incorrect sentences, do more exercises and then read stories that contain frequent instances of the comparative form.

Communicative Competence Model

In the communicative competence model, the purpose of learning grammar is to learn the language of which grammar is a part. The teachers therefore teach grammar forms and structures in relation to meaning and use for the specific communication tasks that students need to complete. For example, while teaching the past tense in English, the teachers could distribute a short narrative about recent experiences or events and teach the regular-'ed' form, using verbs that occur in the text as examples. Then the teachers should teach the pronunciation and doubling rules if those forms occur in the texts and then teach the irregular verbs that occur in the texts.

The Discovery Technique

The discovery technique is a method of teaching in which students are not directly presented with a target-grammatical structure or rule. Instead students are given context in which the target structure is used. Students then discover the grammatical rule or figure out the pattern

for themselves. The teacher's role is to guide students to their own discovery, not to give students the information on the grammar rule. The discovery technique may seem a lot like task based learning, but the task based learning puts a communication exercise before students and does not stress the grammar necessary for this task. The discovery technique, on the other hand, focuses on a particular grammar point, and the goal of the lesson is to learn that point and to elicit a grammar rule from the students and not complete a communication task. With the discovery technique, there is a greater emphasis on implicit knowledge, which gives students language in context and then challenges them to figure out the grammar on their own. Students tend to remember the rules of grammar better because they have played a part in discovering them.

Summation

To be able to perform both in oral and written discourse equally well, the teacher should devise ways to enable the students to be able to do that at the classroom. There are so many intricacies, obscure rules and exceptions that different generations of teachers have used various approaches to teaching grammar. Over the years, many methods have been developed for teaching grammar and have been built upon, abandoned or combined, but all with the same goal in mind-teaching students how to communicate effectively and understand how to use English language. Sometimes teachers are attracted towards new approaches and without examining their merits and demerits, they are excited to use them due to their novelty and difference from the earlier ones. The challenge before a teacher is to choose the right approach or to integrate the concepts of different approaches in teaching grammar and the language. Only when learning of rules of grammar is extended to their spontaneous use in different socio-cultural contexts, the learners will be considered to achieve communicative competence which is the main aim of language teaching.

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The Teaching of English in India: Changing Scenario

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Abstract

English education was in fact introduced in India in the middle of the nineteenth century. Three universities were established, one each at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in 1857. The teaching of English in these Universities however, followed a set pattern. The then University of London provided the model. However, the traditional approach to the teaching of English came in for severe criticism later.

At this juncture, in 1917 the Calcutta University Commission took note of the rapid decline in academic standards in all subjects, especially English. The commission recommended the adoption of scientific methods of teaching English. The commission also stressed the need for the rationalization of the English curricula, text books and examinations. In fact, the teaching of English now aims at developing communication skills.

The education commission had pointed out, the teaching of English as a skill and as literature should be clearly differentiated. Examination procedures, instead of improving communication, they just improve the memorizing power of the students. The UGC Study group had also highlighted the need to replace the existing English courses by a course in language skills. The focus of English teaching at the undergraduate level now, therefore, should be on the teaching of language rather than on literature. The importance had been often given to the study of literature. This needs to be corrected. The poetry selections used to be dominated by Shakespeare, Blake, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Eliot and others.

Keywords: English Teaching, Communicative Skills, Language Skills, Puppetry, Teaching Aids, Creativity in Teaching Language.

Shift from Traditional Chalk and Talk Method

There is a greater shift from traditional chalk and talk method to the multimedia class room teaching. In recent years such acronyms as EGP (English for General Purpose), EIP (English for Instrumental Purpose), EST (English for Science and Technology), EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and EOP (English for Official Purposes) and so on have gained considerable importance.

Communication as Best Means to Teach and Learn

Language is in fact, best learned when it is taught as a means of communication. We find it advisable at any rate to think of reorganizing our teaching programmes in such a way that the oral and written communicational aspects of English get more prominence. Hence to cater of the needs of the learner, various teaching aids are introduced in the class to replace the chalk and talk method. The use of media and technology bring about motivation and the teaching of English becomes more successful and relevant.

History of English Language in India

Although the history of English language in India can be traced back to the 31st of December, 1600, the day on which Queen Elizabeth I of England granted a charter to the “Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading with the East India Company”, English education was only introduced in India in the middle of the nineteenth century. If we confine our discussion to universities alone, three universities were established, one each at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, in 1857. The Senate of the University of Calcutta adopted a resolution in 1861 that all examinations should be conducted in English. Needless to say, this compelled all schools to introduce English as a very early stage. Thus over a hundred years ago, that is, when the British introduced the modern system of English education in India, the study of English became an important part of the liberal and humanistic discipline. Sir. Henry Maine, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta in the 1860’s, noticed the ambition of all its graduates to write the finest English possible. Sir. Henry was one of the rare Englishmen of old days who recognized that the English of some of us was very good, and he raised his voice against the chorus of jeers against Babu English from the majority of his countrymen in India. The teaching of English in the Indian universities, however, followed a set pattern. For all we know, the then University of London provided the model. However,

the traditional approach to the teaching of English has come in for severe criticism in later years.

Calcutta University Commission and Other Developments

The focus of our ELT programmes and the role of English in our educational system have been shifting over the years. In 1917, the Calcutta University Commission took note of the rapid decline in academic standards in all subjects, especially English and stressed the importance of the study of English as part of general education in India. The commission considered English indispensable to higher education in India at that time. According to the commission some of the causes of the deterioration in the quality of the teaching of English were lack of contact with teachers who spoke English as their mother tongue, unsuitability of the lecture method and a lack of systematic instruction in spoken English.

The commission recommended a progressive reduction in the use of English as a medium of instruction all the way up to the matriculation stage and its retention as the medium above that stage, the adoption of scientific method of teaching English, the introduction of more highly trained teachers and more difficult tests of a practical knowledge of English. Interestingly, the commission found that the students displayed a disquieting preference for literary studies. During the 30s the regional languages were made the medium of instruction which resulted in an alarming deterioration in the standards of the teaching and learning of English.

Set Back After Independence

The teaching of English in our colleges and universities received a major set-back after independence because of the prevailing psychological attitude. The regionalization of the medium of instruction at the university level resulted in an inadequate exposure to the English language. The examination system in use was largely unrealistic and the text books rather outdated. All this led to a sharp decline; the people concerned have taken note of the growing inadequacy of the teaching of English in colleges.

Once again, a number of commissions and study groups stressed the need for the rationalization of the English curricula, text books and examinations. The 'service' nature of

the teaching of English has been largely realized and also the need for the diversification of courses to suit the diverse requirements of different categories of students of science, commerce and humanities and consequently of the suitable changes in teaching techniques. In fact, the teaching of English now aims at developing the communication skills.

Education Commission Thoughts

As the Education Commission had pointed out about two decades ago, the teaching of English as a skill and as literature should be clearly differentiated. The scales had often been heavily tilted in favour of literature. This needed to be corrected. The poetry selections were still dominated by Shakespeare, Blake, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Eliot and others. Shakespeare's plays are even now prescribed in some form or the other. A researcher has noted that even in the short Shakespeare edition of Julius Caesar, there are 154 archaic words and 400 sentences containing old-fashioned elements of structure and vocabulary. One wonders how the book gets prescribed for students who do not even know the rudiments of modern English usage, who are yet to be taught how to make a subject and the verb agree. Examination procedures are often so clumsy and antiquated that a student can pass by memorizing summaries of passages dictated by his teacher without reading the texts prescribed or trying to learn a word of English. The course often degenerates into a blind alley and encourages a memorizing and point-grabbing mind and not a thinking mind. The UGC Study Group had also highlighted the need to replace the existing English courses by a course in language skills. The Group had recommended that at the degree level, teaching should equip students with communication skills necessary to cope with the predictable situations one is likely to encounter.

Focus of English Teaching at the Undergraduate Level

The focus of English teaching at the undergraduate level now, therefore, should be on the teaching of language rather than on literature. "The shift in emphasis from literature to language is a happy shift indeed and a sensible shift too. It is not elegance and grace and style we crave for today, it is rather a working knowledge of the language, achievement of an acceptable standard, both in comprehension and expression" (Mathur, 1982). It is, however, uncharitable to analogize the learning of English in India today with the learning of Latin in the medieval era, when the study of literature became vestigial in the curriculum and,

allegedly, a narrow careerism became a motivation. Although this task can be performed by a communication course as well, the literary texts are now being increasingly employed in the context of language teaching keeping the 'language scheme in the foreground'. "Language through literature" course prepares at the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad, exposes the students to the living language, as it exists today. The approach of the course designers is not historical or rhetorical; they do not wish to introduce the students to literary landmarks. Both language controls and cultural controls have been exercised. Several courses designed after 1975 are generally functional, communicational or notional and have been prepared bearing in mind the fact that English is now chiefly a 'service' subject and a library language. There is now a greater concern for the learner's need. There is a greater shift from traditional chalk and talk method to the multimedia class room teaching.

Use of Media and Technology

English by Radio and TV courses now in use have not been necessarily based on textbooks. In fact, they attempt to teach English through dramatized stories, anecdotes, conversations and the like. The basic objective of these media courses is to expose the learners to acceptable models of English being used in different situations. The programmes have been popular and could be considered potentially effective. Language laboratories have been found useful for teaching a language, but even now there are very few laboratories in the country. A language laboratory is not meant to teach merely the phonetics and the repetitive drills: it can be effectively used for listening comprehension, reading, testing and evaluation. Wiring three rooms as an extension of the laboratory and broadcasting lessons to students sitting in all three rooms simultaneously was an experiment initiated at the Wilson College, Bombay, with a view to solving the problem of large classes. It was an experiment worth pursuing. There is a feeling, however, that the programmed materials or those used for mass media may sometimes reduce the teacher to secondary importance or the teacher becomes just a 'manager' or 'facilitator' of learning. The computer also opens up possibilities for language teaching through computer-assisted ELT which is still in its infancy. The vast potential still remains largely untapped. To cite an example, the programming in the computer presents a series of interconnected problems to the student. As the student answers each question or solves each problem in the series, the answers are compared against a standard list for acceptability. If the student is correct, he automatically moves to the next

problem and consequently, gradually increases his knowledge of some specific central issue. If he commits an error, the programme directs him to re-do the same ground or to an auxiliary remedial series of problems. It is interesting to note that student is rewarded immediately, or corrected and allowed to continue at his pace.

ESP (English for Specific Purposes)

In recent years such acronyms as EGP (English for General Purposes), ESP (English for Specific Purposes), ELP (English for Instrumental Purposes), EST (English for Science and Technology), EAP (English for Academic Purposes), and EOP (English for Official Purposes) etc. have gained considerable currency. Robinson (1980) defines ESP in terms of what might broadly be seen as language situations and functions in various combinations. The attempt is to teach a certain group of people, for example, the scientists, just what they need to the exclusion of everything else. As a result, the concept of deciding the specific needs and teaching only that much was developed. It may be profitable to being up-to-date with Error Analysis with a view to specifying the students' needs. The UGC Study Group had also emphasized that one general course of English for everybody would hardly serve the purpose and that specific courses for specific needs should be offered. The report of the Education Commission (1964-66) claims that where such courses have been tried, they have proved helpful in enabling the students to use English as a library language in their own fields far more efficiently than a General English course would have done. Of late, intense interest has been taken in ESP and new courses and materials in this area have been produced.

Simple, Capital-Saving Technology

In the Third World it is imperative to use new aids of teaching in the classroom. The teaching of foreign languages in particular, should not be a 'Chalk and Talk' profession only. But at the same time, we cannot afford to be extravagant in this direction. Highly mechanized and electronically operated teaching aids will be difficult to manage particularly in rural areas. Instead of holding the attention of the students of these areas, such aids will perhaps make them nervous and unduly conscious. Expensive and sophisticated audiovisual aids, therefore, are no answer to our problem. They are suitable for utilization only on a limited scale and in selected places. How many full-fledged modern language laboratories have come

up in India? Not many, perhaps, and even many teachers are not aware of the existence and use of such laboratories.

The charts have been tested and found valuable in different parts of the world. But we in this country cannot make a free choice due to our limitations. Bearing in mind our characteristic requirements and genius we can however recommend puppetry and sand table for wide use throughout the country besides blackboards, wall pictures, maps, plans, posters, charts, models and so on. Large pictures can be seen by the whole class by direct display and no projection is required. 'Perforated' maps can be used for drawing. In a chart or picture the visual elements should be given precedence over words in conveying information. A complex story must be told in a series of pictures or charts.

Puppetry

Puppetry is of special benefit to shy and nervous children and also gives the feeling of involvement and participation to the entire class. These shows give a sense of relief from the tension of classroom teaching and add variety to the lesson. The use of puppetry as a teaching aid will also save time, as time spent in going to the blackboard etc. is saved. Puppets are convenient teaching aids also because they are easy, cheap and fascinating to prepare and can be taken anywhere and a show set up at a moment's notice. They can be made for a fraction of the cost of a tape recorder or overhead projector. It has been suggested that a spare-time puppet club can be established to fulfil the need of the schools for recreation outside the class hours. Vocabulary tests arranged through puppetry will become interesting guessing games. Very useful counting games can also be arranged. Glove puppets or dolls can be used as talking partners in listening sessions.

We can make various types of puppets according to the requirements of the situation. Glove puppets with or without legs, papiermache puppets, rod puppets, wooden puppets, articulated or non-articulated shadow puppets, the marionette with or without aeroplane control, tube puppets, padded cardboard puppets and simple wooden puppets are some of the more widely used puppets. The puppet should be dressed with soft materials before it is strung. A shadow puppet screen may be made from an old sheet. Though a theatre is not essential, a very simple and cheap, portable and multipurpose theatre has been designed and

developed for such classroom shows. Puppetry has been specially recommended for teaching immigrant children, handicapped children and also adolescents.

Application of Aids - A Challenge to the Teacher

Audio-visual teaching aids bring about motivation and the teaching of English becomes more successful and more relevant. The importance of the use of some cheap supporting materials in classrooms in India, therefore, cannot be overemphasized. The international conference on the teaching of English literature held at King's college, Cambridge, in 1962 had also noted that chief obstacles in underdeveloped areas against applying audio-visual aids to the teaching of English are lack of funds, lack of facilities, and lack of technical resources, that the teacher must improvise aids from whatever meagre resources may be near at hand. The use of audio-visual aids must be limited by the economic resources of the country, and expenditure involved must always be taken into consideration. With this end in view, the present writer has recommended here some comparatively inexpensive and less complicated materials for wide use in this country. We can as well devise a number of other aids of like nature. It must be borne in mind that the application of these aids is not all that simple and the whole business is actually a clear challenge to the teacher. Sometimes the teacher may find the use of these techniques a little taxing. Of course, the teacher has to spend much time in gaining competence in the use of these materials. Nevertheless, it must be realized that they will ultimately prove beneficial to the teaching profession. If we seriously wish to improve the standards of language teaching in our country, efforts must be made in right earnest to spread their use. The teacher should see to it, however, that he does not over-use these aids. By giving extraordinary prominence to them the teacher might relegate the objects to a position of secondary significance.

Conclusion

It should be borne in mind, however, that many teachers just cannot imagine teaching a language without a textbook. They may feel a little awkward and out of place if the book is taken away from them. Also, we are definitely in a fool's paradise if we think that all teachers, irrespective of their equipment, can keep creating 'communication' situations for a number of days. It should be remembered, therefore, that for the success of English through communication or English without textbook approach, resourceful and imaginative teachers

with command over the language, are required. We find it advisable, at any rate, to think of reorganizing our teaching programmes in such a way that the oral and written communicational aspects of English get more prominence. Language is, in fact, best learnt when it is taught as a means of communication. It should be realized that the study of English is primarily the study of the process of how to communicate something to somebody with the maximum of clarity and effect that is best suited to a particular situation. It is human psychology to take interest in things socially desirable and immediately useful.

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The Role of the Teacher in Multi-Cultural Class Room

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Abstract

English language teaching explores significant methods and innovative techniques in the entire complex world. Culturally enriched English teaching is familiar in recent days; particularly in the Multi-Cultural classrooms. The Language teacher acts as a facilitator, not as an instructor in these classrooms. These classrooms are popular for learner-centric teaching. Educational pedagogy varies in these multi-cultural classrooms. Culture must not be a barrier in this learning process. The traditional classroom does not consist of innovative and technological teaching aids. Conventional practices and methods have been followed in our formal education until the last decade. Due to the emergence of Westernization Concept, new technological revolution entered into our academic policies for empowering and escalating the spirit of the learners globally.

In the students' universal competency enrichment, the role of the teacher is transformed from instructor into facilitator. According to the ancient system of education, it was more sufficient to be an instructor for any mentor. But now, in this diverged cultural setup, the expectation of the learners should be satisfied by the teachers in all the dimensions.

This paper purports to analyze the modern teaching – learning process with the agglomeration of culture.

Keywords: Multi-Culturalism, Westernization, Cultural agglomeration, Universal Competency, Multi-cultural Classrooms

Transformative Curriculum for Our Multicultural Society

One of the great challenges faced by the faculty is to create a transformative curriculum, which must be reflective of both our multicultural society and individual differences among the citizens. The students must be trained to participate effectively in a democratic and pluralistic society. So, the pedagogical challenge of individualism and diversity within the classroom are the complicated tasks for the teacher.

Every Classroom is a Cultural Community

Every classroom is a cultural community, reflective of the disciplines and perspectives studied for the authors, the students and the professor. Successful learning requires an intercultural approach, where students are responsible for listening to understand both the perspective of others. Students will come to understand that learning is about the generation, mutual reflection of ideas and concepts. This is most effectively done in a collaborative and non-competitive environment.

Needed: Attention to Variety of Learning Styles

One effective approach to this challenge is to attend the variety of learning styles in the classroom. Understanding multiple learning styles allows one to focus on individual student's own learning style. There will be many sub-groups within a classroom community. The entire class room will be considered as a learning community.

Even in the most transformed classes, faculty members are unaware of the variety of pedagogies, which can produce enhanced learning for students. This will facilitate growth in intellectual complexity and capacity.

Four Steps Model of Learning

According to the research analysis of David Kolb, we receive four steps model of learning and also a movement through four phases: 1) Concrete experience, 2) Reflective observation 3) Abstract conceptualization and 4) Active experimentation.

The teacher is in the position to focus on both the ‘Dominant and the minority culture’ students of the classroom. The students can take a ‘learning styles inventory’ and study their own individual results as well as a class summary that indicates all the members of the learning community in this method of teaching.

Students may also learn that there are patterns of values, speech, preferences and behaviors associated with the different cultures. The students will also learn that there will be many differences within cultural groups, since there are different cultures, cultural pattern and behaviors. This will help the students to break down the cultural stereotypes in the society as a whole.

Each Individual Has Unique Learning Pattern

After utilizing all these methods and techniques students may learn that they each will have a unique learning pattern with respect to the realization of their own ‘multiple subjectivities’. It will help them to understand the multiple and interlocking identities in the people and groups around them. Thus, the classroom becomes a living laboratory for negotiating the individual and group differences of the classroom.

We cannot expect that the negotiations are easy, but the work to listen and learn across both the similarities and differences that can only produce better and more effective learning for all the students in the pluralistic world.

Catering to the Needs of Diversity in Classroom

The students in the classroom have been multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-generational. So, the classroom is always a challenge for the teachers, due to the diversity of children and their approaches, new situations etc. Teachers should be well prepared to face all

the challenges they will meet in the working place. For every stakeholder, the teacher's role is the most responsive one by nature of their work and responsibilities.

The teacher as a facilitator in the multicultural education system brings the philosophical concept which is built on the ideals of freedom, justice, equality, equity and human dignity. This type of education challenges all forms of discrimination in schools and society through the promotion of democratic principles of social justice.

School-wide Approach

Multicultural education is most successful when implemented as a school wide approach with reconstruction of not only curriculum, but also organizational and institutional policy. Multicultural education requires a culturally competent and diverse teacher. So the educators must be aware of the embracing of diverse beliefs, perspectives and experiences. Thus, it is important for the teacher to be an optimistic role model for the pluralistic student community, by using appropriate language and behaviour.

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**Updating and Sharing Through UGC –
User Generated Content, a Modern Trendy Alternative Perspective
in Teaching of English Language and Literature**

Prasanth Arokia Samy

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Abstract

Internet has become a new blackboard for this generation and it is a bitter truth in the 21st century. Keeping that in mind, this research paper tries to explore an alternative perspective in teaching of English language and literature based on the expectations and possibilities in teaching for modern people in a globalized world with UGC-user generated content. UGC most often appears as a supplement to the online platform, such as social media websites. It aims to scrutinize the kinds of language and literature teaching and learning activities taking in social networks such as **Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Wiki, Whatsapp** and so on. It also tries to examine the individual level of development on Listening, speaking, reading and writing skills on English through social media activities. There are numerous conventional theories for decades on teaching English language and literature; even then, we find it difficult to satisfy every learner. Change is inevitable, as such; teaching needs a change or at least modification based on modern trends. Therefore, this paper tries to study about the modification needed in teaching with the availability of user-generated content, especially focuses in teaching ways of English language and literature and explicates the teaching and learning process of English, in and outside the classroom.

Keywords: User generated content, Facebook, YouTube, e-mail, Google, Wikipedia, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Digital technology, Social media, networking websites, web 2.0.

Education, a Powerful Weapon

Jimmiki kammal, a group dance by Kerala girl students from the school of commerce on Onam celebration goes viral and trending with more than 4k likes among social networks for days. It even got the attention of famous American TV host Jimmy Kimmel. The suicide of Tamil girl named Anitha as she fails to qualify in the NEET exam, got the attention of all youngsters from India and protest is made against the state and central government to provide same syllabus for all students in school education or else ban NEET exam for a prolonged period of time. How is it possible within hours or days that news spreads over the globe? Is this what we mean globalization? Obviously, globalization of modern digital technology is the key behind this. If this technology helps in these things why cannot we make use of this technology in developing education to the next step? Nelson Mandela states that “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”. However, in most parts of India, education system is in need of change in the method by which it has been taught and learnt.

Digital Technology and Education

Modern digital technology has almost made a storm of change in every aspect of life today in unimaginable ways, and education is not an exception. As a matter of fact, modern generation students are very much in control and depend on the content found online. Digital students are no longer passive consumers of knowledge, but also producers or creators with a more active approach to learning. The Pew internet & American life project (Lenhart & Madden, 2005) reports that approximately 70% of all students in the United States are not only participate in online activities for education but also create their own online content through blogs, personal webpages and remixing. Teaching and learning, as a part of the open culture of web 2.0, are modern ways to contribute, communicate and collaborate, using a variety of accessible and easy use tools that empower one to develop and share ideas. The most popular and connected Web sites on the internet such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and so are all making use of this user-generated content, which is redefining how we think about creativity and provoke us to consider how new modes of community based sharing and content creation might be a modern way of learning and teaching in colleges and universities. Therefore, it shows that Indian higher

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Prasanth Arokia Samy

Updating and Sharing Through UGC – User Generated Content, a Modern Trendy Alternative
Perspective in Teaching of English Language and Literature

education is progressing with this modern digital approach in teaching and learning. Most probably not, unfortunately in most parts of India, even when we are in the 21st century making modern digital India, education seems to be the same as it had been for decades.

Conventional and Traditional Approaches Still Retained, Change Is Coming!

The higher education system of India, in most of the states is still used to following the conventional and traditional approaches in teaching and learning, especially regarding English language and literature. Most Indian students face a pitiful situation of being still used to traditional approaches to teaching and learning that are based on pre-packaged learning materials, fixed deadlines, assignments and assessments tasks designed and stipulated by teachers. The situation has stayed the same for centuries because of its parallels to the modern times. The teacher lectures from a podium at the front of the room while the students sit in rows and listen. Some of the students have books open in front of them and appear to be following along. A few look bored. Some are talking to their friends. One appears to be sleeping. Classrooms today, do they look different from what has been portrayed? Most of our response will be, genuinely, no. because, though we might find modern students looking at their laptops, tablets, or smartphones instead of books. A cynic and conventional teacher would say that technology has done nothing to change education. However, this paper tries to explore the answers for those cynic and conventional teachers by conveying the changes brought by technology in education. Moreover, to specify, this paper tries to make a study of how user generated content such as social media and websites helps education and becomes an alternative perspective in teaching and learning English language and literature in the modern digital world.

Technology has profoundly changed education and greatly expanded globalized access to education. A few decades ago, books were rare and only an elite few had access to educational opportunities in India. However, those situations and accessibility to needed things in education have been drastically changed at present. A massive amount of information such as books, audio, images, video and so on are available at the fingertips of individuals through the internet, and opportunities for formal learning are available online worldwide through MOOC's, podcasts and

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even the invitation for this paper presentation and more. Access to teaching and learning is unprecedented in its scope now, thanks to modern technology.

User-Generated Content

User-generated content refers to any media that was created by users. This can include images, videos, audio files, text posts, tweets and more. The key factor is that the content was created by users of a service or customers of a brand, rather than by professionals seeking to sell said service or brand, convey or popularize or convey something to the world. User-generated content is a highly impactful and affordable means to learn and teach. UGC is based on the psychological response of users. So when a potential user gets to learn about something through others, their hardwired brain feels the assurance that they are making the right choice. The reason is simple word of mouth referrals are the best kind of referrals, even in this age of digital world. With the advent of and growth in popularity of user-generated content has increased the relevance for teaching and learning environments in higher education, and is already influential and approachable (Williams & Jacobs, 2004). The new affordability of user-generated content is now making learner and teacher-centered education a reality. Even though, these tools enable and encourage informal conversation, dialogue, collaborative content generation, sharing of information, giving learners access to a vast array of ideas and representations of knowledge. As a result, the one way flow of information between teacher and student is now being challenged. Moreover, the conventional method of teaching should be allowed to rest in peace at last.

Social Media Platform

Unarguably, modern students and online Statistics prove that through social media platform teachers can evoke better interest in students in learning the English language and literature, which serves as an alternative perspective in teaching. Opportunities for communication, collaboration and interaction have also been expanded by technology.

Traditionally, classrooms have been isolated and interaction with the class or other students is limited. However, modern technology has globalized forms of communication and

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collaboration which was undreamt of in the past. In the same manner, Teachers are not in need of carrying a chalk piece to every class. Teachers can save their time from taking notes in a separate notepad whereas now they can select and save everything within a few seconds. Teachers can even share more number of examples through images, photos, videos, voices and so on, instead of traditional writing about the topic and its spelling on the board. The excessive ideas and points will help the students to develop their critical thinking and imaginative power. For example, decades before, traditional teachers taught Shakespeare through text more than through actual presentation like acting, apart from which they could not share anything other than facts regarding places and other matters in England or in some other country mentioned by Shakespeare. However, the accessibility of technology and user-generated content enable us to know every detail of a specific item. Students in a classroom can share what they are learning with students in other classrooms in other states who are tracking the same expedition. Students can collaborate on group projects using technology based tools such as wikis and Google docs. The walls of the classrooms are no longer a barrier as technology enables new ways of learning, communicating and working collaboratively.

Changing Role of Teachers and Learners

Technology has also begun to change the role of teachers and learners. In the traditional classroom, such as what we depicted in de Voltolina’s illustration, the teacher is the primary source of information, and the learners passively receive it. This model of teacher as the “sage on the stage” has been in education for a long time, and it is still very much in evidence today. However, because of the access to information that technology has enabled, in many classrooms today we see the teacher’s role shifting to the “guide on the side” as students take more responsibility for their own learning using technology to gather relevant information. Schools and universities across the country are beginning to redesign learning spaces to enable this new model of education, foster more interaction and small group work, and use technology as an enabler.

The constant use and upgrade of social media through modern technology enables the educationalist to develop in unimaginable ways such as teaching and learning through Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Wikipedia, Google, YouTube and so on as all these websites and social media come under user-generated content. For example, if we take Facebook as a platform to show an alternative perspective in teaching and learning of the English language and literature. Facebook enables a learner as well as a teacher to get through in all four LSRW listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Facebook as a Model for Alternative Teaching and Learning of the English Language and Literature

The ideas are just a starting point for alternative teaching and learning in class room with the use of Facebook. The students follow news feeds relevant to the course material in order to keep current information flowing through the class. The students can post their reviews for peer criticism and for other students to read. If Indian students learn a foreign language like English, they can connect with native speakers through group. A great way for journalism students in writing is to practice their craft, use Facebook status update feed as a breaking news source for sports results, academic competition results and other campus news. User-generated content enables the teacher to facilitate communication skills in an excellent way to ensure that students are more engaged in the learning process. There are a few steps by which a student and teacher can strengthen the communication through technology instead of conventional teaching and learning method. The teacher can create groups for the entire class or for study groups with smaller subsets of students that allow for easy sharing of information and communication, without students even having to friend each other. The teacher can even schedule events of the entire semester through Facebook. Any unexpected absence or change in schedule can be intimated through Facebook. Modern technology gives preference to share multimedia with the ability to post videos, photos etc. with the entire class. Apart from that, the teacher and students can even post study notes after each class period for students to have access for review or in case they were absent. User-generated content provides direct communication between instructors and students through Facebook and so, providing an opportunity for better sharing of information and

better relationship. The main objective of this technology is to make shy students approachable for their teachers after class. When students get to know each other more intimately, they become more involved in the learning experience. This is helpful in both large classes that would not normally promote such intimacy and in smaller settings that regularly depend on that connection. Students through user-generated content can have the ability to add their thoughts to the class any time they occur, for more opportunities for brainstorming each other.

Benefits of User-Generated Content in Teaching and Learning

User-generated content does not mean only Facebook; however, it is one of the social media platform with more number of followers when compared to other social media such as twitter, Instagram and so on. Therefore, it would be suitable if we take examples from the most used platform in teaching and learning the English language and literature. It offers students and teachers an opportunity for active participation on a level playing field as it proves to be a comfortable way for students to participate in class as most of the students are already users of Facebook. The students' active participation will gradually increase, since it just requires informal inherent communication that triggers students to participate in large numbers. It promotes social interchange between participants, thereby increasing the collaboration between students working on activities. UGC – user generated content provides an excellent opportunity for both teacher and student to participate in ambient awareness, a way of getting to know those you follow on social network in more meaningful ways. The main thing is for the instructor to take personal responsibility in teaching through user-generated content. They have to teach students to use content responsibly and other social networking sites, so it helps their future and not the opposite. Conducting Seminars for every student in the classroom with limited time before the syllabus is covered is really a hectic schedule for the teachers. Therefore, seminars and guest lectures can be arranged through user generated content platform, even though the speaker is in foreign universities, and yet we can arrange a time scheduled.

Technology is a powerful tool that can support and transform education in many ways, from making it easier for teachers to create instructional materials to enabling new ways for

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people to learn and work together. With the worldwide reach of the internet and the usability of smart devices that can connect to it, a new age of anytime anywhere education is dawning. It will be up to instructional designers and educational technologies to make most of the opportunities provided by technology to change education so that effective and efficient education is available to everyone and everywhere. Therefore, implementing teaching and learning through user-generated content for education is most welcome with the valid environments, and support from all partakers.

Teaching and learning via user-generated content such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and so on does not only help improving team working relationship skills, but also helps, them to achieve better results in learning. Therefore, creating richer environment is the ultimate notion of getting education through user-generated content. It is suggested that lectures should be more active in conducting activities through user-generated content. This in turn will motivate the students to participate more. The design of the study plan also needs to be planned prior and one must ensure that all topics are involved in using user-generated content activities. The educational institution should be aware of the capability of user-generated content access in supporting the process of teaching and learning.

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Language and Culture through Literature

N. Rama Gommathi, M.Phil. English Literature

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Abstract

Learning another language is a tough task for students who are not native users of the language. In order to learn another language, it is necessary to learn the culture and social context of the target language first. One of the most challenging kinds of material for English classes is literature. Literature forms the basis which will help one to learn the culture of a particular language; it also seems to be the best way to teach culture and thus literature teaching acts as the foundation for learning the language. There is a relationship between culture and literature; it is said that culture and language are interrelated. This paper provides the benefits of reading literature and the relationship between language and culture which is of much importance for ESL students.

Keywords: language and literature, language learning, language and culture, critical thinking, intercultural relationship, interpersonal relationship, communicative competence, linguistic competence

Introduction

The English language is the global language; it can be native language or second language, but it is the administrative language of many countries including South-Asian countries. The importance of introducing English in the educational system is obvious. English seems to be a communicative, wide ranging and dynamic subject that can be best learned in an environment, which encourages socio-constructive learning. Literature plays a vital role in teaching English language and culture. It is necessary to learn the culture of a specific language

that one is going to learn. Language and culture are interrelated; language is something that people use in their daily lives and something they use to express, create and interpret meanings and to establish and maintain social and interpersonal relationships. Learning to communicate in an additional language involves developing an awareness of the ways in which culture correlates with language whenever it is used.

Literature – A Mode to Learn Language and Culture

The literature is a dynamic source in English language learning because it helps students to develop critical thinking, build valuable skills and expand their worldview. There are some factors that need to be taken into consideration when teaching literature, such as cultural value, expanding horizons, building vocabulary, improving writing skills, teaching critical thinking. Literature offers students a second language which enables them to communicate in a broader social-economic context. It also gives students a tool to directly access scientific, technological and humanistic information, and in this way expand their knowledge of the world.

The cultural value is about learning through stories, it can be real or fictional, ever since the first writers came up with their stories; literature is the perfect way to picture certain aspects of different cultures and the perspectives of the ones who dedicate their lives to share the stories and connect the world. Chinua Achebe, the great African novelist says, “it is not difficult to identify with somebody like yourself, somebody next door who looks like you. What's more difficult is to identify with someone you don't see, who's very far away, who's a different color, who eats a different kind of food. When you begin to do that then literature is really performing its wonders”.

Another important benefit of literature is critical thinking, because with right reading the students can see how to analyze and question the situations they may face in the society. With literature, the students can develop the habits of thinking and analyzing what is happening around, as well as also check whether it is right or wrong. In the words of C. S. Lewis,

Literature adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect, it irrigates the deserts that our lives have already become.

Introduction of Culture in Literature Classes

Culture can be introduced in literature by implementing authentic materials in the context. This brings positive motivation in students as they get interested. Providing authentic information about the target language is necessary. They provide exposure to real language. Literature creates exactly the environment for the English learner. One's main focus should be on how to interact with the situation one encounters, and through this interaction, develop the knowledge of English.

Language Learning

Language is made up of words and a series of rules that connect words together. Language learning involves learning vocabulary and the rules for constructing sentences; this understanding of language is, however, a very narrow one. It sees language as fixed and finite and does not explore the complexities involved in using language for communication. An understanding of language as open, dynamic and energetic, encompasses the rich complexities of communication. This expanded view of language makes educational experience more engaging for students. Language is not a thing to be studied but a way of seeing, understanding and communicating about the world and each language user uses his or her language in very different ways to do this.

Purposeful Communication

People use language for purposeful communication and learning a new language involves learning how to use words, rules and knowledge about language as well as its use in order to communicate with speakers of the language. Literature is beneficial to language development. It is a good source of accurate diction, diverse sentence patterns, and passionate narratives. Since literature is related to real-life situations, it deals with accurate diction. The language employed in literature is the language of its audience, so it cannot be inaccurate. Also, since literature deals

with different moods as well as situations, it is filled with diverse forms of sentences. Truly different people talk as well as write differently. As such, literature contains all these various forms of use of language. Besides, passion has its own value in literature. When reading literature texts, the reader is engaged with this passionate aspect of the text.

Culture as the Body of Knowledge

As a matter of fact language and culture are closely related, the use of language makes sense only in context, and culture is part of that context. Understanding the nature of the relationship between language and culture is central to the process of learning another language. That is, language is the carrier of cultural messages. It is language in its cultural context that creates meaning: creating and interpreting meaning is done within a cultural framework.

One way in which culture has been understood is as the body of knowledge that people have within a particular society. This body of knowledge can be seen in various ways: as knowledge about cultural ornament or works of art; as knowledge about places and institutions; as knowledge about events and symbols; or as knowledge about ways of living. Literature is culture. Narrations are often built upon the perspective of one main character, who experiences the pains of growing up. This makes reading literary texts a drastically dramatic experience. In this way literature prepares a fund of resource and context to contextualize these activities. A good story book not only informs ESL students about the situation and development of an event; it also connects readers to the event to gain an insight, rather than an overview of English culture and society. Students find the social and historical contexts of the event and become familiar with culture in the literary texts. The piece of literary work amuses and opens the eyes of students as they see how other people think, interpret, and act on a variety of things, especially those things that ESL students are familiar with. Literature is one of the most interesting and significant expressions of humanity.

Conclusion

Knowledge of cultures is important for facilitating communication with people. Therefore, learners of languages need to learn and understand the cultures of the target language.

This means not only the learners develop knowledge about another culture but the learners come to understand themselves in relation to some other culture. This shows a contemporary emphasis on ‘intercultural’ relationships. Learning to be intercultural involves much more than just knowing about another culture; it involves learning to understand how one’s own culture shapes perceptions of oneself, of the world, and of one’s relationship with others. Learning another language can be like placing a mirror up to one’s own culture and one’s own assumptions about how communication happens, what some particular message means and what assumptions one makes in one’s daily life. Literature forces them to read more and more and deeply.

In learning about culture, one needs to draw one’s own experience of language and culture when trying to create and interpret meanings. The ability to learn beyond the classroom is probably developing the skill of reading literature. In order to understand the piece of material in front of them, they have to read it again and again and to think deeply about all its parts to find out the interrelation within each part. Literature helps in the incorporation of linguistic competence into communicative competence by putting language into use in different social situations.

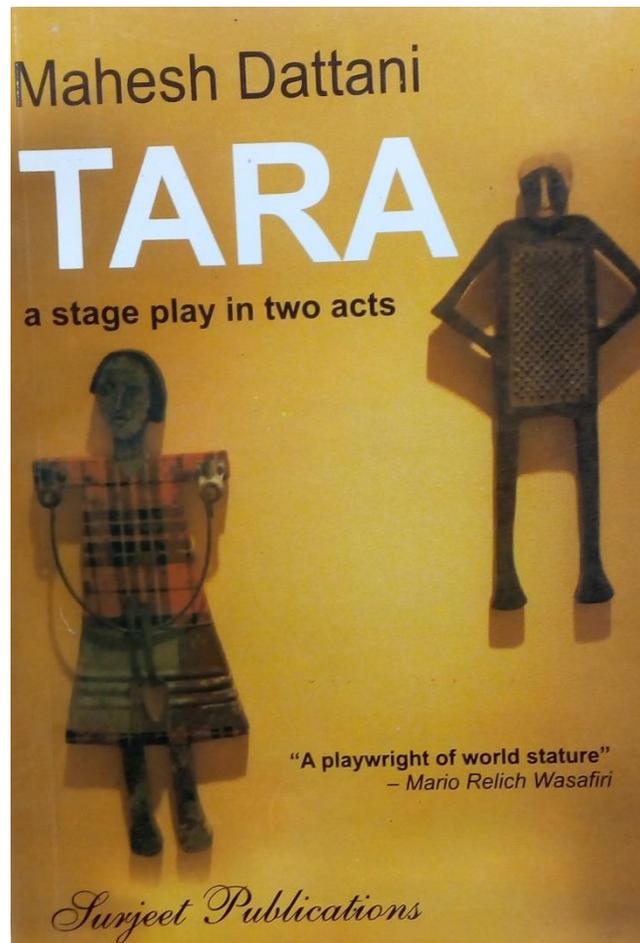
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Gender Issues in Mahesh Dattani's *Tara*

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Abstract

Mahesh Dattani is a famous actor, playwright, director. His *Tara* is a famous play which deals with the gender issues in the society. Tara is the protagonist of this play who was born as a Siamese twin with her brother Chandan. The play moves around the separation of the twins.

Their family gives importance to Chandan and his future. Finally, Tara dies because of society, not because of her family. Dattani exposes gender issue in a deep manner.

Keywords: Mahesh Dattani, *Tara*, Siamese twins, Surgery, Gender.

Mahesh Dattani's *Tara*

Mahesh Dattani is a powerful playwright, Actor, Director, Dancer and screenplay writer. His theatre group **Playpen** was formed in 1984, and he has directed several plays. His famous works are *Final Solutions*, *Dance Like A Man*, *Bravely Fought The Queen*, *On A Muggy Night In Mumbai*, *Tara*, and *Thirty Days In September*.

Mahesh Dattani's *Tara* is a famous play which deals with gender discrimination in our society. Gender discrimination, among other things, is suppressing one gender either female or male, and they are not allowed to express their own feelings, talents, etc. The title *Tara* means star. Stars always twinkle in sky. They are stable, immortal, loved by all. But the protagonist of this play named Tara is suppressed, hated by all because of her gender. In our Indian society, females are considered to be weaker than males and female babies may even be killed. Tara was born as a conjoined twin with a boy Chandan. The play focuses on how the society and family give more importance to the male than female. Dattani expresses this problem in his play in a deep manner through the character Tara. *Tara* was staged at Chowdiah Memorial Hall, Bangalore on October 23, 1990 by Dattani's Playpen Performing Arts Group.

The Play

Tara is a two Act play with a few characters. Tara is a very talent girl who wants to shine like her name in the world. She looks beautiful and is always optimistic in character. The play draws light on stage by focusing on Bharati and Patel, Tara and Chandan, Roopa and shadow characters of Prema and Nallini, and interview of Dr. Thakkar.

Chandan

When the play opens Chandan changed his name into Dan and expresses his feelings through writings. He is a writer staying in London and writing his own tragedy.

“Dan: In poetry, even the most turbulent emotions can be recollected when one is half asleep. But in Dramas! Ah! Even tranquility has to be recalled with emotion. Like touching a bare live wire.”

Chandan is guilty conscious in his heart. He has lot of memories and is trying to change that memory into a play. He locks himself in a bedsitter in a seedy suburb of London. He is a Siamese twin born with his sister Tara. After Tara’s death he becomes very sad and thinks that he caused her tragedy. He wants to write about her life as a drama, recollecting his memories. Chandan had already written a work *Random Raj* which was about British Raj. “The publishers here in India ignore them because none of them deal with Sati, Dowry, deaths or child marriages—all subjects guaranteed to raise the interest of the average western intellectual (*Tara*: p. 4)”.

“Dan: To tell you the truth, I had even forgotten I had a twin sister. Until I thought of her as subject matter for my next literary attempt. Or maybe I didn’t forget her. She was lying deep inside, out of reach... (*Tara*: 4)”

Parents of Tara

Patel and Bharati were parents of Chandan and Tara. They had a happy married life. Bharati’s father was a famous political person who had an opportunity to become Chief Minister if he lived. They felt happy when Bharati had twins in her womb. But they were born as conjoined twins by hugging each other. Every mother loves her children. Bharati also loved Tara and Chandan. They looked like a freak. They had to be separated by surgery. The babies had three legs but the major blood supply of third leg was provided to the girl. The family supported boy child because males take their family forward but females are considered to be weaker. Parents have to give dowry for girl child. So, Tara’s family chose the male child. Bharati and her father personally met Dr. Thakkar and bribed him to make surgery unnatural. These

incidents show how Bharati didn't like Tara and favored the boy child. No mother does like this position, but Bharati wanted boy baby. So the surgery was not done properly, made the operation wrongly. This shows woman is first enemy to another woman.

“Patel: A scan showed that a major part of the blood supply to the third leg was provided by the girl. Your mother asked for a reconfirmation. The result was the same. The chances were slightly better that the leg would survive...on the girl. Your grandfather and your mother had a private meeting with Dr. Thakkar. I wasn't asked to come. That same evening, your mother told me of her decision. Everything will be done as planned. Except – I couldn't believe what she told me--that they would risk giving both leg to the boy... (Tara: 58)”

After Surgery

After surgery the children were separated. They walked with the help of *jaipur* legs. Tara was very active and enjoyed her life. She had one more operation to transfer kidney. So they went to Mumbai for surgery. There Tara and Chandan had no friends. They simply stayed in home. Roopa is a neighbour girl. Years on, Bharati realized her mistake and showered love on Tara. Bharati bribed Roopa to become best friend with Tara.

“Bharati: you will be her best friend?”

Roopa: well, I don't know. Nalini and Prema are my best friends.

Bharati: if you promise to be her best friend- what I mean is if you would like to be her friend-I will be most grateful to you and I will show it... in whatever way you want me to (Tara: 21).”

Question about Kidney Transplant

Bharati was ready to offer one kidney to Tara. But Patel refused to give it. Bharati wanted to be part of Tara but Patel did not allow her. Patel showed male power over Bharati and slapped her and said “you are in no condition to be taking major decisions.”

“Bharati: Everything will be all right. Now that I am giving you a part of me. Everything will be all right.”

Patel gives more importance to Chandan. He always cared about his studies and his future but not about Tara. He wanted Chandan to study in London and work with his business.

“Patel: I was just thinking ... it may be a good idea for you to come to the office with me

Chandan: What for?

Patel: Just to get a feel of it.

Chandan: You can take Tara. She will make a great business woman.

Patel: Chandan, I think I must insist that you come (*Tara: 8*).”

Dr. Thakkar

Dr. Thakkar plays a major role in this play. The work of a doctor is to give life. Doctors are compared to God. But here Thakkar made unnatural surgical operation to Twins because of getting bribery. Tara’s Grandfather and Mother provided a large nursing home, three acres of prime land, in the centre of the city to Dr. Thakkar. Finally no one supported Tara, neither Mother nor Nature. Later Bharati realized her mistake. She always said “Tara! My beautiful baby! You are my most beautiful baby! I love you very much.”

Chandan and Tara

Chandan had lots of affection for Tara. He never went anywhere without Tara. He said about Tara as “What is Tara? Kind, Gentle, Strong, her mother has given her Strength. And daddy? Silent? Angry? (*Tara: 10*)” Chandan is a sweet character who always felt guilty about his sister’s death. He expressed his tragedy as a drama. He did not type the drama in paper. He recorded his voice in recorder, “No writing. No masterpiece. Only a voice (*Tara: 59*)”. Chandan ends his voice by saying,

“Chandan: Forgive me, Tara. Forgive me for making it my tragedy (*Tara: 60*)”.

To Conclude

Tara is a wonderful play about gender. The main work of a writer is to identify and present the social problems. Dattani has done his job in a skilful manner. In India, females do not get freedom from males. Girls are considered as a family burden because of dowry. Tara lost

her shine because her family was under the sway of the values of the society, which is mainly pro-male. Stars are stable and immortal, Tara is not allowed to shine in the world but she always shines in the play.

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Pronunciation and Its Importance

S. ShunmugaSundari and B. Gowsalya

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Language and Pronunciation

Language is something that people use for communication. It is a tool of communication. There are a number of situations in our daily lives in which we communicate with each other. They used two different mediums of communication. One is medium of speech which is also called as aural medium since people use their ears to understand such communication. And the other is medium of writing which is also called visual medium since people use their eyes to interpret such communication. Of the two mediums of communication (spoken and written), the former is more important than the latter.

Pronunciation is the most important and difficult problem that non-native speakers have to face when studying English. Improper pronunciation can lead to negative impression, misunderstanding and ineffective communication. English continues to change and develop with hundreds of new words arriving every year. Knowing a lot of vocabularies is meaningless if you cannot pronounce those words correctly and no one can understand the words that are trying to use. Even worse, pronunciation mistakes can lead to some serious misunderstanding.

Pronunciation Could Be Affected

Pronunciation is occasionally affected by the way in which a word is spelt and spelling may gradually be modified in accordance with changes in the phonological system. It is a big problem for English language learners, because the English language does not have fixed phonetic rule. An important point to note about the above sentence is that the English language has borrowed words and expression extensively from many language throughout its history. That, in fact, is the main reason for pronunciation of those words which naturally

sound different from the spelling, since they were borrowed from other language into the English language.

Learner's Errors of Pronunciation

Learner's errors of pronunciation derived from various factors such as

1. A particular sound may not exist in the mother tongue, so that the learner is not used to forming it and therefore tends to substitute the nearest equivalent he or she knows.
2. A sound does exist in the mother tongue but not as a separate phoneme: that is to say, the learner does not perceive it as a distinct sound that makes a different in meaning.

Five Kinds

There are five kinds in the matter of pronunciation as follows:

1. A language learner must learn to recognize readily and with certainty the various speech sounds occurring in the language, when the language learner hears them pronounced; he or she must moreover learn to remember the acoustic qualities of those sounds.
2. A language learner must learn to make the foreign sounds with his or her own organs of speech.
3. A language learner must learn to use those sounds in their proper place in connected speech.
4. A language learner must learn the proper usage in the matter of the sound-attributes or prosodies as they are often called especially length, stress and voice-pitch.
5. A language learner must learn to link sounds, for example, to join each sound of a sequence on to the next, and to pronounce complete sequence rapidly and without stumbling.

Role of Phonetics in Pronunciation

Phonetics is a component of linguistics that deals with speech sounds. The English word 'spoon' is made up of four speech sounds. There is [s], [p], [u:] and [n]. The example given above is an interesting one because in this word there is no correspondence between the number of letters in the written form of the word and the number of sounds in its spoken

form. We shouldn't count the number of letters in the written form of a word and say there are so many sounds in that word. In English in which the number of sounds in their spoken form is the same as the number of letters in their written form ex: - Bat – [b], [æ] and [t]. Phonology is a component of linguistics which deals with the way in which sounds function in a language.

Pay Attention to Pronunciation

Many people learning English language often do not pay any attention to their pronunciation. Even worse, some of them underestimate it. They think that pronunciation is less important than grammar and vocabulary. In fact, pronunciation is extremely important. Many cases of misunderstanding in communication were caused by the mispronouncing of words.

Knowing grammar and vocabulary are important but useless if you are unable to pronounce those structures or words correctly. Also, native speakers are more likely to understand you, even if you make grammatical mistakes in pronunciation.

Even the simple words misspoken will keep you from effectively communicating with native English speakers. Achieving good pronunciation should be your main goal. It is not so easy to overcome these mispronunciation problems in students. So as a social being, it is our duty to make them aware of the mispronunciation and by that we can increase our skills and attitudes towards the language and pronunciation.

Words	Phonetic Transcription	Correct pronunciation	Wrong pronunciation
1. Aegis	/iːdʒɪs/	ee - jis	ay – jis
2. Asterisk	/astərɪsk/	as-ter-isk	as-ter-ik
3. Alumnae	/ə'ɪlumnə /	a-lum-nee	a-lum-nay
4. Archipelago	/a:'Kɪpələgəʊ/	ar-ki-pel-a-go	arch-i-pel-a-go
5. Athlete	/ˈæθli:t/	ath-leet	ath-aleet
6. Candidate	/kændɪdət/	kan-di-dayt	Kan-i-dayt
7. Chimera	/kɪmɪərə/	kiy-meer-a	Chim-er-a
8. Disastrous	/dɪzɑːstrəs/	di-zas-tres	di-zas-ter-es
9. Electoral	/ɪlɛkt(ə)r(ə)l/	e-lek-tor-al	e-lak-tor-al
10. Etcetera	/ɛt 'sɛt(ə)rə/	et-set-er-a	ek-set-er-a

11. Lambaste	/lam'beɪst/	lam-bayst	lam-bast
12. Larvae	/lɑ:və/	lar-vee	lar-vay
13. Library	/'laɪbrəri,'laɪbri/	li-brar-y	li-bar-y
14. Mischievous	/mɪstʃɪvəs/	mis-che-vus	mis-chee-vee-us
15. Triathlon	/trɪ'æθlən/,/trɪ'æθlən/	try-ath-lon	try-ath-a-lon
16. Ticklish	/'tɪklɪʃ/	tik-lish	tik-i-lish
17. Tenet	/'tɛnɪt,'ti:nɛt/	ten-it	ten-unt
18. Cache	/kæʃ/	cash	cash-ay
19. Hyperbole	/hɪ'pɜ:bəli/	hahy-pur-bah-lee	hyper-bowl
20. Meme	/mi:m/	meem	mee-mee/mem
21. February	/'fɛbrʊəri/,/'fɛbjʊəri/	feb-roo-a-ree	feb-yoo-a-ree
22. Pronunciation	/prə,nʌnsɪ'eɪʃ(ə)n/	pro-nun-si-ay-shun	pro-noun-si-ay-shun
23. Almond	/'ɑ:mənd/	ah-mund	aal-mund
24. Bury	/'bɛri/	be-ri	beu-ri
25. Dengue	/'dɛŋgi/	den-gee	den-geu
26. Women	/'wɪmɪn/	wih-men	woo-men
27. Heart	/hɑ:t/	haa-rt	hurt
28. Tomb	/tu:m/	toom-	tom-b
29. Rendezvous	/'rɒndɪvu:/,/'rɒndɛɪvu:/	ron-day-voov	ren-des-voos
30. Asthma	/'asmə/	az-ma	as-tha-ma
31. Wednesday	/'wɛnzdeɪ/,/'wɛnzdeɪ/	wenz-day	wed-nes-day
32. Gauge	/geɪdʒ/	gaje	gow-je
33. Bowl	/bəʊl/	Bo-hl	Ba-ool
34. Epitome	/'ɪpɪtəmi/,/ɛ'pɪtəmi/	Ep-i-tummy	Epi-tome
35. Gnaw	/nɔ:/	naw	g-naw
36. Pizza	/'pi:tʃə/,/'pɪtʃə/	peet-zuh	pi-za
37. Monk	/mʌŋk/	muhngk	maunk
38. Genre	/'ʒɛnrə/,/'(d)ʒɒnrə/	zhon-ruh	jen-ner
39. Sour	/saʊə/	sower	saar
40. Police	/pə'li:s/	puh-leece	poo-leece
41. Suite	/swi:t/	sweet	suit
42. Dessert	/dɪ'zɜ:t/	dizz-urt	des-ert
43. Schedule	/'ʃɛdju:l/,/'skɛdju:l/	sked-jule	shed-yool
44. Zebra	/'zɛbrə/,/'zi:brə/	zee-bra	zeb-ra
45. Nuclear	/'nju:klɪə/	noo-kee-ur	noo-kyu-lur
46. Nuptial	/'nʌpʃl/	nup-shul	nup-shial
47. Primer	/'praɪmə(r)/	prim-mer	pry-mer
48. Picture	/'pɪktʃə(r)/	pik-cher	pit-cher
49. Prescription	/prɪ'skrɪpʃn/	prih-skrip-shun	per-skrip-shun

50. Prerogative	/prɪ'rɒgətɪv/	Pre-rog-a-tive	per-rog-a-tive
51. Peremptory	/pə'remptəri/	per-emp-tuh-ree	pre-emp-tuh-rae
52. Probably	/'prɒbəbli/	prob-a-blee	pra-beely/prob-lee
53. Realtor	/'ri:əltə(r)/	reel-tot	ree-la-ter
54. Supposedly	/sə'pəʊzɪdli/	su-pos-ed-lee	su-pos-ab-blee
55. Spurious	/'spjʊəriəs/	spyoor-ee-us	spur-ee-us

Hence if a student typically mispronounces a word, or fails to fully enunciate each syllable in everyday speech; it can make it difficult for him to correctly spell the word. The pronunciation cannot be underestimated. It must become one's priority. We should provide a practical knowledge on pronunciation and it will avoid mispronunciation.

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Teaching English Vocabulary: A Real Challenge to English Teachers

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Abstract

Teaching a foreign language has always been a challenge for teachers at all levels. With the growing importance of English language in the global scenario, schools and colleges teach English and most of them have it as medium of instruction. Vocabulary is one of the most important aspects in teaching and learning a foreign language. In addition, vocabulary is the key to enriching the knowledge of a foreign/ target language. Different perspectives of teaching vocabulary shed light on the complexity of helping learners achieve success in learning vocabulary appropriately. Teaching vocabulary can be a dull and mechanical activity if not handled properly. Thus, it is a process that needs the teachers' help. It is teachers' responsibility to provide students with effective activities. Theoretically, teachers, in order to be effective in their teaching, should be provided an overview of the students' needs, characteristics and their culture. Sometimes, it can be quite challenging for English teachers to know how to teach vocabulary to students effectively, because every student has his/ her own style of learning new words. Even though the students have the same level of English language, such as beginner, intermediate or advanced, they do not use the same learning strategies in the classroom or outside it. Therefore, students need to enhance their vocabulary and they need to know how to use it in the classroom and in everyday situations. Vocabulary teaching can be made meaningful and effective by following certain techniques. This paper entitled "**Teaching English Vocabulary: A Real Challenge to English Teachers**" focuses on the challenges faced by the English Teachers in teaching vocabulary and the different techniques adopted in making vocabulary teaching more meaningful and effective.

Keywords: teaching, vocabulary, challenge, techniques, effective

Vocabulary: Key to Enriching Our Knowledge

Teaching a foreign language has always been a challenge for teachers at all levels. With the growing importance of English language in the global scenario, schools and colleges teach English and most of them have it as medium of instruction. Vocabulary is one of the most important aspects in teaching and learning a foreign language. In addition, vocabulary is the key to enriching the knowledge of a foreign/ target language. Different perspectives of teaching vocabulary shed light on the complexity of helping learners achieve success in learning vocabulary appropriately. Teaching vocabulary can be a dull and mechanical activity if not handled properly. Thus, it is a process that needs the teachers' help. It is teachers' responsibility to provide students with effective activities. Theoretically, teachers in order to be effective in their teaching should be provided an overview of the students' needs, characteristics and their culture.

Sometimes, it can be quite challenging for English teachers to know how to teach vocabulary to students effectively, because every student has his/ her own style of learning new words. Even though the students have the same level of English language, such as beginner, intermediate or advanced, they do not use the same learning strategies in the classroom or outside it. Therefore, students need to enhance their vocabulary and they need to know how to use it in the classroom and in everyday situations. Vocabulary teaching can be made meaningful and effective by following certain techniques. This paper entitled "**Teaching English Vocabulary: A Real Challenge to English Teachers**" focuses on the challenges faced by the English Teachers in teaching vocabulary and the different techniques adopted in making the vocabulary teaching more meaningful and effective.

Past Practices

In the past, vocabulary teaching was mostly incidental. Languages were taught through text. Students studied certain prescribed passages mostly from classics or scholarly essays. They were taught the words found in the passages. Teachers explained the meanings and gave

examples so that students could understand how to use them. The recent trend is to dedicate special efforts for teaching vocabulary. Teaching vocabulary can be a dull and mechanical activity if not handled properly. If a teacher introduces word after word in a list, explains its meaning, makes the students repeat its pronunciation and write it out until the spelling is remembered, it will be a meaningless activity for the students and they will not be interested.

Present Challenges

The challenges faced by the English teachers in teaching English vocabulary are listed below:

- The meaning of words depends upon the context. Meaning changes with the context. Example: The meaning of the word ‘interest’ is different in each of the following sentences-
 - a) Lakshmi received a good *interest* on her fixed deposits.
 - b) The students show no **interest** in studies.
- There are several verbs in English which are termed as ‘phrasal verbs’. The native British speakers make a lot of phrasal verbs in their speech. They are very handy and useful for day-to-day oral communication. The meaning of the main verb changes as per the following preposition, adjective, adverbial, etc.

To put

 - To put **on**
 - To put **off**
 - To put **across**
 - To put **out**
- Certain words and phrases are technical in nature. Their usage is typical to a particular subject or a field of knowledge. For example, the terminology constantly used by doctors will be entirely different from that used by somebody studying Literature or Geography.
- Some words in English have become stereotyped due to overuse. They are called clichés. E. g. bookworm.

- Often there are boundaries between the conceptual meaning of words – e.g. cup, bowl, mug.
- Polysemy – Sometimes, a word has several meanings. E.g. the word ‘head’.
 - **Head** of a pin
 - **Head** of a person
 - **Head** of an organization
- Homophony – Some words are pronounced alike but they have different spellings and different meanings – e.g. flour and flower
- Translation – We do not always find equivalent words for all words in all languages.
- Chunks of language – this refers to phrases or idioms that are grouped together in a special way, which have a different meaning from what the words mean otherwise, taken separately – e.g. to jump to conclusions. (This does not have anything to do with jumping physically using legs.)

Some Effective Ways of Teaching Vocabulary

Vocabulary teaching can be made meaningful and effective by following certain techniques. Some ways of teaching vocabulary are discussed below:

- In the initial stage, when almost every word is new for the learner, primary words can be taught using the direct method. Language teaching cannot begin until students learn some basic common words. In the direct method, the use of mother tongue is avoided. The teacher shows an object to the students and names it. The students repeat the word. This is done 3 to 4 times. Students cannot be expected to remember the names of the objects in a single session. The same objects are shown for 4 to 5 days repeatedly and then after a few days’ gap, the teacher shows the objects and the students name them. Words like pen, pencil, book, table, boy, girl, bat, ball, etc., can be taught in this manner. All objects cannot be brought to the classroom. Teacher can use models or pictures to teach words like car, aeroplane, tiger, lion, etc. Nouns and adjectives can be taught in this way.
- Words like up, down, round, slow, fast etc. can be taught through actions. There are plenty of nursery rhymes in English which contain such words. Students enjoy learning

songs and rhymes although they do not understand the meaning. If the teachers perform actions while reciting rhymes, a number of concepts can be made clear.

- Action verbs can also be taught using the Direct Method. The teacher can pronounce a word and perform the action simultaneously. E.g. run, swim, jump, read, eat, drink, wash, go, come, etc.
- Concrete words are easier to teach compared to abstract concepts. E.g. concepts like hot, cold, beautiful, sad, happy etc. it is necessary to put such words in a context so that gradually, students understand the meaning. We cannot allow a child to burn his hand so that he can understand what is meant by 'hot'. But warning a child by fine tuning the voice and insisting that he should keep away from it is useful.

Let us take an example of creating a context in order to teach the word "happy".

- a. Brinda likes chocolates.
Brinda's mother gave her a chocolate. Brinda is happy.
- b. Sheela has got a big balloon. Sheela is happy. Leela did not get a balloon.
Leela is not happy.
- c. Today is Rita's birthday. She is very happy.

- Certain concepts can be taught by contrasting them with their opposites. E.g. clean x dirty, sad x happy, here x there, come x go, good x bad
- Associating a word with something that is familiar to the students is very helpful.
Teachers can make use of this technique to a large extent.
- Verbal situations can be created so that the meaning of the word is clear. Let us take an example of the word 'negotiate'. The word can be put in the following verbal situation-
The workers in a company went on strike because they wanted Diwali bonus amounting to their monthly salary while the company was against giving bonus. The strike continued for several days. The company officials met the representatives of the workers. They NEGOTIATED the matter and arrived at a solution. Finally, it was decided that the company would pay 75% of the monthly salary amount as bonus to each worker.

The teacher can create 2 to 3 verbal situations to make the meaning clear.

- Grouping words is the most widely used technique for teaching vocabulary. Words can be grouped in several ways.
 - a) Words can be grouped according to their function e.g. all adjectives that can be used to describe a person like tall, short, fat, plump, strong, hefty etc. or all verbs that describe the action of walking in different ways e.g. trampling, striding, jogging, skipping, hopping, bouncing, pacing etc.
 - b) Technical jargon related to a particular subject e. g. medicines, dose, thermometer, stethoscope, saline etc
 - c) Words related to a particular topic e.g. thing used in a kitchen like pots, pans, spoons, dishes, knives, forks, plants, cups, bowls, tongs etc.
 - d) A root word followed by all related derivatives e.g. happy, happiness, happier, happily, happiest, unhappy, unhappily, unhappiest, unhappily.
- Teacher can give a list of antonyms and synonyms which help in association as well as understanding the meaning better.

Sometimes, it can be quite challenging for teachers to know how to effectively teach vocabulary to students, because every student has his/her own style of learning new words. Even though the students have the same level of English language, such as beginner, intermediate or advanced, they do not use the same learning strategies in the classroom or outside it. Therefore, students need to enhance their vocabulary and they need to know how to use it in the classroom and in everyday situations. These techniques will help to promote the learners' understanding and communication in English language.

- Communicative approach is emphasized as an appropriate method in learning new vocabulary. It is to be made sure that students are motivated and interested to get involved in communicative situations.
- Using different kinds of activities in presenting new vocabulary will help learners to improve their vocabulary in English language. That is, during activities the students will

learn from each other. The teachers should create an environment where the students will enjoy the learning.

- Brainstorming new words is a technique that encourages students to focus on a topic or situation. This gives them the opportunity to share their knowledge. Students can be given a specific topic that is in accordance to their level and interest, and they are allowed to discuss about it.
- Class games help students build on their experiences and allow them to improve their vocabulary. There are a lot of games that teachers can use in the classroom by taking into consideration the student's level of English. Sometimes students get bored by listening to the teacher all the time. Therefore, games encourage learners to learn the language and also enjoy at the same time.
- Framing the sentences using the new vocabulary that students have learnt will also improve their writing. Let them choose the topic for what they will be more interested to write about.

To Conclude

To conclude, vocabulary is the key to enriching the knowledge of a foreign language. Teaching vocabulary is not just conveying the meaning to the students and asking them to learn those words by heart. If teachers believe that the words are worth explaining and learning, then it is important that they should do this efficiently. Teachers should use different techniques and activities in teaching English vocabulary to motivate the learners, enrich their vocabulary and enable them to speak English properly.

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Learner-Centric Classroom in the Domain of ELT – An Observation

Swati Basu

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Abstract

While concentrating on the above mentioned sub-theme of the Conference, my present paper attempts an understanding of the **role and relationship** that exists between the learner, the facilitator and the **reciprocal teaching-learning process** aiming to attain **educational objectives** en masse. It is pivotal in building mutual trust, respect between the learner and the facilitator as much as in establishing reliability and validity of the teaching and learning process. Through the mode of discussion and comparative approach, the paper takes into consideration the **traditional system** of educational process and the specific factor of learner centered classroom which is a **dominant signifier** in the paradigm of **ELT**. The comparative approach in my present paper attempts to find out the extent to which we **have stimulated** or **could stimulate** learner-centered classroom in the present scenario. The study foregrounds certain rural and semi-urban classrooms at UG and PG levels of Engineering and Management students in the context of West Bengal. This interpretation and understanding indicates the need for:

- ✚ Frequent faculty development programs to provide opportunities to explore the avenues made open through constant research on learning and teaching perspectives.
- ✚ Self-awareness on the part of the facilitators in terms of teaching methods being followed and the subsequent actions on self -development required.

Keywords: role and relationship, reciprocal teaching-learning process, educational objectives, traditional system, dominant signifier, ELT, stimulate.

What do we understand by the term “myth”?

According to Wikipedia the term ‘Myth’ has been derived from the Greek word ‘mythos’ which simply means ‘story’. The dictionary meaning of the term indicates false belief or idea. Going by these definitions, I would not like to consider learner-centered classroom is a myth or a false belief. We have to understand here that , belief and real existence stand poles apart. We will come to this point little later .

We talk about ICT (Information and Communications Technology) based learning in our contemporary society. We talk about Smart class, online-learning , distance learning and so on. The world has become a global village and everything can be accessed sitting at one corner via ICT. Now, ICT can be viewed as an umbrella concept for all its components, namely , television, cellular phones, computer , network systems-hardware and software, satellite connectivity and such others i.e. to say any application enabling any mode of communication . In such a state , the role of a Teacher is largely shared by ICT enabled tools.

Vedic System

Now, what was/is the role of Teacher in Vedic and ICT enabled educational society? Let us have a look at certain key considerations.

First, in reference to Vedic educational prevalence can we equate the weightage of the terms of modern day ‘Teacher’ to those of Vedic age ‘Guru’ ?

Second, the prevailing education system in our contemporary society and those of Vedic society.

Third, the need analysis of education in the challenging environment of Global village.
Fourth, the role of Government in the promotion and spread of education.

Finally, the education imparted in Institutions and the learning environments prevailing outside/apart from the Institutions.

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The scope and treatment of the above considerations requires detailed analysis and discussions. The limitation of words for the Conference paper and time constraints presently out me to take up the issue at length and would indulge upon these considerations for further detailed analysis and exploration in future research endeavors.

Role of the Teacher

Coming back to the question of role of Teacher in present scenario , it can be argued that one of the educational objectives demands the learners to ‘be prepared’ and ‘market ready’ to suit for any work environment standing on the doorstep of global village and extremely challenging multi-faceted work pressure.

Self-learning and the Teacher

Self-learning is the only option left to survive and harmonize with the need of the hour. It is to meet such a demand the role of a teacher becomes extremely crucial and facilitate learners by gearing them for the situation. Encouraging self-learning has many purposes. Critical thinking skills or higher order thinking skills are nurtured through self-learning. The learners with their existing knowledge (that they bring with them before the start of formal education) when explore their own potential they themselves create ways to meet their demands and find out newer techniques of learning to achieve and fulfill their aspirations. It is here, that the Teacher can function to understand them and their needs and guide them to the path of self-learning and self-awareness. But, the complexity lies in the word ‘guide’. To guide others one has to be competent and adept in one’s mission and vision. A Teacher needs to be visionary first, needs to be adaptable and flexible; needs to undergo self-analysis to compare their own state in the past, at present and how it can be improved for better future.

Difference between ‘Belief’ and ‘Reality’

Referring back to my first assumptions of the existing difference between ‘belief’ and ‘reality’ in terms of learner-centric classroom, it is undoubtedly true that in many remote areas / far from the city life many teachers with little or no facilities are toiling under the sun to guide the children learn on their own and combat their social barriers. Many NGOs have taken up this

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social cause to enable the children derive the blessings of educational technology to their fullest. In such a learning environment learners can question, can analyze, can solve, learn to accept responsibilities for their decisions in learning, encourages their control over learning. This stands in opposition to the teacher-centric classroom.

Learner-centric classroom doesn't allow one to accept the teachings as golden grains or as unquestionable. In fact, the scope to verify and argue is greater in such a system. It encourages the learners to reflect on what they are learning to be authentic and valid. It provides space for criticism and own points of view. It also gives them scope for self-recognition. Such a system imparts group learning, peer activities through collaborative approach. Learner-centric indicates liberty to enjoy learning but it nowhere eradicate situational guidance. But, it is also a sorry figure to accept that , in many other cases, learning through learner-centric classroom is a far cry. The teachers, instead being a guide and facilitator, make too many decisions both about teaching (suited to their own perspective) and about learning.

Are Teachers Above All?

Perhaps, it would not be wrong to point out that perceptions exist that teachers are exalted and their sole decisions alone can carry out the educational objectives. The need analysis of the learners and strategic planning according to their needs are left out. The psychology of the learners remain ignored. Traditional lecture method of instruction, late arrival in class even in time-bound class hours , water tight competition for tuition classes, thrusting of information with limited or no scope of application (encouraging rote learning), loops in evaluation system, partial or unskilled marking criteria remain the same where they were . Routine class sessions back to back remind us of the Industrial/Factory model of education system. It is here, the teacher's guidance becomes effective where they facilitate the process of learning yet the control to monitor a well-balanced educational atmosphere is equally important.

Focus on Learners

Undoubtedly, attention is to be administered that the learners do not miss or neglect the course curriculum while being independent or that every learner learns and none are affected by

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peer mismanagement or groupies. Relationship and rapport with their guide is indispensable to devise an approachable and workable learning environment. The age group of UG and PG students range between 18-25 and 20-30 respectively. The pros and cons of the psychology of the learners at this age is extremely sensitive. As Facilitators it needs undaunted quintessence and zeal to guide the future prospects of the learners as much as to be a responsible citizen and a good human being. The learners are shaped and molded through the educational process.

Facilitators

The requisite skill, patience, expertise and a keen observational ability are the keys to a facilitator to develop a team of learners who shoulder the various roles and responsibilities of the society in future. However, it is not the lone responsibility of a facilitator. In a country of second largest population (till date) in the world it requires systematic change and proper implementation of policies to enable learner-centered classroom in practical. It cannot be said that such a concept exists only as a belief of some educators aiming to propagate. But, it is also not to be shouldered only by some. Such an implementation needs thorough analysis and re-modification.

Curriculum

Curriculum needs to be revamped at regular intervals in accordance to the need of the time. Facilitators need opportunities and scope to be trained and skilled in their own areas. But, it has to be ensured that every facilitator gets equal chances for self-development, training and up-gradation and it should be a continuous process. Strict vigilance and alertness required that it does not remain a power game or a fruit to be enjoyed only by a few.

Monitoring

Equally important is monitoring the proper functioning and application of the self-developmental trainings so undergone. It requires monitoring in all educational Institutions concerned with learner's future. Mushroom like growth of small or big scale Institutions without a proper learning environment or basic teaching motivation are bound to fall flat. Local authorities are to analyze and be a strict vigilant about the scope and justification of such

permissions even before the intrusion of the higher or governmental authorities. The contribution in educational funding or expenditure in education sector are also of paramount importance. As facilitators we remain a part of the stakeholders in education and the protocol is a chain of process.

Learner-Centered Classroom Is Not A Myth

Finally, it would, perhaps, not be wrong to summarize by pointing out that undoubtedly the learner-centered classroom is not a myth altogether nor a belief which exists only in imagination, but, a hard core reality. This reality could be made practical only at a microscopic level and we are yet to journey miles and mile. It can be achieved only when our psychology really wants to make it happen . The teacher paves the steps to this achievement by being an eternal guide and source of inspiration and motivation --- more intrinsic than extrinsic. It is not an autocratic vest of power.

Rationale for conducting the systematic review

- Numerous evidences in our own known environment indicate the dire need of soul-searching and introspection on the part of the facilitators. The facilitators bear the solemn responsibility of building a Nation by shaping the learners according to their learning trajectories and careers. A learner can be shaped and guided towards competence only when the trainer is self-guided (to positivity and personal growth).
- This situation desperately needs facilitators' self-control on the sense of self-satisfaction and stagnation. Educational interventions by the authorities, in certain cases, are in high need through the implementation and compulsion of attending trainings and self-development programs and monitoring their applications in the classroom situation the inertia of which can lead to serious infringement.
- An in-depth understanding and realization of all the factors mentioned, the disadvantages faced by the under privileged suggesting potential factors for low academic performance / under achievement.
- Appeal to the concerned authorities to provide scope and exposure to those facilitators who aim to upgrade and update but are far from the benefits.

Method

As applicable, the present study is bent on Qualitative Research method . After formulating the study topic, some literature reviews were studied and relevant research reports from electronic databases were analyzed. The method of data collection also included minute observations of learner’s behavior in and off the classroom situations, anecdotal records as maintained. The personal experiences in teaching has been of immense help and worked as a tool in collecting and analyzing data .

Limitations of the Study

The study was initiated as a part of evaluating the impact of learning-teaching with a view to create necessary awareness and self-motivated actions there from. Observations were made in association with direct contact with the learners and fellow facilitators in and around our environment where we come across facilitators of all kind – those who remain to be inspirational and some others who turn us down or with whom T S Eliot’s great saying can be applicable “Between the motion /And the act / Falls the Shadow”.

Owing to huge number of theses only a few of the Literature Reviews on students’ aspirations and expectations and factors related to under achievements could be studied for analysis. Due to shortage of time and scope it was difficult to manage reading all of them and hence, it is possible some significant information might have been missed. Many other factors are associated in relation to the topic of the present study. The study is relevant to West Bengal context (rural and semi-urban) and the target learners are UG and PG students studying technical courses (B Tech / BBA / MBA) and exceptions in all related cases , situations and factors are applicable. However, these situations might be applicable (correlational) to certain similar cases that we come across/share in our environment outside West Bengal.

Conclusion

The study aimed to analyze a range of factors , limited in range and scope , linked to under achievement of learners and steady fall of moral values and the role of student-teacher relationship in educational attainment of these learners . However, it needs special mention in

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this , that it is not only the role of educational Institutions and the educator alone to bring in the desired changes but the parents/guardian too need to cooperate hand in hand as one of the important stakeholders involved in the education of the children. However , the study does not cover full range of diagnosis and intend to carry on with further analysis of the same . it is extremely crucial to address these concerns to support and sincerely give our best to reduce under achievement, risk experiences, depression, participation gap and further psychological disorders in future.

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Mastering English Language – Some Suggestions

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Abstract

English language has turned into an easy and faster medium of communication to meet both professional and personal needs. It's a vehicle which transmits in science and technology, a tool for business. It is a channel for life and literature. It has created a special place for itself in many countries. To master a language one should start using it frequently as practice makes anything perfect.

The World Wide Web has many websites that offer professional training in English language which can mould a person into an eloquent orator. However, one needs to exercise care and caution while selecting such online tutors. The best choice will be exposure to a native speaker or direct tutor who is an expert.

Keywords:

Why English?

English is one of the vastly spoken languages of the world.

English has adopted many words from Latin and French which have undergone change in meaning and some have vanished altogether. Nearly 15% of the French and Latin words that are in Old English died and a few got a change in meaning.

Future of English Language

Growth in language is primarily a matter of population. Two things should be considered for the growth of English language. The expansion of British Empire in seventeenth and eighteenth centuries led to the English speaking nation (Great Britain) controlling about over a quarter of the surface of the earth. Russians and Spanish followed subsequently. To state in numerical point-of-view the three great languages would be English, Russian and Spanish, but it seems like English-speaking nations offer many openings compared to other two (Example: US,

Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa). To conclude, English language is provided with best facilities for expansion, be it natural or immigration. Based on this, one can predict that English will be spoken by high number of population and used widely in every field of growth.

There are two angles for an influential language. Relation of words of a sentence through variation means Synthetic Language. Extensive use of prepositions and auxiliary verbs, to rely on these word orders to show similar relationships is known as analytic language. Modern English language is analytic and old English language is synthetic language.

English – For a Demanding and Successful Career

English language has turned into an easy and fast medium of communication, be it professional or personal. It is a vehicle which transmits in science and technology, a tool for business. It is also a channel for life and literature. English has become necessary for a demanding and successful career in many parts of the world, including China these days. In India, without knowledge of English, success in corporate jobs has become impossible. Government exams are given in English. In other words, even when Hindi and other Indian languages are important, English has become the dominant medium of communication.

How to Improve English Knowledge and Use?

Observing and Listening

In order to have correct pronunciation one should be a patient listener. Observing the pronunciation of words or the stress on the syllables of native speaker will definitely enrich one's language (spoken or written format). If that's not possible, check tutors or a movie for that matter. Listen carefully and try to imitate the intonation and stress patterns. Try for the mouth movements for the production of sounds initially and then extend the same to words, phrases and then sentences.

Use of Dictionary

Another way is to check phonetic script of a particular word or phrase is to use a dictionary. Condition is to follow a standard dictionary. Use of dictionary is considered to be helpful not only in bettering one's pronunciation but also in enriching one's vocabulary. In a normal dictionary, every word may have different meanings based on the usage (noun or verb).

Daily Practice

As English is mandatory in many parts of the world, only right recourses will help a non-native speaker master the language. Though the right form of communication and English

speaking cannot be taught theatrically, one can follow a pattern in training one self. It's quite possible for a person to overcome the fear of committing errors while speaking English.

Newspaper reading may sound rudimentary, but it helps in recapitulating what was taught. Finding new words and perfectly tailored sentences will help a novice to build techniques for improving vocabulary and become a confident speaker. There are situations where a deserving candidate has lost an opportunity due to poor English sentence structure or even a strong native language accent.

Right Training

Without a professional's help, one can't find right pronunciation and intonation when speaking. To overcome this, try BBC news or any English news channel, for that matter. Children's books or comics are the best way to start out learning words; phrases are simpler in children's books when compared to advanced ones such as novels, news, articles, etc. Never hesitate to use words that are familiar; ones that are difficult to pronounce can be cross-checked with friend/teacher/online/dictionary.

Even though a full-fledged classroom instruction is great, practice/exercise is great if one can get the help of a native speaker. If direct (native speaker) help is not possible, turn towards TV shows that are in English. This is a less laborious task when compared to reading books. Practice session is also possible by imitation of words and phrases.

Thanks to the advancements that technology has brought in, today, one does not have to step out of the comfort of one's home to accomplish a range of language learning tasks. The World Wide Web has a large number of websites that offer professional training in English language which can mould a person into an eloquent speaker and even as an orator. However, one needs to exercise care and caution while selecting such online tutors.

Listening/ Pronunciation, etc.

Make a list of terms that are used frequently but are difficult to pronounce. Without help, training and guidance, this Herculean task will be insurmountable. Once the words and their meanings are mastered, the next task will be to master the grammar/ right sentence structure. Written communication plays a vital role, be it when applying for a job or writing a cover letter or even when expressing one's viewpoints.

In order to make correct presentations in the professional arena, one could try digital writing with text block that will highlight any grammatical errors. By doing so, the errors can be corrected easily. Writing is one of the important tools to express both professional and personal

view points. Even though the advent of technology has replaced the normal mail with electronic mail, there has been no change in the medium of expression.

Finally, with the help of Internet a lot can be accomplished. Free and paid videos or instructional videos of English language can be browsed on the Internet to educate oneself in addition to availing the services of a real time trainer.

Conclusion

One huge difference between English language and other languages can be seen while translating the connecting words. Apart from English, other languages tend to employ many words at the commencement of the sentences that turn into connecting words or phrases in English. While translating English we see 'and,' 'but,' and 'because' in the middle of sentences, whereas in other languages we see words like but, therefore, in addition, furthermore, and moreover.

In logical sentences we do not need connecting words at the beginning of the sentences. Words are tailored with coherence /logic, not with introductory words/ phrases.

There are two standard pronunciations and spellings, one is British English and other is American English. While formulating the learning strategy, try to be aware of these two. Best method to learn any language is by staying with the one who is a native speaker, as the learner will have direct exposure to the correctly used language and imbibe the same from the speaker or the trainer.

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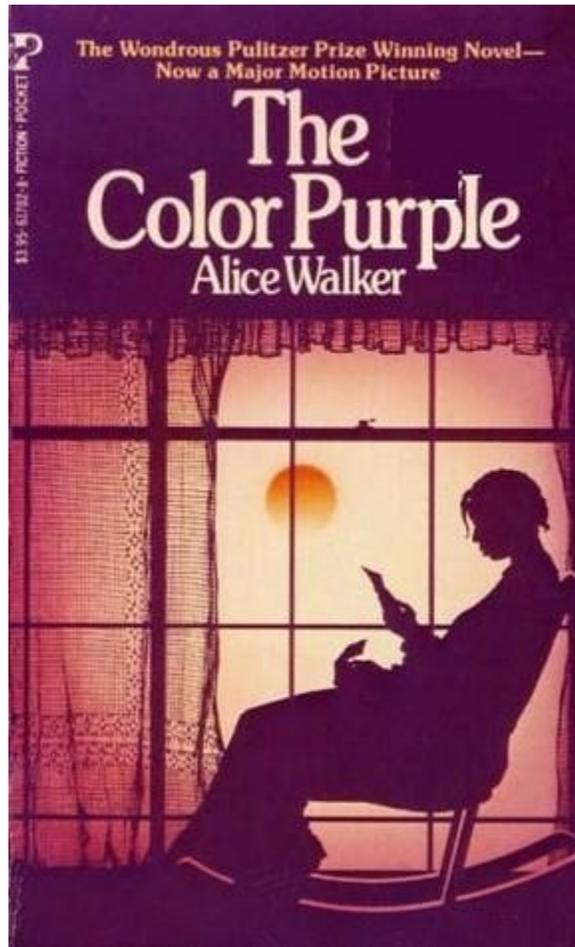
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Mastering English Language – Some Suggestions

Gender and Sexuality in *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker

T. Veeranangai & K. Rajalakshmi



Epistolary Novel

The book *The Color Purple* comes under the category of novel. The novel is an epistolary novel made up of letters written by Celie to God and by Nettie to Celie. The epistolary novel is fictitious narrative in the form of letters. In such a novel the author poses as the editor of

the letters that have somehow come to his possession. The first epistolary novel in English appeared in 1678. It was translation from Portuguese book called *Portuguese letters*. Several fictional writings in letter form appeared during the Restoration period. The most outstanding was Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*. Richardson was the first master of this form. Later many writers like Smollett, Fanny Burney, Swinburne and others wrote epistolary novels.

The Color Purple

The Color Purple is a fable and it is a fantasy. It is not simply a movie of social history it is particularly a history of black women. It is more about the oppression of black women than about black people. Critics of Walker have stated that she has portrayed black men as cruel in her works, which has sustained stereotypes of black male violence.

Historical Background

Alice Walker was active in the social events in her time, speaking out against injustice during civil rights demonstrations in the 1960s. Her feminism and activism in women's issues reflect the novels of Zora Neale Hurston, a writer in 1930s. Alice Walker set *The Color Purple* during the same time period as Hurston's novel. Hurston's novels drew criticism for its portrayal of black men as abusive. Hurston was criticized by her black peers as well. It was believed that by commenting upon the unequal relationship between black men and women, Hurston diverted the attention from the social inequality of blacks and whites.

Celie

The novel *The Color Purple* focuses upon the growth and development of a girl named Celie raped at 14years by her own father and then was forced into a marriage with a cruel older man. Celie learns to be quiet and submissive. The person she cares most about her sister Nettie is forced out of her own home and kicked out of Celie's home by her husband who had married Celie so that she could take care of his children and work for him since he is already love with Shug Avery.

When Shug Avery falls ill, he keeps her at his home. Thanks to Celie's care, Shug is able to recover and the two women begin friendship. Overtime, Celie learns to stand up for herself

and gain self-respect. Celie also learns how to love, as the two women become lovers as well as friends. Shug promises Celie that she will stay and protect her from the abuse of her husband.

Nettie

Nettie, meanwhile, finds refuge at the home of Samuel, the local reverend, and his wife, Corrine and Samuel have two adopted children, Adam and Olivia. Celie is actually the mother of these children; they were taken from her by her father before she married Mr.... Eventually the entire family, including Nettie, is sent to Africa for work as missionaries. They attempt to teach African children about Christianity. Nettie becomes involved in the struggle to educate a young African girl. Tashi, despite the wishes of her father, who believes that women should follow the custom of striving to become good wives. Nettie also enters a conflict with Corrine, who believes that Adam and Olivia are the result of an affair Nettie had with Samuel. Corrine is convinced that this is what happened because the children resemble Nettie so closely.

Nettie tells Samuel and Corrine that Celie is the children's original mother, but by now Corrine doesn't believe anything she says. When Corrine falls ill with a fever and comes close to death, Nettie becomes more desperate to make her believe the truth. Finally, Corrine remembers an early meeting that she had with Celie and dies understanding that Nettie had never had a relationship with Samuel. As the years pass however, Nettie and Samuel fall in love and marry.

Eventually the missionaries are unable to save the Olinka tribe, whose land has been taken by developers. They plan to return to America and rescue Celie from her unhappy marriage. Nettie chronicles her adventures in Africa by writing letters to Celie twice a year. These letters, however, are taken by Mr....and hidden from Celie who believes her sister is gone forever.

When Celie, with Shug's help finds out that Mr....has been hiding these, she make a stand and leaves Mr....'s house. She learns how to live life on her own and how to take care of others, all the while waiting for Nettie. After her departure from Mr... 's farm. Mr....and his son Harpo learn to be kinder to each other and to others. Celie enjoys a life of independence and eventually accepts and reconciles with the people who have treated her cruelly.

The climax of the novel occurs when Nettie returns with Samuel, Olivia, Adam and Tashi who has married Adam. After a tearful reunion, Celie after all her suffering is the happiest she has ever felt in her life.

Unique Structure of the Novel

The unique structure of the novel should be noted. Walker uses first-person narration that is the action of the novel and it is written through the eyes of the character Celie.

Celie's narration takes place in the form of letters, first to God, then her sister Nettie. Nettie's adventures are told through her point of view, through letters written to Celie. Therefore the plot of the text is actually two separate stories loosely connected through Celie's relationship with Nettie. Celie and Nettie comment on their shared experiences such as Celie's relationship with Mr... and the discovery of Celie's children, allowing the reader to fill the gaps left by only one perspective in narration.

Gender and Sexuality

Gender is the range of characteristics pertaining to and differentiating between masculinity and femininity.

Sexuality is diverse and deeply personal understanding. Our sexuality is about the sexual feeling and attraction we feel towards other people, not about who we have sex with.

What does sexuality mean?

1. Feeling or attraction to other people
2. Sexual thoughts and feelings
3. Sexual preferences

There are number of prominent themes in this novel. Gender and sexuality is the main theme in this novel. Alice Walker challenges and subverts both male and female gender roles with her strong characters. Initially, Celie is passive and subservient young woman, systematically beaten down and abused by men. She is prime example of the voiceless black

women of the era. Although the novel was published in 1982, its themes of gender roles, sexism, racial identity and racism are still relevant today.

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Technology Enhanced Language Learning: MALL

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Abstract

Initially mobile phones were used as voice transmitters but today it is influencing a large group of people as well as current academics in such a way that in future the whole process of learning and teaching will be put under a single idea: 'm-learning'. Today mobile learning is increasing among wide range of language learners through various apps and devices like iPods, WhatsApp and PDAs. This paper focuses on the use of mobile technology in language learning. This paper focuses on the use of mobile phones in enhancing the competency level of learners in learning English.

Introduction

Today we live in the world of technologies. The traditional classroom is shrunk and learning/teaching through the use of various devices like PDAs, multimedia cellular phones, MP3players and software applications is increasing day by day. Mobile learning is also called as m-learning, which is an integral part of e-learning. MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) can create a new environment for language learners. It provides a different perspective towards learning atmosphere in contrast to classroom-based learning. It helps in experiencing a new kind of learning beyond traditional way of teaching and learning language through broadening the space and creating a new platform for the learners.

We can define Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) as a process of learning a language, which is assisted or enhanced through the use of mobile device. It is a subset of both mobile learning and computer assisted language learning.

Needs

The fast spreading technology that is frequently used by people is mobile phone. It plays a dominant role in educational communication, which is used for transferring knowledge. Ten years ago, mobile phones were used as transmitters of human voice from one place to the other covering a wide range of geographical areas. Today it is used for various purposes like: Sending multimedia features and text (MMS), photos, videos and audio transfer, easy access to Internet (get connected with Google, email, etc.).

Mobile/ Cell Phones

The latest android, windows and software equipped operating system mobile phones can easily access Internet. The information regarding all subject fields are available in the Internet. This helps the learners in finding appropriate information from a wide list relating to the relevant subject topic. Through mobile phone the learners can send voice messages, text messages, photos, emails, SMS, and videos using different applications software.

Listed below are few mobile applications which promote language learning:

WhatsApp and Facebook

These are highly rated social media and networking used by people all around the world, especially youngsters. It is a kind of collaborative learning where the learners share the same learning platform (learning setup). Using these apps for learning, English can be learnt effectively as they undergo communicative language practice without the learner's knowledge. It helps in developing the learners' language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) as they send and reply text messages, listen and record audio clipping. For example, the learners can create a group, where they can send a word with phonetic transcriptions so that the members in the group can learn the correct pronunciation and then can make use of that word in a sentence too.

American English App

Through downloading this application the learners can listen to many audio clips with different accents (British as well as American). The learners who use British accent may find it interesting to learn American accent. There are work areas on reading comprehension where the learners have to read and answer the question. This helps the learners in enhancing their listening, reading and writing skills.

Story Board

This enables the learners to develop their speaking skill. Under this application the learners have to create stories with the help of websites like *zooburst* or *storybird*. Through this the thinking process of the learner is developed as they create their own story. It enhances the thinking skill of the learners, which is considered as one of the skills in language learning.

Kindle

It is an application, where the learners can download enormous collection of books. This helps the learners to use virtual books replacing the paper-material books. Thus they can carry any number of books without any difficulty. This app provides an option called ‘night mode’ where they can read the books even in darkness. This helps in promoting their reading skill.

Audio Translation Application

There are many standard dictionaries available in Google Play Store, where we can easily download the applications (Example: *Merriam-Webster* etc.). These dictionaries have audio recognizer which it recognizes a word or sentence and provide the user all possible matches. These dictionaries have access to Internet where they provide all details relating to words like *etymology*, *pronunciation*, *synonyms*, *antonyms*, *word transcription* and *accent*. Some dictionaries can be used through offline too.

Moblogs

Blogs are the recent development in educational technology, which can be used with the help of personal computers or laptops. Moblogging is a new application in language learning,

which is a combination of mobile and weblogging. Moblogs help in promoting language creation, especially writing and collaborative activities.

PDA's

Personal Digital Assistants have access to Internet and support wireless communication. These help in sharing files like text, images, audio and video among members or groups which helps in language learning and teaching. The recent development in PDA's is hand-writing recognition. This helps the learners to write directly as program accepts the input and it gives the same output. New intergraded PDA's have narrowed the gap with high speed, access to Internet, larger screen and functions which are similar to PCs and laptops.

IPods

IPods are similar to tablets. Digital audio files like MP3 provide quality sound in a compressed format. This helps the learner to listen the audio and learn the language. This can develop the listening skill of the learners. The latest iPods have the video option, where the learners can visually watch the video when they are listening.

Learning Occurs Collaboratively through MALL

An approach which is fully student-centered is known as collaborative learning. In this approach the instructor is more like a facilitator. This kind of learning encourages the learners in supporting the other learners in the group and motivates them to achieve the learning goal.

Language can also be learnt through collaborative learning using mobile phone where the device does not drive the learners but the learners do that process of gaining the knowledge.

Benefits

1. Time saving
2. Easily portable
3. The learners get easily attracted, which enables them to learn unconsciously.
4. Mobile phones are cheap compared to PCs and laptops.

5. Learners can utilize these devices outside the classroom.
6. Learners can study and practice in any place and time of their choice.
5. Easy access to Internet
6. Expand social inclusion in language learning.

Challenges

1. Slow processing (especially in those areas where the broadband connection is poor)
2. Font limitation and screen sizes for visually-disabled learners.
3. Learners' physical health concerns (differently abled).
4. Power limitation
5. No face to face interaction.

Conclusion

The present generation learners are known as 'digital natives' because at a very young age they begin using the gift of technology. Mobile device is becoming popular throughout the world. Language learning can be effective through MALL. It involves the principle of 'anytime anywhere' which enables the learners as and when required. It can provide a private space for the learners in learning the language. It supports a variety of interactive and collaborative learning approaches and techniques.

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