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Editors:

*Dr. Rajendrasinh Jadeja
Dr. Sunil Shah*

Assistant Editor:

*Dr. Nishant Joshi
Anna Patel
Amita U. Prabin*

Advisory Board:

*Vice – chancellor,
The EFL – U, Hyderabad*

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Editorial Correspondence:

*Dr. Sunil Shah(M) 96876 05009
H.M.Patel Institute of English
Training & Research
VallabhVidyanagar – 388 120.
Tel (O) 02692 – 230193
Email :ELTQ@hmpenglish.com
/sunilshah76@gmail.com*

To the Contributors:

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If your article is accepted for publication you will be intimated within fifteen days.

From the Editors' Desk

Dear colleagues,

We are pleased to once again bring to you another issue of ELT Quarterly! For reasons beyond our control we have clubbed two issues namely, October 2013-14 and December 2013-14.

The present issue is largely focused upon classroom practices, studies conducted on the same as also inclusion and innovations related to digital pedagogy in the classroom ranging from undergraduate to postgraduate levels. While some researchers have focused upon the classroom from an affective and a socio-psychological perspective, others have presented studies on digital practices in the language classroom as also effective assessment strategies. The dynamic nature of teacher and student roles has also been focused upon including studies delving in reflective practices of pre-service teachers. Additionally, this issue also contains two book reviews.

We hope this issue helps your own reflection related to your classroom and also fuels the need for further research in this area.

Happy reading!

Rajendrasinh Jadeja

Sunil Shah

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Exploring the optimal employment of digital pedagogy in the Japanese English classrooms from socio-psychological perspectives

Rieko Matsuoka

Introduction

In this globalized society, English as a lingua franca (Jenkins, 2009) has become an essential factor for Asian people to be successful in any area. Despite the limited time available for learning English, the participants of this study, who are Japanese college students in nursing, are expected to reach an advanced level of English proficiency since being active in the international healthcare settings is a part of the mission of their nursing college. As Chapelle (2009) points out, the integration of computer technology in language learning has provided opportunities for learners to engage with English beyond the classroom. Therefore, employment of digital technology or computer-assisted language learning (CALL) should be utilized in order to compensate for and maximize the efficiency of learning English within the limited class hours. In other words, because of limited classroom hours, they are expected to do their work outside of the class.

Now-a-days, the digitalized pedagogy has been employed widely including less developed countries such as Botswana (Mmani, 2012), and it seems vital to examine the precise benefits as well as negative effects caused by the digitalized learning system. The present study aims to examine the participants' attitudes towards

using the digitalized technology and to explore the optimal ways to enhance their learning English by utilizing the digitalized learning system, taking account of socio-psychological theories such as self-efficacy, autonomy, and self-regulated learning theory.

The research questions established for this purpose are:

- a) How long have the participants engaged in digitalized learning system and how their attitudes are related with other factors mainly based on quantitative data?
- b) How do they perceive the digitalized learning and how can their perceptions be interpreted using some socio-psychological and learning theories based on qualitative data?
- c) In what way are their attitudes enhanced for improving their English proficiency based on a) and b)?

Material

The TLT computer software program was used for this study.

TLT stands for 'Testing, Learning, and Training' and was developed as a learning strategy for Japanese by a subsidiary of Newton Press. This company acquired a patent for TLT from both the USA in

Rieko Matsuoka, National College of Nursing, Japan

1999 and Japan in 2006. This software has been applied for an online e-learning system including English learning. The company brochure (2010) explains that learners know their own proficiency levels by 'testing', they are supposed to learn only the items that they have not acquired by 'learning', and they need to repeat the items they have not learned until they acquire them by 'training'.

This software program includes the following features, each of which is endorsed with users' needs or wishes in brackets.

- a) choosing only items learners erred
[wish of spending time only for unlearned items]
- b) repeating each erred item until learners can answer it correctly three times
[wish of acquiring the items perfectly]
- c) avoiding messy inputs for efficiency
[wish of easy inputting system]
- d) owning multiple layered storage system
[wish of not forgetting the learned items]
- e) assigning 10-15 minutes practice for concentration

[wish of avoiding fatigue and boredom]

- f) storing weak items in the record
[wish of practicing only weak parts before the exam]
- g) providing support-system to enhance efficiency
[wish of easy accessibility to support system]

Participants

Fifty first-year students majoring nursing participated in this study. Their age ranges from eighteen to thirty-four but majority of them are eighteen to twenty who are fresh from high school. The average age is 18.82 as of June 30th, 2012. Regarding the gender, forty six of them are female, whilst four are males. Therefore 92 percent are female students. The diagnostic test provided by Newton e-learning company suggests their English proficiency levels as shown in Table 1. The test consists of listening and reading parts, each of which are 100 scores. Sixty-nine point twenty-two percent as a mean score can be interpreted that their English proficiency as a whole belongs to an intermediate level.

Table 1: Results of Diagnostic Test

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
listening	50	48.00	88.00	69.86	7.977
reading	50	52.00	88.00	68.46	8.367
total	50	103.00	170.00	138.44	14.085

Procedure

On the first class session in April, 2012, the participants were requested to do the TLT e-learning program as their supplemental homework in their English

classes. After five class sessions, the questionnaire regarding e-learning was administered in June, 2012.

The items of questionnaire are as follows, and the participants were asked

to respond to the items 3 to 13 using a 10 likert-scale.

1. Overseas experiences including holidays
2. How long did you spend for e-learning?
3. Do you want to be good at English?
4. Do you like English?
5. Do you like using computer?
6. Do you like e-learning in English?
7. Do you like speaking in English in general?
8. Do you like reading in English?
9. Do you feel that you are good at English? Do not be modest!
10. Can you read books in English?
11. Can you speak English?
12. Do you think e-learning should be included as your homework?
13. Do you think e-learning should be included for your grades?
14. Do you think e-learning should be done in class?

15. What do you think of e-learning? Why do you not do, for example?

Analysis

The statistical package of social studies: SPSS version 19 was used for analyzing the scaled and numeral data gained from the items 1 to 14. In addition to descriptive statistics, correlation coefficients were produced by using Pearson coefficient tool for discussing the relationships among the factors or features explicated in the items.

Regarding the item 15 the voices from the participants were elicited and categorized as strengths and weaknesses about the digitalized learning system as qualitative data. Certain socio-psychological theories such as motivation, autonomy, self-efficacy, and self-regulated learning were utilized for discussion in answering the research questions.

Results

Frequency of hours

Table 2 shows the frequency of hours (question item 2) that the participants reported.

Table 2: Frequency of Hours and Statistics

Hours	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
.00	7	14.0	14.0
.33	1	2.0	16.0
.50	5	10.0	26.0
.75	2	4.0	30.0
1.00	4	8.0	38.0
1.33	1	2.0	40.0
1.50	3	6.0	46.0
1.70	2	4.0	50.0
2.00	6	12.0	62.0

2.25	1	2.0	64.0
2.50	2	4.0	68.0
2.75	1	2.0	70.0
2.80	1	2.0	72.0
3.00	3	6.0	78.0
3.20	1	2.0	80.0
3.25	1	2.0	82.0
3.50	2	4.0	86.0
4.00	1	2.0	88.0
5.40	1	2.0	90.0
5.80	1	2.0	92.0
6.00	2	4.0	96.0
7.50	1	2.0	98.0
9.00	1	2.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	

Mean: 2.17 Median: 1.85 Mode: .00 Minimum: .00 Maximum: 9.00

The mean of hours spending for TLT e-learning was 2.17, whilst the mode was 0.00. The instructor asked the participants to spend some time doing e-learning at their spare time on the regular basis when they had a class biweekly. Therefore, in case they conducted the e-learning as their self-study for a few hours biweekly, the hours should have amounted to approximately 10 hours. The questionnaire data show that only one participant spent nine hours

during the five session time span whilst the most participants did nothing despite the direction as Table 2 indicates.

Descriptive statistics of scaled items

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of the questionnaire items from number 1 to 14. All the items except for items 1, 2 and 14 have a 10- Likert scale with the score 10 as the maximum and one as the minimum.

Table 3: Results of questionnaire items

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1.	50	.00	11.00	1.60	2.119
2.	50	.00	9.00	2.17	2.033
3.	46	1.00	10.00	8.43	1.893
4.	50	2.00	10.00	6.04	1.937
5.	50	1.00	10.00	5.26	2.302
6.	50	2.00	8.00	5.42	1.715
7.	50	1.00	10.00	6.02	2.352

8.	50	1.00	10.00	5.22	1.993
9.	50	1.00	8.00	4.46	1.951
10.	50	1.00	8.00	4.54	1.798
11.	50	1.00	8.00	4.30	1.787
12.	50	1.00	10.00	7.06	2.445
13.	49	1.00	10.00	5.92	2.405
14.	49	1.00	2.00	1.57	.500

The results indicate that many participants have been abroad (item 1: 1.60) and that the participants harbor considerably high level of desire in improving their English communication competences (item 3: 8.43). In other words, many of them have foreign experiences and they want to be good at English. The second highest score (7.06) is the item 12, meaning that the participants are supporting the idea of including the e-learning practice as their homework. In the area of motivational features, items 4 (Do you like English?) and item 7 (Do you like speaking in English?) have both scores above six, whilst item 8 (Do you like reading in English?) marks less than six (5.22). On the other hand, in the area of self-efficacy or confidence, items nine through eleven produced all below five, which means they are not very confident in English. In terms of their attitudes towards using computers, both item 5 (Do you like using computer?) and item 6 (Do you like e-learning in English?) mark the average; a little higher than five (5.26; 5.42).

These numbers suggest that the participants are considerably motivated in improving their English proficiency and they more or less like English but are fonder of speaking than reading in English, whilst they are less confident in speaking it than reading in English. In sum, their degree of self-efficacy or confidence is lower than that of their motivation, and they are moderately fond of using computers and of e-learning using computers.

Correlations

Pearson correlation coefficients were produced using the SPSS 19 for all fourteen scaled items in Table 3. As a result, 38 correlations were proved to be statistically significant with 27 at the 0.01 level and 11 at the 0.05 level. Among 38 correlations, the items directly related to digital learning employed (items 2, 6, 12, 13, and 14) are focused for this study.

Correlations with Item 2 [How long did you spend for e-learning?]

Table 4 shows the significant correlations with item 2.

Table 4: Significant Correlations with item 2

	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 14	
Item 2	Pearson Correlation	1	.339*	.280*	-.381**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.021	.049	.007
	N	50	46	50	49

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The first item of positive correlation with item 2 was item 3 [Do you want to be good at English?], with .339 coefficient. This means that the participants who are eager to improve English are more likely to spend time for e-learning practice using their free time. Item 4 [Do you like English?] has a slightly weaker coefficient with item 2, suggesting that the participants who like English are more likely to spend

time for e-learning. The third item with a significant correlation shows negative, which means the participants who spend more time for e-learning feel they do not need to do the e-learning practice in class.

Correlations with item 6 [Do you like e-learning in English?]

Table 5 shows the significant correlations with item 6.

Table 5: Significant Correlations with item 6

		Item 6	Item 5	Item 7	Item 14	Item 12
Item 6	Pearson Correlation	1	.308*	.286*	-.289*	.364**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.030	.044	.044	.009
	N	50	50	50	49	50

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The first item of positive correlation with item 6 was item 5 [Do you like using computers?] as is easily imagined. The participants who like using computers had stronger preference in e-learning in English. Item 7 [Do you like speaking in English in general?] also has a positive correlation with item 6. The participants who like speaking are more likely to spend time on e-learning and/or those who spend more time for e-learning like speaking better. The other positive relation with Item 6 is item 12 [Do you think e-learning should be included as homework?] When

they like doing e-learning, they feel more comfortable about e-learning being included as a homework or vice versa. The correlation with item 14 [Do you think e-learning should be done in class?] was negative in the similar way with the item 2. When the participants like doing e-learning, they do not need to do so in class.

Correlations with item 12 [Do you think e-learning should be included as homework?]

Table 6 shows the significant correlations with item 12.

Table 6: Significant Correlations with item 12

	Item 12	Item 7	Item 4	Item 8	Item 14	Item 12
Item 12	Pearson Correlation	1	.440**	.293*	.324*	-.411**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001	.039	.022	.003
	N	50	50	50	50	49

The first item of positive correlation with the item 12 was the item 7 [Do you like speaking in English in general?]. This means when they like speaking in English they are more likely to prefer including e-learning as homework. The second strongest positive coefficient was produced with the item 8 [Do you like reading in English?], and the third one was with the item 4 [Do you like English?]. These three items imply the participants' positive attitudes towards English and the learners seem to be inclined to be more

interested in including the e-learning as their homework. The negative coefficient was gained with the item 14 [Do you think e-learning should be done in class?]. The relationship between doing e-learning as homework and in class was negatively correlated.

Correlations with the item 13 [Do you think e-learning should be included for your grades?]

Table 7 shows correlations with the item 13.

Table 7: Significant Correlations with item 13

		Item 13	Item 7	Item 12
Item 13	Pearson Correlation	1	.385**	.513*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006	.000
	N	49	50	50

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The two items have reasonably strong coefficients with the item 13 [Do you think e-learning should be included for your grade?]. The stronger correlation was produced with Item 12 [Do you think e-learning should be included as homework?]. The participants who prefer e-learning as homework tend to prefer e-learning to be included for grading. The slightly weaker correlation was produced

with item 7 [Do you like speaking in English in general?], meaning the participants who like speaking in English tend to prefer to include e-learning as a grading criterion.

Correlation with the item 14 [Do you think e-learning should be done in class?]

Table 8 shows correlations with the item 14.

Table 8: Significant Correlations with item 14

		Item 14	Item 3	Item 7
Item 14	Pearson Correlation	1	-.452**	-.291*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002	.043
	N	49	45	49

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Two significant negative correlation coefficients were produced with the item 14 [Do you think e-learning should be done in class?] in addition to the above-

mentioned correlations with item 2 [How long did you spend for e-learning?], item 6 [Do you like e-learning in English?], and item 12 [Do you think e-learning should

be included as homework?]. The stronger coefficient was produced with item 3 [Do you want to be good at English?], which means that the participants with smaller motivation prefer to do e-learning in class. The weaker coefficient was produced with item 7 [Do you like speaking in English in general?], which may be interpreted that the participant with positive attitudes towards oral communication in English prefer not to include e-learning in class. Such learners seem to prefer face-to-face communication rather than e-learning practice facing the computer monitors.

Qualitative data from the participants

The item 15 provided real voices from participants and they were categorized into strengths and weaknesses as follows. Their voices may reveal the possibility of affordance.

Strengths of using the digitalized learning system

1. Availability of learning environment:
 - They can practice English anywhere only if the PC or smartphone is available.
 - At home or anywhere when they have some time and they can come in touch with English.
 - They can do this alone only if PCs are available.
2. Lower level of English resources in TLT program than the levels in classwork
 - By doing easy items, you feel more confident.
3. Repetition
 - does facilitate their acquisition and
 - is good for reviewing
 - enhances memory

4. They can enjoy learning just like you do play the game.
5. Audio availability is useful for listening practice.
6. They know where they are or their proficiency levels. .
7. They do not feel any forceful feelings.
8. They can move on the advanced steps in their own pace, which is motivating.

Weaknesses

1. They cannot do without the PC or smartphone.
 - Limited availability in case of not owning their PCs with internet connections.
2. Lack of concentration.
3. Learning style:
 - Analogic way using paper and pen is better than digitalized version for memory
 - Hand-writing is better for acquiring linguistic items such as vocabulary.
 - It is not good for learning spellings.
4. The program is not helpful for writing.
5. Physiological problem:
 - PC monitor screen exhausts eyes.
 - their shoulders get stiff.
6. They need to control themselves.

Discussion

Research question a) How long have the participants engaged in digitalized learning system and how their attitudes are related with other factors mainly based on quantitative data?

The first research question is concerned with the levels of participants' engagement in digitalized learning system and their attitudes causing their behaviors. The statistical results show that the participants spent 2.17 hours on average during five class sessions (item 2: see Table 2). As the class was held biweekly, five sessions are 10 weeks. This means the participants were engaged in digitalized learning system (TLT e-learning software system) for 13 minutes a week. Considering the fact that they had guidance for using the software system on the first session in April, majority of them did not seem to be motivated to conduct this e-learning. In addition, the fact that the mode was zero hours indicates the most participants did not even try to do e-learning using their own time.

On the other hand, the desire of improving their English skills (item 3) was the highest (8.43 out of a 10 point Likert-scale) among eleven items and this item was correlated with the item 2 (Pearson correlation coefficient: $p < .05$). The participants motivated in improving their English skills spent more time in e-learning. Also the high value on item 3 suggests that the majority of the participants are motivated in improving their English skills despite they did not invest themselves in utilizing the e-learning system.

As Table 4 shows, other items (4 and 14) are also correlated to the hours they spent for e-learning. Correlation with item 4 means the more they like English the more they spent in e-learning, and correlation with item 14 means the more they spent in e-learning the less they need in-class e-learning time. Levy and Kennedy (2010), for instance, argue the

optimal mix of in-class and out-of-class learning in the process of developing the materials, under the tight schedule with their majoring subjects, the English courses does not seem to afford in-class engagement of e-learning except for the first session of guidance and taking diagnostic test.

Regarding the PC availability, their college has some rooms equipped with PCs for their convenience. Through real voices in item 15 the participants pointed out both easy accessibility of and limited opportunities of using digitalized learning system as listed in number 1 in strengths and in weaknesses. Recently many participants have started to own their smartphones, which are the mobile phones equipped with capability similar to regular personal computer, and some have tried to do e-learning using their smartphones.

Research question b) How do they perceive the digitalized learning and how can their perceptions be interpreted using some socio-psychological and learning theories based on qualitative data?

In response of item 15, the participants contributed plenty of voices regarding the digitalized learning. Although majority of the participants were proved not to be engaged in it, the respondents provided valuable comments.

First, in number 2 in strengths, they pointed out the easy level of language contexts. As explained in the section of 'material', this digitalized program focuses on training through repetitive drills in order to complete the basic parts of English. By doing easy questions, the participants felt more confident and comfortable in doing this program. The statistical data on confidence or self-

efficacy shows they do not have high levels of confidence or self-efficacy on their English competencies (items 9, 10 and 11: see Table 2). Doing easy practice seems to make them feel confident. In accordance with the student in Matsuoka (2011), the participants may be successful in demonstrating improvement in various linguistic areas by using this digitalized program. Garcia and Arians (2000), in the same token, point out the improvement in the grammar domain, vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation by accessing computer-assisted resources. Computer-assisted learning seems to be successful in providing learners with enhancement in language learning and motivation as well.

Secondly, related to numbers 3 and 4 in strengths, and number 2 in weaknesses, the participants provided advantages as well as disadvantages of repetitive features of this program. As an advantageous point, repetitive drills helped them acquire English and facilitated their memory and they even enjoy doing so like playing the computer game (cf. Zhng, Young, Brewer, & Wagner, 2009) but as a disadvantageous point, the same repetitive drills developed mannerism and they eventually lost concentration. Behavioristic phase of this program (Warchauter & Healey, 1998; Matsuoka, 2011) seems to work effectively for some participants; while revealing certain amount of limitations in a digitalized program, comparing with a real face-to-face communication in English. In response of this negative feedback, the program developers argue that the repetitive drills help learners gain successful acquisition (Newton e-learning, 2010). As Warshauer and Healey (1998) point out, the paradigm based on behaviorism was particularly popular

in the USA, and plenty of interpreters working for Pentagon were trained mainly through repetitive drills-and-practice and memorization. In order to acquire a foreign language, learners may have to store sufficient amount of resources and drills-and-practice for memorization may remain vital.

Thirdly, as for learning styles (number 5 in strengths, and numbers 3 and 4 in weaknesses, the participants perceived this digitalized program to be useful in listening practice but not effective in vocabulary acquisition as they do not need to spell out in the program. They argued that the analogic way of learning using paper and pencil should be more effective in memorizing the spelling and in writing. These limitations may not be generalized as some digitalized computer-assisted programs have been developed in versatile manners (Dunkel, 1987). In fact, Veena and Kumar (2012) investigated the effectiveness of CALL program using the cognitive load theory framework and they found that students may enjoy improving their listening skill through the immediate feedback. Therefore, the digitalized learning style may be capable of enhancing the learning process in acquiring language.

Regarding the physiological problems, they pointed out that using computers make them deteriorate their eyes and stiffen their shoulders. Liquid crystal monitor may alleviate the eyestrains and temporary provision of eye drop may help them relax. Some light exercise between practices on the computer may be suggested for alleviating stiff shoulders for example.

Lastly, numbers 6, 7, and 8 in strengths, and the numbers 6 in weaknesses are related

to autonomy and self-regulated learning. Number 6 in strengths deciphers the importance of monitoring oneself, which may be prerequisite for having autonomy or being self-regulated. Numbers 7 and 8 in strengths are positive phases and number 6 in weaknesses is a negative phase about being autonomous and self-regulated. More specifically, when learners have autonomy and are self-regulated they are more likely to feel freedom and positively motivated in doing out-of-class digitalized learning program as they are competent in managing their skills, attitudes, knowledge (Wolters, 2010). As Jang, Reeve and Deci (2010) suggest, structure in pedagogy may facilitate the students learning language with their autonomy encouraged.

Research question c) In what way are their attitudes enhanced for improving their English proficiency based on a) and b)?

The third and last research question is concerned with pedagogical implications. There are several issues in the process of engaging the digital pedagogy. The first one is dealing with individual differences. Because of individual differences digitalized individualized learning system might be valued. For example, Chapelle and Heift (2009) investigated the different cognitive styles; the field independent and field dependent, and found the CALL can be efficient for different learners with different cognitive styles. Some participants for this study are field-independent who need less interaction and others are field-dependent who need sufficient interaction. Using the digitalized program in their own ways, such as doing exercise with their classmates or by themselves will enable learners to engage themselves in their preferable ways. The levels of self-regulation and autonomy

also vary; however, Pintrich (2004) argues that the underlying competencies, attitudes and beliefs necessary for self-regulated learning can be learned by most all students.

As above-mentioned, homework was listed the second highest in score in quantitative data (7.06: see Table 3). This can be interpreted that the participants feel that digitalized practice or e-learning should be homework. Fresh from high school, the participants may not be familiarized with doing some extra work autonomously, and may prefer to have homework. As in Warchauter (1996), Japanese people are less outspoken, compared with other nationalities, and culturally embedded as obedient instead of autonomous. In case that the learners are less self-regulated and inclined to be obedient, providing homework should be suggested. Even so, being self-regulated is vital in any learning context, and learners should try to be independent and to be able to control their lives eventually. Through doing homework, they may be able to routinize the work and to enhance their proficiency gradually.

Based on Gardner's dichotomized distinction of instrumental motivation and integrative motivation (Gardner, 1979), the desire of doing homework is instrumental motivation. However, once they are used to doing e-learning in this given context their proficiency level in English will be raised. Then they are expected to feel confident or to have self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). When they feel confident or to have self-efficacy, to be self-regulated or autonomous will be attainable. Then learners can manage their own learning process without homework.

The challenging portion in developing the optimal pedagogy is probably to decide or judge how much forceful requirement should be given to the learners.

Conclusions

The participants, who are expected to acquire the certain level of English proficiency under the condition of limited class hours, are required to take the digitalized language learning program. However, they have failed to complete the expected amount of work by themselves. Therefore, in order to explore the optimal employment of digital pedagogy, their attitudes including behaviors from socio-psychological perspectives were examined through questionnaire data. Consequently, three established research questions were answered as follows;

- a) How long have the participants engaged in digitalized learning system and how their attitudes are related with other factors mainly based on quantitative data?

The participants have not spent sufficient time for digitalized learning system though their motivation or desire of improving English is reasonably high. These two factors are positively correlated but in-class employment is negatively correlated. Their self-efficacy in English was proved to be not high, which may discourage their autonomous study. Limited accessibility to computers may impede some from being engaged in this.

- b) How do they perceive the digitalized learning and how can their perceptions be interpreted using some socio-psychological and learning theories based on qualitative data?

Both positive and negative features were provided regarding this digitalized learning system in terms of language levels and repetitive drills. In addition, comparison between digitalized version and traditional learning styles were conducted. The feature allowing autonomy produced positive and negative feedback, which should be a clue for exploring the optimal pedagogy.

- c) In what way are their attitudes enhanced for improving their English proficiency based on a) and b)?

Based on the data that the participants want to be assigned the digitalized learning program as their homework, provision of homework seems to be a starting point to raise their positive attitudes in learning English. Probably encouraged by cultural propensity of being obedient, the participants seem to have failed to be independently self-regulated learners. Through doing the digitalized program as homework, their self-efficacy will be developed, and eventually they will be autonomous and competent in controlling their own learning style.

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A critical study of language teaching practices at the Undergraduate level – Issues and Concerns - A Case Study

Harsha J. Patadia & A.V. Bharathi

Communication through second language [mainly English] has become increasingly important and the recent global trends have dramatically increased the need for functional communicative competence in languages. The English teacher has the responsibility of equipping his pupils with the skills they need to pursue their studies in all other subjects. But the present educational policies pose certain hindrances in the process of teaching English. The heterogeneous group consists of some highly motivated students and many weak and slow learners generate many difficulties to the teachers. To begin with, while teaching such heterogeneous groups, the teacher feels difficulty in selecting a common methodology which suits to the different needs of the students. This study was conducted to identify the problems encountered by the teachers while teaching English at the U. G. level. The study was conducted in all the commerce colleges of K. S. K. V. Kachchh University. The study attempted to identify some of the problems faced by the teachers at the U. G. level by means of administering a teacher's questionnaire to all the English teachers. The data collected were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. It concludes with some adaptable suggestions for minimizing the problems of language teachers.

Objectives of the Study:

- To study the Teaching Practices of English Teachers at the undergraduate level in context of Methodology of Teaching, Syllabus relevance, Use of Teaching Aids and Reference Materials and Examination and Evaluation Patterns.
- To locate the constraints and to suggest some adoptable measures to minimize the problems of Teaching-learning English at the first year level of graduation.

The present study is a survey type of study which is delimited to English Teachers, who teach at the first year of graduation (B.Com) level in commerce colleges affiliated to the K.S.K.V. Kachchh University, Bhuj.

Population and Sample of the Study:

All the English lecturers of all the Eight Commerce colleges of K.S.K.V. Kachchh University constituted the population for the proposed study.

All the teachers, teaching compulsory English or Commercial communication subjects at the F.Y.B.Com. level, from all the eight commerce colleges, affiliated to K.S.K.V. Kachchh University constituted the sample of teachers for the study.

Harsha J. Patadia, Professor, CASE, Faculty of Education and Psychology, The M.S. University of Baroda, Vadodara.

A.V. Bharathi, Associate Professor, Tolani Commerce College, Adipur.

Tools of the Study:

1. Questionnaire for the English Teachers.
2. Conduction of Focus Group Discussion

Data Collection:

The data collection was in the form of responses given by the respondents collected through questionnaire. The study intended to collect the data regarding regular teaching practices, syllabus relevance issues, and examination and evaluation aspects. The study attempted to identify some of the problems of teaching and learning of English at F.Y. B.Com level. Later on after identifying the lacunae in the process of teaching-learning, a Focus Group Discussion of Lecturers (teaching at F.Y.B.Com. level) was conducted under the monitoring of a senior ELT expert, Professor to obtain their suggestions to minimize the problems of ELT, in context of present study.

Data Analysis:

The collected responses were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The responses collected comprised of the opinions of the teachers and the experts of English. The frequency and percentage analysis were used wherever required. The Questionnaire contained 26 items pertaining to all the above mentioned aspects of English language Teaching-learning.

Major Revelations

- It was found that 88% of the teachers follow lecture method and another 75% of them revealed that they also adopt discussion method along with lecture method to teach their students.
- It was found that 88% of the teachers

prepare both the written and mental lesson plan before taking their lectures.

- It was found that all (100%) the teachers adopt the traditional mode of teaching and regularly use the conventional aids like chalk and duster as their teaching aids.
- It was found that the prescribed syllabus was not in tune with the objectives of language learning.
- It was found that 88% of the teachers mentioned that they could cover the entire syllabus in the stipulated time. All the teachers reported that they use grammar books, work books and related literature to teach their students in their regular classes.
- It was also found that only 12% of teachers are habituated to use the latest teaching aids and preferred technology enabled teaching aids.
- It was observed that marking system was more appropriate mode of assessment in comparison with the grading system.
- It was opined by 75% of the teachers that three hour duration of examination was not sufficient to judge the performance of the students properly.
- It was mentioned by 63% of teachers that the present examination pattern did not co-relate to the aims of syllabus in testing communication skills.
- It was found that 75% of teachers that the spoken English skill was not given any significance in the process of teaching and testing of academic

performance of a student at the college level.

- All the teachers (100%) opined that the system given maximum weightage to written communicative skills and reproductive abilities and ignored the remaining language skills like, listening, speaking and reading.
- It was told by the teachers that the teachers' efficiency, attitude, motivational abilities, knowledge, dedication, acquaintance with latest modern innovative tools, personal qualities and other attributes influence the overall teaching learning process of a language.

The analysis of the Teachers Questionnaire indicated that there was a considerable dissimilarity among the teachers order of priority of various aspects of English language teaching and testing. It was shocking to notice that the same options which were given the top priority by some teachers were assigned the lowest priority by others. This situation projected

the present scenario of English language teaching at the undergraduate level and it attempted to find out some answers to the questions posed in this regard. To quote some of those questions, (1) what could be the reason behind these individual differences of attitude among the teachers? (2) Does this reflect improper delivery of knowledge in the context in the capacity of a teacher? (3) Does it project the impact of individual attitudinal aspects on English language teaching?

The study revealed that though the environment remains the same, some teachers took initiative and make maximum sincere efforts to justify their professional responsibilities while some others simply blamed the barriers and impediments which hinder the entire process of English Language Teaching-Learning.

After identifying the lacunae in the process of English language teaching-learning, the study had found certain constraints in the process of English language teaching-learning. All the identified problems were discussed at length during the course of Focus Group Discussion.

Identified Constraints

Sl. No.	Constraints	Components
1	Administrative Constraints	1. Lengthy Syllabus 2. Incompatibility with the Syllabus 3. Examination Oriented System 4. Faulty Method of Teaching 5. Practical Difficulty in Evaluation
2	Pedagogical Constraints	1. Unawareness of the Objectives of Teaching English. 2. Lack of Training 3. Improper Lesson Planning 4. Teaching of Grammar

Administrative Constraints

The first segment of analysis focused on the Technical Constraints and the study identified some of the following mentioned problems which became impediments in the process of English Language Teaching-Learning.

Lengthy Syllabus

Majority of the teachers reported that syllabus prescribed at the UG level was too lengthy. Further, they conveyed that as the majority of the students lack the proper grounding, adequate foundation and they were unable to understand the concepts of textual contents and as a result of this, most of them consider English language subject as a tough subject. One of the participants expressed that he/she always feels the shortage and crisis of the time for completion of syllabus on time.

Incompatibility with the Syllabus

Majority of the teachers projected that there was a vast gap between the syllabus prescribed for commerce college students and its relevance of that knowledge in their practical lives. *The studies of Tedla (2007), Charudutt (2006), Desai (2002), Deshmukh (1997), Anjilvelil (1996), Frances (1985), Patil (1985) and Sundara (1984) observed that the syllabus of the English language at various levels was not in tune with the objectives of the teaching and the needs of the student learners.* All these researchers emphasized on the functional English course syllabus at this level. Hence, this inappropriate syllabus issue was projected as a problem, which constrained the teachers' efficiency of teaching.

Examination Oriented System

While sharing their experiences with others, some teachers expressed that the students basically focus on examinations only. They were not interested to develop language skills at all. Instead, they aim to pass the examination. They also mentioned that even at the personal level, sometimes the teacher would pamper their students. But the students were mainly interested in getting passing marks. They did not realize the importance of communicative abilities and their requirement of these skills in their personal/professional lives. This examination oriented learning procedure of the learners would sometimes trouble the teacher and the teacher would lose the spirit, initiative and enthusiasm. It was pointed out that when the students were not ready to go 'extra miles' for developing their language efficiency, this hostile attitude of the learners indirectly would discourage the teachers attitude and spirit. *The investigations of Neelaveni (2005), Patil (1985), Aziz (1984), Joshi (1984), Patrikar (1981), Gadgil (1978), Keller (1978), Sogani (1977), and Mishra (1968) have also supported this finding and highlighted the need to change the existing pattern of examinations.*

Faulty Method of Teaching

It was reported by many teachers that the present system of lecturing did not give enough scope for developing communicative and comprehensive abilities of the students. It was reported that some teachers enter into the class with the prescribed text book opens it and start reading the passage from the text themselves and then convey the meaning of those words to the students in their

regional language. It was also reported that some other teachers who adopted the direct method, teach English through the medium of English to heterogeneous group of students in each and every class. Thus, the style and the methodology of teaching varied from teacher to teacher and from college to college. Those teachers, who adopted the translation method, used regional language to the maximum extent. It was noted that this method would not leave any scope for the students to learn communicative skills in English language. So, the present system which did not emphasize on the development of all the four language skills was found to be totally examination oriented and teacher centered. Hence, this faulty method of teaching was also considered as a problem which posed some problems to the students.

Several other investigations by Chen, Meng and Sun (2010), Raja (2005), Arthur and Judith (2003), Kudesia (1987) and Natraj (1984) also confirmed this finding and observed that the present system was improper and suggested other techniques like Collaborative Learning and Group Discussion Techniques as proper methods of teaching language. Kudesia (1987) and Natraj (1984) emphasized on the effectiveness of Group Discussion Method. Liang (2002) had found that Cooperative Learning enhanced the oral communicative competence of the learners. Arthur and Judith (2003) had found that the discussion based instructional activities supported the development of understanding. Elliot (1997), Dave (1996), Padmaja (1996), Paliwal (1994), and Speth and Brown (1988) had also confirmed the significance of appropriate approach in language learning and emphasized on the Communicative Approach as the most appropriate one. Jadeja (1988) had found

that new techniques of teaching facilitated greater use of language within the class room. Kotak Gira (1981) found skills approach which developed the reading proficiency as the better one and Sabarwal (1978) had observed the Grammar Translation Method and Bilingual Method were most effective in comparison to other methods. All these findings indicated the need to change traditional lecturing style and recommended various other techniques and methods to promote better learning language abilities.

Practical Difficulty in Evaluation

Some of the above mentioned problems also cause some other co-related problems for both the teachers and the students. The issue of excessive strength of class was projected as a cause of concern which constrained the efficiency of the teacher. It was reported by some teachers that it would lead to some pedagogical problems for the teachers as the teachers could not give equal importance to all the four language skills during their lecturing except listening. It would also pose practical difficulties for the teachers in evaluating the students' performance in the class rooms individually. Further, it would also create some sort of gap between the teacher and the student as the teacher could not pay personal attention to each and every student in such large classes. However efficient the teacher might be, it was practically impossible for any teacher even to remember the names of the students in such large classes. In the same manner, the individual differences of the teachers and the students also affected the class room environment. Sometimes such overcrowded classes might also create some sort of managerial problems for the teachers. They could not facilitate

100% attentive listening due to the noise pollution created in the class room.

Pedagogical Constraints

Some of the revelations of the responses of Teachers Questionnaire pointed out some of the aspects, which indirectly influenced the teachers' teaching efficiency. The study included these components, under 'other located problems' which are shown under 'Pedagogical Constraints' segment. Hence, these problems were not discussed at length but were identified as some factors, which played a vital role in the process of teaching learning a language.

Unawareness of the Objectives of Teaching English Language

It was found that majority of the teachers were unaware about the objectives of teaching English. All the teachers can become lecturers after completing their post-graduation with a pass percentage of 55% at the post-graduation level. The students did not study communicative English or English language teaching as a part of their post-graduation and hence they were the masters of English literature and can teach English literature very effectively but could not have any idea about the primary aspects of language teaching. For commerce students, compulsory English and Commercial Communication are the two different subjects which are compulsory at the first year level of their graduation. Those students who had studied through English medium of instruction might develop better communicative abilities in English but it did not mean that without proper grounding and basic knowledge of business communication principles, they

could not draft the technical letters and reports as expected at this level. First, the teacher should try to understand the concept of commercial communication clearly and pass that information to the students properly. If either the student or the teacher did not understand the difference between teaching or learning a language and teaching or learning a poem that may create problems for both the teachers and the students. Hence, this was reported as a constraint, which de-limits the teacher efficiency.

Lack of Training

It was reported by many teachers that they did not have proper infrastructural abilities to adopt the latest techniques of language teaching. It was also pointed out that some of the teachers were not well acquainted with the latest efficient teaching techniques and they did not take any initiative to change their traditional pattern of teaching through lecturing. It was proved that the technology enabled teaching aids strongly influence the motivational aspects of the learners and successfully drag their attention towards the subject. But as the faculty members lack this ability to handle the technical tools in the class room efficiently they face problems in this regard. It was agreed that if all the teachers developed this ability in this technocratic society, it will definitely be helpful in developing the career of the present day students. *The results of several other studies by Wong (2010), Mishra (2005), Raja (2005), Rana (2000), Sharma (2000), Illangovan (1998), Bose (1996), Gupta (1996), Jadeja (1988), Sharma (1986), Jindal (1985), Barot (1995), Roy (1985), Bhattacharjee (1984), Sundara (1984), Khan (1982),*

Veena (1982), Saraswati (1981), Saraf (1975), and ELTI (1971) also emphasized on the need of 'professional training' to ensure better language learning abilities. Further, the results of this study reinforce findings of several other studies. For example, investigations of Satya (2008), Raja (2005), Vaidya (2002), Illangovan (1998), Bose (1996), Sita (1990), Jadeja (1988) had confirmed that technology enable audio-visual teaching aids facilitate the language learning in a better way.

The investigation of Illangovan (1998) discussed the effectiveness of audio-video intervention and Bose (1996) through his research study proved that the use of multi-media had proved beneficial for overcoming learning difficulties.

Improper Lesson Planning

The revelations of teacher questionnaire indirectly revealed that majority of the teachers did not know about the objectives of teaching English at the college level. The teachers' views on planning of their lessons revealed that unlike in schools, most of them did not have any specific plan of teaching their lessons. In schools teachers were directed to know what their task was, what they were trying to achieve by teaching English. It was found that some sort of planning about what to teach and when to teach should be mentioned specifically in the syllabus itself. But in colleges the teachers did not have any such direction regarding the lesson planning except the information of the syllabus content. The teacher had to decide his academic planning in consonance with the academic calendar of their university. The concerned teacher would decide himself about the choice of priority of different

segments included in the syllabus. The teachers' main emphasis would be on the completion of syllabus before the ending of the term. So, they as per their interest wanted to cover the course without having any idea about the aims and objectives of teaching either Compulsory English or Commercial Communication at this level.

Remedial Measures Suggested during the Course of Focus Group Discussion:

As the second objective of the study is to find out some remedial measures to minimize the ELTL problems, the study covered each and every constraint during the course of focus group discussion. The Focus Group Discussion concluded with the following remedial measures.

Professional Training: It is suggested that as professional training provides knowledge of various methods and strategies of language teaching and enables the teacher to diagnose the strength and weaknesses of the learners, proper emphasis should be laid on it.

Creation of Conducive Climate in the Class: It is suggested that the teacher should make the learners feel comfortable in English. The teacher has to develop homely atmosphere in the class room.

Appropriate Text Books: It is suggested that the Government and the Board of Studies, the syllabus designers should assess the appropriateness of the text books and their relevancy in accordance with the objectives of the curriculum, teaching methods and examination and evaluation system and so on.

Justification of Various Roles as a Teacher: It is suggested that the teacher

has to play the role of an informant at the presentation stage, the role of a conductor at the practice stage and the role of a guide at the production stage.

Emphasis on Spoken English: Considering the present day communicative needs of the society, it is suggested that oral approaches, situational teaching, audio lingual approach, communicative language teaching, which emphasize on all the aspects of skills and cognitive aspects should be implemented in the class room.

Enriched Class Room Environment: It is suggested that individual differences which are reflected in the language learning attitude of the learners can be tackled easily by enriching the class room environment and adopting innovative teaching strategies to ensure better language learning environment.

Reforms in the Examination System: The present system, as reported by majority of the teachers could not provide right feedback of the learners' performance in the right sense. So, it is recommended that appropriate modifications should be made in the present system of examination and evaluation.

Teaching of Grammar: Considering the career prospects of the commerce graduates, the course test design should include such practical dimensions of body language through Group Discussion, Viva-Voce and so on.

Proper Lesson Planning: Lesson Planning is essentially an experience in anticipatory teaching. It is living through in advance, mentally and emotionally, the class room experience as the teacher visualizes it. It is suggested that the teacher should think of a lesson plan which aims to minimize the

difficulties of the learners.

Modification in the Correction, Evaluation Procedure: It has been suggested that the process of the task of evaluation should be stimulating, interesting and absorbing for the teacher. The present stereotypic system has to be replaced by an innovative teacher friendly assessment procedure.

Provision of Orientation towards New Subjects: It has been noticed that the newly recruited college teachers are not oriented about the subjects they are supposed to teach at the UG level. In order to make the teaching and learning more useful, meaningful and relevant, there should be a provision to orient all the teachers towards these subjects. So, it is suggested that it is very much essential to have well qualified teachers, better equipped infrastructure and language laboratories to achieve the aims and objectives of language teaching.

Redetermination of Goals of Language Teaching: Most of the teaching and study of English in our universities and colleges, unrelated to any particular social context and purpose, and having no specific objectives or carefully planned program has become an aimless, lifeless and superficial activity in most of our class rooms (Mohan.1977). The study has revealed that majority of the teachers are unaware of the goals of the teaching and testing of a language. So, it is suggested that all the teachers should be informed about the changing goals which are to be emphasized in the present day scenario.

Syllabus Revision: Suitable books and reference material should be made available and the material should be prepared, keeping in mind the learning interests of different learners. It has been suggested

that the need based language courses which improve the teacher efficiency and promote efficient ELTL should be implemented.

Language Laboratory: The study revealed that the present syllabus and curriculum do not cater to the needs of the present day generation. So, all the colleges should be encouraged to initiate with language laboratory facilities to encourage and providing better language learning opportunities.

Teaching Strategies: It has been observed that some methods of teaching have greater motivating power in built in them than others. It has been suggested that the Discussion method of teaching is significantly more effective in creating interaction in the class. So, the teacher has to follow an innovative strategy to motivate the students' language learning attitude.

Usage of Audio-Visual Aids: Innovative techniques should be made in the curriculum with the advancement of ELT and Communication Technology. Audio-visual teaching, OHP, Internet should be encouraged with the change of time. So, all the teachers should be acquainted to use these latest tools of teaching quite frequently in their class rooms to motivate their students further.

Encouraging Project Works: Involving learners in team projects motivates them towards engaging themselves in such team works. The competence and strategic planning potential of the teachers of English combines with the interest and technical skills of students. This sort of involvement improves the overall development of the teacher and the learner. It will lead to vocabulary development, enhancement of computer

skills, and systematic improvement in framing sentences and so on. So, this type of project works should be encouraged.

Communicative Language Teaching: This has become the most preferred approach of the teaching of English and it is widely spread in the entire world. So, it was suggested that all the teachers should be encouraged to follow CLT approach in their classes.

Developing Compatibility with the Syllabus, Method, Strategy of Teaching and Testing: It has been revealed that the curriculum is not suited to the present day needs of the learner. The syllabus prescribed is out dated and irrelevant. The system of our examination and evaluation has been criticized by majority of the teachers and the students. It has been mentioned that the system lays emphasis on only reproductive memorizing skills of the learners. It will not leave any scope to check what the learner has actually learnt. There is no provision for checking the level of their achievement and proficiency. So, it was suggested that there should be a comprehensive system which has compatibility with the syllabus, method, strategy of teaching and testing.

Teachers' Awareness of the Objectives of Teaching and Testing and Proper emphasis on language skills: As per the findings revealed through the Teacher Questionnaire, it was noticed that a majority of the teachers did not have clear idea about the objectives of teaching a language. So, it was recommended that all the teachers should be oriented towards the goals of their teaching and testing of a language thoroughly. The confusion about the goals of teaching a language should be made clear to all the aspiring teachers.

Thus the study confirms the need to focus on the remedial measures as mentioned above to ensure better language teaching-learning.

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A Study of Pre-service English Teachers' Reflectivity enhanced through a Series of Action Researches on their Classroom Performance

Anil Varsat

Introduction

English in India today is a symbol of people's aspiration for quality in education and a fuller participation in national and international life. Its colonial origins now forgotten or irrelevant, its initial role in independence of India, tailored to higher education (as a "library language", a "window on the world"), is now felt to be insufficiently inclusive socially and linguistically, the current status of English stems from its overwhelming presence on the world stage and the reflection of this in the national arena. It was predicated that by 2010, a surge in English-language learning will include a third of the world's people (Graddol, 1997). The opening up of the Indian economy in the 1990s has coincided with an explosion in the demand for English in our schools because English is perceived to open up opportunities (Das, 2005) (NCERT National Focus Group on Teaching of English 2006 (P, 61). The visible impact of this presence of English is that it is today being demanded by *everyone* at the very *initial* stage of schooling. One of the significant functions of education in India is also directly linked with national development. There has been a phenomenal increase in the sum total of knowledge and growth of knowledge is also ever increasing. To cope successfully and adjust effectively with this age of continuous change which

is rapid, intricate and persuasive, a teacher has to be trained thoroughly so that s/he understands the nature of Indian society, as it has evolved from the past, as it is today and as it is likely to develop in future. The integral relationship between education and society with specific reference to the contemporary socio-cultural, political and economic issues and the multidimensional nature of teachers' role as catalytic agent in the society therefore, the teacher has to see himself not only as a prime source of knowledge but as an organizer of learning and learning experiences. It is a known fact that good teaching can be done through experiences in the classroom. To perform these roles successfully, action research and reflection are required for all categories of teachers to become good teachers. It is, therefore, logical and reasonable to use this approach for pre-service teachers of English.

Use of Action Research and Reflective Thinking in Teacher Education

Teaching and learning are malleable practices that occur in the complex ecologies of individual, social, cultural, and political settings and in the interactions of local and global contexts. Therefore, teacher quality and the evaluation of effective teaching are dependent upon student outcomes; gains demonstrated by a

Anil Varsat, Assistant Professor, H M Patel Institute of English Training & Research, Vallabh Vidyanagar

wide range of students who bring diverse experiences as well as other social factors found in classrooms. A recent paradigm shift in the focus of educational research and the role of teachers and teacher educators (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 2006) might address the challenge of how to appropriately measure teacher performance. It is possible that teachers themselves, through their own problematization of the teaching and learning process within the contexts where they work, and through their own research can be used to closely examine their role as change agents and decision-makers (Alsop, Dippo, & Zandvliet, 2007), particularly when supporting the literacy needs of struggling readers. Reflection is a significant component of self-study and action research (Mills, 2003) as it is a powerful way to know about the self in research and practice as well as to unpack the very self in teaching practice. Reflective practice in teacher education allows teacher educators to explore how teachers learn by including "I" in an epistemology of reflective practice (Whitehead, 2000). Reflective pedagogy also helps teachers closely examine current practices and spearhead changes as teacher leaders (Reason & Reason, 2007) (as cited in Carrie Eunyoung Hong and Salika A. Lawrence, 2011)

Need of the Study

The researcher was inspired to take up this research because of his experience as a teacher educator with B.Ed. (English) students at H. M. Patel Institute of English Training & Research. He had observed that a large number of students have low proficiency in English in spite of their graduation or post-

graduation. This affects their performance in various practice teachings such as Stage Teaching, Block Teaching, Off-campus and Internship. The researcher felt that if they were good at English, they would perform classroom teaching more effectively and also develop confidence.

The call to prepare Pre-service teachers to reflect on their teaching is a dominant theme in recent times for Pre-service teachers. In the context of Indian situation, reflective teaching is a new concept in the field of teacher education. There is a great need to undertake a series of studies, particularly in our country, so that reflective approach could become an integral part for Pre-service teacher and this will help him/her to be an excellent teacher.

One more reason that motivated the researcher to undertake this research was the present status of English Language Teaching in Gujarat. Through his personal visits to various schools as part of Block Teaching and Off Campus programmes, he has observed that English language teaching is not given appropriate justice at Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary schools. To improve education on the whole in our country, we need to start it again from the Pre-service teachers because reconstruction of Pre-service teacher education is highly essential for teacher's professionalization and empowerment. It is a corroborated fact that the progress of any nation squarely rests on the teachers, so that Pre-service teacher has to act as a facilitator and mentor in organizationally focused active learning in order to keep pace with the growing needs of the society. For maintaining quality and achieving excellence in pre-service teacher education action research and reflective teaching is highly essential.

Rationale of the Study

The study proved significant for the pre-service English teachers of B.Ed. (English), at H M Patel Institute of English Training & Research, Vallabh Vidyanagar, Anand, Gujarat and in other B.Ed. programmes. The study provided significant data and helped in arriving at rational conclusions about the effect of the Action Research. This study also made the teachers aware about the drawbacks in their teaching strategies as well as the use of English language. This became possible because they received feedback from their own peers and supervisor. The interaction with pre-service teachers would help the researcher in further planning for teaching English.

Research Questions

1. Can series of action research enhance reflective thinking of Pre-service teachers?
2. Can series of action research based reflective practices instill professional attitude towards teaching in pre-service English teachers?
3. Do the pre-service teachers' enjoy reflective practices while teaching?
4. To study the effectiveness of action research as a reflective tool in terms of:
 - i. Pre-service English teachers' performance on professionals expertise scale.
 - ii. Pre-service English teachers' classroom performance in using English.
 - iii. Pre-service English teachers' opinion towards the strategy.
 - iv. Pre-service teachers' personality attributes.
5. To identify problems faced by pre-service English teachers during classroom teaching.
6. To study/know ways of remedy used by pre-service English teachers in their teaching.

In order to answer these questions, it was necessary to undertake such a qualitative study.

Objectives of the Study

1. To develop a plan for conducting action research for pre-service teachers of English.
2. To prepare the necessary tools to evaluate the defined criteria for

classroom performance of pre-service English teachers.

3. To study the effectiveness of action research as a reflective tool in terms of:
 - i. Pre-service English teachers' performance on professionals expertise scale.
 - ii. Pre-service English teachers' classroom performance in using English.
 - iii. Pre-service English teachers' opinion towards the strategy.
 - iv. Pre-service teachers' personality attributes.
4. To define the criteria for action research to improve pre-service English teachers classroom performance.
5. To identify problems faced by pre-service English teachers during classroom teaching.
6. To study/know ways of remedy used by pre-service English teachers in their teaching.

Variables of the Study

The word 'variable' means which can change. The factors which affect any experiments are called variables. In the present study following variables were considered:

1. Independent variable: Action research as tool of reflective practice is independent variable.
2. Dependent variable: Pre-service English teachers classroom performance, development and personal attribute test are dependent variables.

- Control variable: Pre-service English teacher is control variable.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

- There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of pre and post test of personality attributes.
- There will be no significant difference in the overall performance of pre-service teachers.
- Pre-service teachers will develop a professional attitude towards teaching by conducting action research.

Delimitation of the Study

- Action research was confined only to selected pre-service teachers' who enrolled themselves in B.Ed. (English) course during the academic year 2012-2013 and who were graduates or post-graduates with English as their special subject.
- The study was confined only to the classroom performance of the pre-service teachers.
- The researcher dealt with series of action researches which affected pre-service teachers' classroom performance during various practice teaching phases only.
- The researcher mainly focused on how to improve classroom performance by using the action research as tool and reflective thinking.

Population and Sample

Out of the total population, i.e. 100 pre-service teachers enrolled in B.Ed.

(English); the researcher selected 32 pre-service teachers from B.Ed. English of H M Patel Institute of English Training & Research, Vallabh Vidyanagar, Anand, Gujarat.

Thus, the researcher went for purposive sampling keeping in mind the variables of gender and stream of education. Thus total 32 pre-service teachers were the sample of the study.

Research Design

The researcher used a single group pre-test post-test design. Purposive sampling technique was used for selecting pre-service teachers for the present study. Preparation of the study: the first objective of the study was to develop a reflective training strategy to train pre-service teachers of English. For this purpose (1) the need of the pre-service teachers was identified (2) the entry behavior of the pre-service teachers was identified (3) in the light of the need of the pre-service teachers relevant components were identified, incorporated and integrated into a strategy. It was validated through discussion with experts on the campus. In the light of the discussion and suggestions required modification was made in the strategy. The data was analyzed qualitatively as well as quantitatively. The quantitative analysis was based on the data obtained through the pre-test and the post test. The qualitative analysis was based on the analysis of video recorded classroom interaction.

Tools for Data Collection

An opinionnaire and a test for personal attributes were prepared. The second

objective of the study was to find out the effectiveness of the strategy in terms of the pre-service teachers' personal attributes and professional expertise, students' performance in English, pre-service teachers' liking for the strategy and opinion of the co-operating teachers regarding the feasibility of the strategy. Post test was conducted on the same group and performance in English. Feedback from the group was taken, oral interviews were also conducted, and their journal, diary, and school student's responses were also taken into consideration.

For finding the effectiveness of the strategy on the pre-service teachers' personal attributes, a personality test was administered and for the effectiveness on the professional expertise, a rating scale was prepared, both this test and rating scale was used at regular intervals.

In order to find out the pre-service teachers liking for the strategy opinionnaire was prepared and administered at the end of practice teaching sessions.

Collection of Data

Action Research and Reflective Teaching

The pre-service teachers were provided materials about what action research and reflective thinking are before practice teaching started. During the stage teaching researcher asked them to write reflective diary after delivering the lesson. Six sessions were conducted to ascertain how action research and reflective teaching helps to develop classroom performance. The classes were conducted considering the recent language teaching approaches to English as a second language. Some of

the problems regarding classroom teaching were identified during the stage teaching programme and they were given treatment to improve it by using action research and reflective thinking. The researcher conducted classes for pre-service teachers before taking them out for block teaching programme in the school in order to teach them how to identify problems of students and then how to undertake action research. They were asked to observe of peer trainees lessons. Feedback was given to each trainee teacher by the end of the lesson. They wrote diary after delivering each lesson.

Pre-test of personal attributes

They were given a test for personal attitudes as a diagnostic test by the end of block teaching programme. There were 33 statements regarding practice teaching and to which they were to respond each. Pre-service teachers marked appropriate option against each statement. The options were: No 1: never, no 2: rarely, no 3: not sure, no 4: some times and no 5: always.

Post-test of personal attributes

The post-test of personal attributes was administered as an achievement test by the end of internship programme. There were 33 statements regarding practice teaching and to which they were to respond each. Pre-service teachers' marked appropriate option against each statement. The options were: no 1: never, no 2: rarely, no 3: not sure, no 4: some times and no 5: always.

Questionnaire

They were given questionnaire of 22 questions which were divided into three sections. Section I, was about their personal details. Section II was about reflective

teaching. There were multiple choice and descriptive questions. Section III was about their personal experience about action research and reflective teaching.

An opinionnaire was also given to the trainee teachers at the end of the programme. Then personal interviews of the participants were conducted with a view to get feedback about the action research.

Diary writing

Pre-service teachers wrote diary of 40 lessons which they delivered throughout the year as part of practice teaching. They responded 5 questions on lesson objectives, 3 questions on activities and materials, 4 questions on students, 8 questions on classroom management, and 1 question on overall about the lesson which they taught.

Video recording

Video recording proved much supportive to the pre-service teachers. Which made a permanent record of contextual and paralinguistic data, such as blackboard work, the layout of the classroom, movement, gestures, facial expressions. The researcher recorded 10 lessons of each pre-service teacher.

Analysis of the Data

As mentioned in research design action research classes were conducted and trainees were given treatment. A test for personal attributes was administered at the end of block teaching programme and the same test was administered at the end of practice teaching programme in order to check prior differences about their liking for action research. Along with same test questionnaire and opinionnaire

were administered towards the end of the practice teaching programme to measure the effectiveness of the series of action researches on their classroom performance. For data analysis the researcher used qualitative and quantitative methodology.

Major Findings of the Study

➤ The data analysis showed a significant difference between the mean scores of test for personal attributes administered at the beginning of block teaching programme and the test administered at the end of the internship programme of the pre-service trainee teachers at the end of the tryout of the study of pre-service English teachers' reflectivity enhanced through a series of action researches on their classroom performance. Hence, it could be concluded that the series of action researches was effective in helping the students to develop their classroom performance.

➤ A significant difference was observed between the test for personal attributes administered at the end of block teaching programme and the test administered at the end of the internship programme of pre service trainee teachers with respect to certain rating scale like 'always', 'sometimes', 'rarely', 'never' and 'not sure' leading to the conclusion that the series of action researches was effective in helping the pre-service teachers overcome their classroom mistakes.

➤ A significant difference was observed between the early stage of diary writing and later on by the end of practice teaching. A significant improvement was observed among the trainee teachers' in terms of teaching lessons, preparing

lesson plans, blackboard work, classroom language, treatment to the learners and classroom management. Diary writing proved very effective in helping the pre-service teachers to overcome their classroom problems.

➤ There was no significant difference observed between the overall performances of the pre-service teachers in terms of gender. Thus, it is concluded that the series of action researches had the same effect on the pre-service teachers' irrespective of gender.

➤ Findings from the questionnaire filled in by the pre-service teachers revealed that the series of action researches had impact on trainee teachers. It motivated trainee teachers increase faith in their ability to deliver the better lesson in the classroom.

➤ The pre-service English teachers opinion on the action research and personal interviews conducted at the end of the practice teaching programme revealed that the trainee teachers enjoyed the overall action research study. The trainee teachers found that the action research and reflective teaching were need-based and very interesting in nature.

Conclusion

To meet the demand of a swiftly changing society, it is important that teachers actively study the practice of teaching. Action research allows educators to study and improve the teaching and learning process. It bridges the gap between theory and practice. Because of this connection, the process of action research allows the teaching profession to take a zealous lead in determining the

future of educational practices. Educators must embrace the responsibility of the study, the way in which we teach and learn. This study proves that as teacher engage in action research they are increasing their understating of the school process what teachers are learning will have great impact on what happens in classroom, schools, and districts in the future. Action research implies adopting a deliberate openness to new experiences and processes, and, as such, demands that the action of educational research is itself educational. By consciously engaging in their own educational development, teachers expand both professionally and personally; and it is this personal commitment that counts in the process of human enquiry.

Without personal commitment, teaching is no more than what appears on the curriculum, and learning the product of a schooled society. For maintaining quality and achieving excellence in education reflective teaching is highly essential.

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Nativism, Rootlessness, Homelessness, Dislocation, and Identity Crisis in A House for Mr. Biswas by V S Naipaul

Bhaskar Pandya

Prelude

Originally, an eminent writer of Commonwealth, V S Naipaul's contribution is pretty significant even in the postcolonial era. Though an expatriate of the present time especially among the writers of Indian origin, as a matter of fact, he is the seventh Indian or person with Indian roots to be awarded with the Nobel Prize and second for literature after Rabindranath Tagore. He is considered to be one who has with his brilliant skill of language and fascinating narrative technique swept the western world off (Khan, 1998). His works portray diverse experiences of his life. They also present his heartfelt concern for the colonized cultures. Initially, he portrays his own world of Trinidad and then his experiences as a journalist, his travelogue and nonfiction novels have made him a prominent figure; actually the greatest living writer writing in English.

Biographical Facts

V S Naipaul was born in Chaguanas, Trinidad on August 17, 1932. Trinidad is one among many islands which together are called West Indies. Trinidad and Tobago are the southernmost islands of the Caribbean archipelago. Geologically, they are an extension of the South American continent. Particularly, Trinidad is separated from Venezuela by 11 Kms (seven miles).

Indigenous people, mainly Caribs and the Arawaks inhabited the island. Later, it was discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1498. It was in the regime of Spanish from 15th century itself to the time the British Empire captured it in 1797. Later on, it became an independent country in 1962.

Naipaul is the eldest son of a second-generation Indian. His Hindu grandfather had emigrated there from West India as an indentured servant. He, actually, had migrated from India (particularly Benares in Uttar Pradesh which is now called Varanasi) to teach the Indian cane-workers of Trinidad. His father, Seepersad (1906-53), was a journalist and an equally good literary writer. He was a reporter in the Trinidad Guardian and also published a collection of short stories under the title *Gurudeva* and other Indian Tales in 1943. His literary aspirations were inherited by Vidiadhar and his brother, Shiva Naipaul. Shiva was highly talented. He was achieving great heights and a very high level of popularity. But, unfortunately, he passed away in an accident at a very early age, when he was in his early thirties. He also published a novel entitled *Fireflies*. He has a collection of short stories to his credit, too.

The family moved to Port of Spain, where Naipaul attended Queen's Royal College, Trinidad. He was awarded Trinidad government scholarship in 1948. With the

Bhaskar Pandya, Head, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Faculty of Management Studies, CHARUSAT, Changa

help of the same, he studied literature in England at University College, Oxford beginning somewhere in 1950. He, actually, left Trinidad for England in 1950 and he also did his Honours at Oxford University.

After his graduation in 1953, Naipaul worked for the BBC. As a writer, he hosted the 'Caribbean Voices' programme between 1954 and 1956 and later on, also worked as the editor of the same. He also worked with the literary journal, *The New Statesman* between 1956 and 1960.

He also got married to an English woman - Patricia Ann Hale - in 1955. Unfortunately, she died in 1996. So, after sometime he remarried to a Pakistani woman named Nadira. Since then, he lives in Wiltshire, England.

He has been travelling extensively and writing many successful and internationally acclaimed novels, short stories, and essays.

V S Naipaul was knighted in 1989 / 1990 by the Royal family. He has many awards and accolades to his credit for his brilliance that is manifest in his works like John Llewelyn Rhys Memorial Prize, Somerset Maugham Award, Hawthornden Prize, W. H. Smith Prize, Booker Prize, The Nobel Prize, to name but a few.

Naipaul's Bent

V S Naipaul is primarily considered to be a writer of diaspora. He is the one who through his characters expresses the theme of identity crisis and rootlessness. He is, as the critics regard him, the best known for it in the literary world. Though not so explicit, without any doubt, all his writings have a very close relationship with his own personal life. "In between *The Mystic Masseur* (1957) – his first work

and *Half a Life* (2001), he has produced a very huge corpus of writing that includes novels, short stories, non-fictional novels, travelogues, fictional biographies, fictional autobiographies, journalistic writings and history, proper among others" (Mehta, 2004).

A detailed study of his works put before us history of his family, of (Caribbean) Trinidad and Indo-Trinidadian families, and their socio-cultural alterations resultant of colonialism. He also portrays other cultures; obvious among them is England. England and its culture is evident in his culture primarily because of the colonial impact. It is evident also because it gave Naipaul an identity. Naipaul also looks at India and many West Indian, South American and African countries, Iran, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, and the United States.

Further, Naipaul believes, "To take an interest in a writer's work is, for me, to take an interest in his life; one interest follows automatically on the other" (Naipaul, 1980).

The names and personalities of great writers are as much a part of literary heritage of a nation as their works. Would the literature of any country be the same, if we were left only with the works and knew nothing of the men behind them? In spite of all that has been said against the biographical approach, the writer's life still remains key to a deeper understanding of his or her work (Joshi, 1994).

Nativism, Naipaul and A House for Mr. Biswas

Naipaul has been suffering from Identity Crisis. Rootlessness has been his

prime concern in his works. We do not know whether India is his native place or Trinidad where he was born or the Great Britain of which he has the citizenship. It is because “born in Trinidad, he is an Indian by ancestry, a Trinidadian by nativity and British by residence as well as intellectual training and inclination” (Joshi, 1994). He was born into exile, separated from his racial and cultural roots and again driven into another exile from the land of his birth followed by the third dispossession in England. There are found to be three nativistic forces in him. First is his displacement from his ancestral land – India; second one is his second time displacement from his native land – Trinidad; and the third one is the influence of his father. It is said, “He has explored with great sensitivity the predicament of the exile – the pain of homelessness and of loss of roots” (Joshi, 1994).

A House for Mr. Biswas is Naipaul’s fourth novel that established his reputation, and in a sense, these earlier stories are still the immature fruit of his apprenticeship. They are less dense, less allusive than the later novels, and in place of the brooding vision of the third world embodied in such books as *Guerrillas* and *A Bend in the River*, there is a humorous appreciation for the vitality of the populous Caribbean world.

A House for Mr. Biswas is without any doubt one of the most personal of the novels by Naipaul. Actually, the character of Mr. Mohun Biswas is created after his father – Seepasad Naipaul. Further, the novel is also about his efforts of establishing himself. In a way, the house, in the title, is an assertion of his identity. “Since the days of Adam’s expulsion from the Garden of Eden, man has been looking

for a house; this primal search for shelter has become so much deeply entrenched that it has turned out to be an archetypal aim of all individuals” (Bala, 2003). The longing for a sovereign house is equated with asserting one’s own identity without others’ support - be it material or moral. However, gradually it becomes a pathetic struggle for a house where one can easily and freely express himself or herself. Mr. Biswas goes on,

I am going to get a job of my own.
And I am going to get my own house too.
(67)

There is also a song sung by Amy in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* which also depicts the importance of selfhood and identity, having some roots. The song is:

Through the muck and mist and gloam
To our quiet cozy home,
Where to sing sweet and low
Rocks a cradle to and fro. (81)

This sort of a quest for selfhood of a protagonist who is homeless, nameless and without individuality, personal status, independence and identity is narrated in a definite pattern wherein the protagonist moves from thesis to anti-thesis and back to thesis. It is also modelled on Naipaul’s father’s short story, “They named him Mohun”. It is an autobiographical work that draws upon an experience totally based on layered levels of alienation and exile.

The novel begins with the fact that Mr. Mohun Biswas, a journalist who lived on Sikkim Street in the St. James district of Port of Spain (the capital of Trinidad and Tobago), was fired from his position at the *Trinidad Sentinel* ten weeks before he died. Before his death, he had been ill for

quite some time, spending so long at the hospital and recuperating at his home that, eventually, the paper was forced to let him go, giving him three months' notice and a complementary lifetime subscription.

The entire life of Mohun Biswas was, actually, filled with misfortune (and the death even was tragic and untimely). Further, he is born with the evil sixth finger. In addition, their Maid also proclaims that he is an ominous baby. He is predicted to be a lecher, a spendthrift and a liar. It was also predicted that he would eat his own parents. And, when looking for his missing son Raghu drowned in the river, the proclamation was considered to be true. He, gradually, gets so poorer that he is reduced to a skeleton; and is also dotted with eczema scars. It is resultant of the malnutrition and social neglect. He is found to be fit for nothing. Even in the school, he is ridiculed by his teacher, Mr. Lal. He goes to the extent of compelling him to write on the blackboard that he is an ass and the class also giggles.

The fact is: Mr. Biswas was born in a village with all ill omens. His entire family is scattered after his father's death. Even he had to move with his mother to Pagotes. At school he discovers a talent for lettering, and, that is why, he, then, becomes a sign-writer. As the financial condition of the family is not good, so, he is sent, by his aunt Tara, to a pundit to learn to learn Hindu rituals. Unfortunately, he leaves in disgrace after eight months. Then, he goes to work in a rum shop run by Tara's brother-in-law. There, he is wrongfully accused of stealing a dollar. So, he again leaves the place and joins one of his school friends in the sign-writing business. For the same, he happens

to go to Hanuman House. It is the home of the Tulsis. He is, then, trapped there. Somehow, he happens to marry Shama, the sixteen-year-old daughter of Mrs. Tulsi. He is also expected to join the family and live there by working on the land with the other members of the family. He is not happy there. He rebels immediately. But, unfortunately, he is without any money or position of his own. So, he finds himself dependent on the Tulsis.

He, actually, disrupts the smooth running of the house. He is sent to a small rural village, The Chase, to act as manager of a Tulsi food shop. There, he spends around six years. His family grows. But the shop, continually, loses money. As a result, his family has to spend an increasing amount of time at Hanuman House.

Later on, he also joins them there. Again he is sent to Green Vale to act as an overseer for Mrs. Tulsi's powerful brother-in-law. The work does not suit him. He constantly feels persecuted by the labourers under him. He also suffers a mental breakdown. He has to return to Hanuman House because the house he had built was destroyed by a storm. He had to have it recovered. Again for his livelihood, he leaves the Tulsis and goes to stay with his sister in Port of Spain. He finds some work as a journalist on the Sentinel newspaper. This also leads to his reconciliation with the Tulsis. He also goes to live with his family at Mrs. Tulsi's house in the city, which she also shares with her younger son, Owad, till the time, he is sent abroad for study.

A close relationship develops between Mr. Biswas and his son Anand. He also takes a growing interest in his education. Meanwhile, the Tulsis move to an

estate at Shorthills. Mr. Biswas is also persuaded to join them. The Tulsi family begins to disintegrate under new social and economic pressures. As a result, Mr. Biswas leaves them and returns to Mrs. Tulsi's crowded house in the city. He lives there until he moves to his own house in Sikkim Street. He also had a fierce quarrel with Mrs. Tulsi and Owad.

His job at the Sentinel also changes to that of social investigator of 'Deserving Destitutes'. He is given a government post in a Social Welfare Department. His has all his hopes in Anand. He also wins an exhibition to the prestigious Queen's College in the city. Meanwhile, the house, Mr. Biswas has bought in Sikkim Street, leads him to heavy debt. There are two reasons for that. First is the house is over-priced; and the second is it badly in need of repairing. Though there is a major loss and over-pricing, Mr. Biswas is happy that he possesses his own house and land.

The happiness of Mr. Biswas does not last long. The government department, he was transferred to, is dispersed. So, he returns to the Sentinel. But after some time, he is put on half-pay; and eventually, he is dismissed. He also develops heart-trouble.

His son Anand is now studying at a university in England. He has gone there on a scholarship. But he does not return during his father's illness. Fortunately, for Mr. Biswas his daughter, Savi, comes back. She also gets a well-paid job. But, the poor fellow had suffered enough meanwhile and so, he dies suddenly. He is also given a traditional Hindu cremation. Thereafter, his wife and children return to the empty house.

Thus, the novel becomes a fictional biography of Mr. Biswas. It covers the "journey of his life, from his birth to death. It is an elaborate explanation of various stages of growth in his life. Covertly, the novel, whose time span is the first half of the last century, is the fictional history of the immigrant East Indians in West Indies, particularly, the second phase of their history" (Mehta, 2004).

Conclusion

If some of the incidents are elaborated in detail, they reveal a lot of expressions where Naipaul cries over his rootlessness, dislocation and identity crisis.

It deals with displaced, isolated and dispossessed characters striving really very hard to find out a habitation where they can start their life and lead it towards some prosperity. Actually, Naipaul was also suffering from this sense of rootlessness, nowhere-ness and semi-permanency. He was in search of his roots, native, a house where he may find peace and solace and live happily. Being a Brahmin gypsy and a nomad, he lives everywhere as an outsider or a traveller. He suffers from the pangs of alienation but at the same time also tries to establish his identity by narrating his life struggle and experiences on the societal, traditional and cultural affinities with Trinidad, India and England.

"With the decline of the British imperialism and the rise of the American power bloc in the second half of the twentieth century, the world has seen mass migration, expatriation and varieties of exile, which have given new shapes to individual and national cultural experiences" (Bala, 2003). People were also living rootless lives. The same has

also been the life-story of Naipaul. He was born in Trinidad in a large Brahmin family of Indian origin in the state of Uttar Pradesh, his early education at the port of Spain, and then going on scholarship to Oxford. From his very childhood, Naipaul had found his father to be a victim of the limited, poverty – ridden, backward Hindu world for his career in journalism and story writing in his diaspora identity. He had also realized the factors that had denied his father to be a potential writer. Talking about the same nostalgic feeling and the impact of his father on his writing, Naipaul himself says in an interview with David Bates:

The writing that has mattered the most to me is that of my father.... It taught me to look at things that had never been written about before, and seemed dull in life, yet when transformed to paper became very surprising. A great deal of my vision of Trinidad has come straight from my father (The Sunday Times, May 26, 1963).

A House for Mr. Biswas is Naipaul's most personal book that is shaped after his father's stories, a vital portion of his heritage to his son who considers them a unique record of the life of the Indian or Hindu community in the Trinidad in the first fifty years of the twentieth century. Through his father's stories, he was learning a great deal about a writer's craft as they gave him a way of looking, an example of labour, a knowledge of the literary process, a sense of the order and special reality. "The novel is the fictional version of experiences Naipaul has recalled in later autobiographical surveys" (Bala, 2003). He describes this as a father's book written out of his journalism and stories, and out of his knowledge.

Mr. Biswas' struggle is, actually, threefold: to build his house, to succeed as a journalist, and to prepare his son to leave home for study. His being caught in the Tulsidom and his own dream for a house of his own is quite symbolic. It is an archetypal symbol. It connotes stability and permanence; above all being attached to something (some roots) and having an identity of one's own.

Thus, A House for Mr. Biswas or the character of Mr. Biswas is not simply an overreaction of the writer to some specific situations, societies and cultures. It is, in fact, a result of fear of extinction and the annihilation that his father endured and transmitted to his son. "In reconstructing his father's life, he has traced the inception of his own process of self-creation on different planes in both tone and intention, theme and breadth, alienation and identity" (Bala, 2003).

There are also instances where he openly disapproved of many of the Tulsi's practices and policies. He even challenges their religious belief and associates with Hindu of another sect with whom the Tulsis disagree. The religious ambiguity and syncretism, and in some cases, even neglect of traditional religion, is one of the earliest aspects of cultural confrontation with which Naipaul deals with in the novel. He also progressively shows how (sometimes subtle and sometimes obvious) western – oriented Creole culture of Trinidad destroys Hindu traditional customs and beliefs and the resultant shifting of attitudes and psychological bewilderment. It is found that the Creole culture and the prevailing orthodox Hindu belief system definitely give people some room for social transmission. It also

highlights the problem of geo-political uprooting of people and the consequences of socio-cultural hybridity. The sense of uprooting weakens the traditional forces. Mr. Biswas' desire to own a house also symbolizes an individual's strong impulse to protect his identity. All this ends in transplantation, exploitation and rootlessness.

The way Naipaul sufferers from rootlessness, tries to find one and is in search of an identity, a culture he can relate himself to; travels almost all around the world visiting various countries, Mr. Biswas also happens to go to various houses (in fact, there are repeated references of houses), to live and to practice varied cultural traditions.

First of all, his family is split (means he becomes homeless) and along with his mother he goes to his sister, Dehuti. Then, he is sent to the Pundit Jayaram. Afterwards, because of the accuse of the theft, he has to move to his aunt, Tara. Once again he goes back to his sister through Ramchand, with whom she had run away. His going to Hanuman House, association with Tulsi House, his gifting a doll's house to his own daughter, Savi, his starting to make a house, entering into the half-house, going back to Hanuman House and finally, completing the house and living there, everywhere there is the reference of a House.

Further, thus, house is the central metaphor in the novel. It contains a number of houses. To name them, there is Hanuman House, the Chase House, Green Vale House, the Tulsi House in Port of Spain and Mr. Biswas' own House in Sikkim Street. In addition, to these houses there are also more references of houses

like Raghu's hut, Ajodha's house, Tara's house, Dehuti's quarter, to name important ones.

House, which primarily means freedom and security, having roots, being attached to some place, culture and society and an identity, is central herein. It also gifts unity to the structure of the novel. And that is perhaps the reason why it has been entitled *A House for Mr. Biswas*.

Further, Hanuman House is portrayed as the central house among all the houses mentioned and described in the novel. As given by Shashi Nath Pandey, "Hanuman House is a miniature India and its members tenaciously preserve the memory of their native country" (Chattopadhyay, 2002). Naipaul describes it as:

Among the tumbledown timber and corrugated iron buildings in the High Street at Arwakas, Hanuman House stood like an alien with fortress (80).

It is also described to have concrete walls and narrow doors. It provides security and protection to its inhabitants. People from outside cannot see the life inside the house. The world therein is quite closed and narrow. Even the Tulsis do not go outside so frequently. And that is why their thinking suffers from orthodox and narrow-mindedness. The word fortress denotes a wider meaning. Mrs. Tulsi is the head of the house, so she is the fortress. Others need to obey. Only the Queen (Mrs. Tulsi) and the guardians (Seth and Prince) and Owad have their identity. Further going deep down in the layers of meanings, the story also presents Hanuman House as a metaphor of the society, a community; and the life therein a community or a group life. It is true that it has its own virtues and vices but, the

fact is, everybody gets his or her primary needs satisfied. In return, every member is assigned some work, duty. Thus, everyone is living a social, group and public life rather than an individual life. Every daughter in the Hanuman House is a family of a society we find around us.

Thus, through the depiction of a society, a community in the form the Hanuman House, Naipaul tries to address his own inner void, failure, isolation, dispossession and rootlessness. According to Satyendra Nandan, the Hanuman House is the microcosm of the slave society. Metaphorically, the word Hanuman in the name of the house refers to the supreme servant of the Lord Rama. It means that it is a community wherein a lot of slaves are serving the Tulsis. However, one was out of love, respect and devotion, whereas the other one is based upon the mutual needs.

Further, due to migrations (after marriage migrations of the daughters and sons with their in-laws and migration from rural to urban area), Tulsis are fragmented into Biswas, Seths, Tulsis etc. Naipaul presents this disintegration of the Tulsi family to have a symbolic reference to the disintegration of the Hindu community in West Indies. And Mr. Biswas' struggle against Tulsis is his confrontation with the community for seeking personal recognition.

Mr. Biswas' stay at Chase house and the house itself are also metaphorical. Unplastered rooms, simply made up of mud and a roof of old rough thatch and the disintegrated floor symbolize how the house is exposed to dangers from outside. Similarly, Naipaul also had his identity and roots disintegrated and exposed to dangers.

Even the elders represented by him are rough to him. Further, the description of the kitchen given by Naipaul is:

The kitchen remained askew and rickety, he did not wall off part of the gallery to make a new room, and he did not thought it worthwhile to plant tree that would bear flowers or fruit in two or three. (186)

This disconnection of the kitchen and the room is suggestive of two things: one it suggests that Mr. Biswas and his wife – Shama were not living together and there was also a huge gap between their thinking. The gap is made visible by showing the need for restructuring of the gallery. The other meaning is that though Mr. Biswas had a house (identity) of his own, it was in crisis, lacked in stability and identity in the other culture(s). One of the basic themes of the novel is the theme of culture clash – the difficulty of adjustment of the protagonist in Tulsidom and his constant yearning for a life of liberty from the Hanuman House.

In addition, the theme of identity crisis also rings from the novel. Because of the problem of identity - symbolically a house, Mr. Biswas has to undergo a lot of tests, trials and tribulations; adjustments, ups and downs. He earnestly longs for a house of his own, means for a free, fair existence, stability and having proper identity. But, unfortunately, like most of the countries of the colonial regime, he is not able to have an identity of his own, literally a house of his own. Unfortunately, Mr. Biswas is found to be a modern man, absolutely alienated from the society. He has perpetual fear of insignificance and alienation.

The same has also been confessed by Naipaul in his Autobiography. He says that there was a migration from India to be considered, a migration from within the British Empire. There was my Hindu family, with its fading memories of India; there was India herself. And there was Trinidad, with its past slavery, its mixed population, its racial antagonisms and its changing political life; one part of Venezuela and the Spanish empire, now English – speaking, with the American base and an open – air cinema at the end of Bogart’s street.

Commenting upon Naipaul’s position in the world at large, it is frequently commented that he lives in permanent exile. Critics go to the extent of saying that he belongs to a fraternity patronizing—their apprehension of reality (which) has been affected by the experience of more than one country and conditioned by exposure to more than one culture.

Further, the story in the novel follows or progresses in a particular pattern: thesis – anti-thesis - thesis. One may find that the pattern repeats itself several times. With reference to the story, the protagonist – Mr. Biswas moves from Hanuman House to a house of his own. But, unfortunately, he has to come back to the Hanuman House with all his sorrows, dejection and disappointment. Despite his several attempts to get a house of his own, every time he fails. His disappointment starts with Chase from where he has to return to Hanuman House. Second effort was going to the Green Vale. There he tries to construct a house for himself. But misfortunate also follows him. The house collapses so does the protagonist psychologically. His third attempt is his

shifting to the Short Hills where he has his own house for his family. He is partly independent and his mother also comes to stay with him. He is found to be on good terms with Tulsis, too. But, one bad night the house catches fire and he is back to live with the Tulsis in the Port of Spain. Though the life is comfortable there, Mr. Biswas is not happy with the kind of treatment he gets there. Even his wife is willing to have an independent residence. So, Mr. Biswas buys a house in Sikkim Street, in Port of Spain. He moves there with his family and passes away. The house, unfortunately and ultimately, becomes an emblem of the loss of his El Dorado – the golden and dearest dream of his life. As given by Nayak, “We see death and darkness rising in him. During the last months of his life, his emotional states are marked as the consequences not only due to strokes but also to a life-time struggle and unbearable tension made by his indomitable spirit and a few gratifying successes” (Bala, 2003).

However, his passing away starts the story with a vivid description wherein Mr. Biswas, the protagonist, is referred as a loser, in fact, quite unfortunate since his birth. The description given by Naipaul is:

Mr. Biswas was forty-six, and had four children. He had no money. His wife Shama had no money. On the house in Sikkim Street Mr. Biswas owed, and had been owing for four years, three thousand dollars. The interest on this, at eight per cent, came to twenty dollars a month; the ground rent was ten dollars. Two children were at school. The two older children, on whom Mr. Biswas might have depended, were both abroad on scholarships (2).

Finally, Naipaul imposes the orthodox objective structure to the novel. It is objective because it is narrated by a third person. This third person is a person who is omniscient and is always with the protagonist. The narration by this third person is chronological with two entities – House and Mr. Biswas at the core of the structure. The same has also been conveyed by the title also. The novel is weaved into two parts consisting of chapters. The first part of the novel presents the rural Trinidad and the Hindu community; whereas the second part depicts the urban Trinidad and higher values. The chronological narrative (of the life of Mr. Biswas) is placed in parentheses – between prologue and epilogue. However, surprisingly, in the prologue and the epilogue, only the narrator is present. The protagonist is dead. Editorial voice of the narrator is made instrumental by the author. Further, Naipaul achieves this effect by making the narrator and the protagonist alienated from each other. Both are strangers and

outsiders. Though the narrator sympathizes with him, he does not develop intimacy with him. He remains formal in his relation and also addresses him as Mr. Biswas.

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New Roles of Teachers and Students in the Tech-supported Language Classroom

Samir J Dabhi

The roles of teachers and students have changed considerably in the tech-supported language classroom. The capabilities of computer-based technologies and technology-enhanced learning environments or virtual learning environments warrant for change of specific roles from teachers and students. It is because the modern media technologies have made it possible to access, represent, process and communicate information in new ways (Kozma, 1991, 1994). It has become possible to search and organize information, analyze data and transform ideas, simulate complex systems and communicate with others in ways that were previously not possible. They avail new approaches and methods of teaching and learning (Kozma & Schank, 1998).

The modern communication technologies herald changes in curriculum and pedagogy. Discovery learning, self-access, community learning, autonomous learning, etc. are some of the new concepts that have cropped up in education with the widening use of the ICT in academics. It enhances constructivist approaches to teaching and learning. Project-based teaching and learning is the off-shoot of various such approaches in which student collaboration gets increased and teacher's dominance gets decreased. The traditional roles of a student and that of a teacher have no place in the new teaching-learning environments. In order to make teaching and learning meaningful activities with

ICT, both the teacher and the student need to make necessary pedagogical and behavioral changes to get themselves fit into the new approaches. With ICT, teaching and learning go beyond rote memorization of facts, instructionist and behaviorist methodologies. It enhances learning more than teaching. It makes learning a process of knowledge creation. It has relieved education from the shackles of 'time' and 'space'. Technology is a tool, a tutor and also a tester. It provides students with everything – tools, devices, information, connectivity, collaboration, communication – to create knowledge on their own. When technology has changed the whole concept of education, the main two characters i. e. teacher and student, have to behave differently.

According to Plomp, Brummelhuis and Rapmund (1996), learning is a process in which four components (a) Teacher (b) Student (c) Curriculum Content and Goals (d) Instructional Materials interact. The last two components have been drastically changed in this age of techno-supported teaching and learning. And these changes have effected modifications in the roles of the teacher and the student. The new roles of teacher need to be complementary to those of the students and vice-versa. Technology supports their roles and helps them create conducive environment for teaching and learning.

According to Daithi O Murchu, there are three new roles for students. They are:

Samir J Dabhi, Arts Commerce & Science College, Borsad

Self-learner, Team-member / Collaborator and Knowledge Manager / Leader.

As a self-learner the student learns on his / her own. The learner engages himself / herself using whatever strategies they have developed for working with learning materials and for interacting with technology. The teacher creates opportunities for ideal input, interaction and collaboration. But it is ultimately the learner who chooses from among those opportunities. Hubbard argues that learner-training is necessary in order to make him/her an effective user of technology for self-learning. Hubbard underlines the importance of issues such as learner control, interactivity, motivation, strategies and authenticity of communication for technology-supported self-learning. The student is required to see his own goals, organize his own work and manage his own time.

The role of a team-member is different from that of the traditional one found in the teacher dominated classroom. The difference is that the social and independent interactions among the members evolve a feeling of ownership over the multi-media projects or portfolios of the advancing projects. They better understand the collective and individual responsibilities. They work more collaboratively to take the project ahead. The various tools or devices for communication are instrumental in making a team of like-minded individuals spread across the length and width of the globe. Such a group can work much collaboratively to advance their project work.

The third role is that of knowledge manager/leader. It is one of the most productive roles that help in bringing various information or data together to

make new equations of knowledge solving real world problems or showing new paths of performing tasks. It develops knowledge products. It is most often associated with the use of technology to support project-based learning. The students have access to vast reservoir of information on the Internet. They have varieties of tools with which they can transform these data into useful knowledge products.

Though the teacher retains most of the traditional roles like class leader, instructor, information giver, trainer, discussion leader etc., the new teacher roles identified are: instruction designer; trainer; collaborator; student; silent partner; team coordinator; advisor and monitoring and assessment specialist. Each role is associated with specific activities and is made possible by the use of technology in support of project-based learning in inquiry-based instructional methods.

Instruction designer is one of the more common new roles taken on by teachers. Much like the 'self-learner' role adopted by students, teachers in this role found themselves designing, planning and organizing their classrooms in order to effectively use and integrate technology into their language lessons. The teacher as an 'Instructional designer' takes into account all of the resources available to meet the variety of needs his/her students have and implements well-designed activities to address those needs (Kozma, 1994).

The role of trainer differs much more than the traditional one. It is more technical than the subject-oriented one of the traditional approaches. As a 'Trainer', the teacher gives individual instruction to enable skilled development. The teacher makes learners aware of the various

technological tools and trains them in their use to accomplish unique language learning tasks.

The role of collaborator demands a teacher to work and share his/her views with his/her colleagues as well as with his/her students. The teacher as a 'collaborator' undertakes various activities with their colleagues to improve his / her instruction." (Kozma & Schank, 1998). These activities include informal sharing with colleagues and team teaching. They also include collaborating, sharing and learning with the students as equals.

The role of team co-ordinator helps the teacher to be a facilitator and a linking or integrating terminus between students and also between students and peers. As a team co-ordinator, the teacher oversees individual student's contribution to project and avails required missing links or resources. The role enables the teacher to manage groups with students with mixed abilities. Apart from opening up opportunities for collaborative and social learning activities, teachers who assume the role of team co-ordinator create opportunities for peer tutoring and apprenticeship modeling.

The role of enabling advisor also refers to the teacher's work as a facilitator. Here the teacher facilitates to bridge information gaps at individual or group level. The teacher gives assistance, advice, suggestions or poses questions in a way that enable students to find the information they needed to complete particular multimedia or language-learning tasks.

The role of mentoring and assessment specialist requires the teacher to create an overall conducive environment to enable the learners avail their contributions

enhancing the process of learning. It also requires the teacher to assess the performance of the learners to improve the process of learning.

These new roles of a teacher co-exist with the various new roles of a student. These roles are complementary and supportive to one another. The student role of 'self-learner' is complemented and supported by the roles the teachers play as 'trainer', 'instructional designer', and 'monitoring and assessment specialist', and vice-versa. The student role of 'knowledge manager', is related to and supported by the 'advisor', 'instructional designer', 'team coordinator' and 'collaborator' roles that teachers adopt. Indeed many roles are inter-changeable.

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Techniques to Encourage English Language Learning among the Students of Technology and Engineering in EFL Classroom

Kaushik Trivedi

Introduction:

Teaching English as a second language is not an easy task. I realized this when I started to teach English to first year under-graduate students of Engineering and Technology. “Sir, I belongs Gujarati Medium, so it’s difficult for me adopt English language”, is the usual statement or excuse of the students when I ask them to produce some English through speaking or writing.

It is quite challenging and tests the patience of the teachers while dealing with such students who put all their weapons down at the beginning phase of English language learning. Slowly and gradually, with the use of different methods, I’ve settled on some techniques that seem to work well for me, and my young learners in overcoming the psychological fear of English language. Here are the techniques that work for me to enhance English competency of my students.

(1) Ice-breaking:

Ice-breaking is an effective way of starting the first session of teaching English. As interactive and innovative fun sessions are held before the main process of teaching English, they help students get to know each other and buy into the purpose of the session (Mind tool, 2012). If an ice breaking session is well-designed and well-facilitated, it can

really help get things off to a great start. By getting to know each other, getting to know the teacher and learning about the objectives of the session, students can become more engaged in the proceedings and so contribute more effectively towards a successful outcome.

The same is experienced by me when I implement the ‘Ice-breaking’ technique during the very first class or lab of communication skills. Most of the students who belong to Gujarati medium background have fear of English language especially when we ask them to speak in English. They suffer from inferiority complex when they see that the students who belong to English medium background are speaking fluently in English. Ice-breaking activities help to break the fear of the students, build up rapport among the students and encourage them to learn more to enhance their English language competency.

(2) Introducing English as a Professional Language:

Learner’s interest should be at peak. If the learner shows interest towards learning, learning can take place. This is the most important task for the teacher to build up connection between learners and learning. In the modern era, students are more practical and they want to learn something innovative. They want to

Kaushik Trivedi , Assistant Professor, Department of Communication Skills, Charotar University of Science & Technology

innovate to achieve professional goals. This can be the universal truth that in this competitive world, the person without good English proficiency fails in achieving professional goals. The teacher should use this reality to introduce the learners to the learning of English by asking to them the first question, what will happen if you have not enough command over English Language? This very question and the answer will connect the learners with the learning of English language. They will realize that enhancing English-language skills improves confidence and prepares them to achieve their professional goals. English for professional purposes will help them to develop the language skills and cultural understanding that they need in the professional workplace (University of Toronto, 2012).

When I teach LSRW skills to my Engineering students, it becomes necessary for me to explain to them that how these skills are going to be useful for them in their professional career and what will happen if they do not acquire these skills. Students realize that the lack of these skills will be dangerous for them when they will be competing for jobs. The fear of failure makes them more passionate and hard working to acquire English language competence.

(3) Conducting Pre-test:

Many educators believe that the best and the most effective lesson plans are those which begin with the final assessment in mind. In other words, teachers should know what they want to test before creating their actual lesson content. Pre-tests are given to students before a lesson or unit to assess what do they in fact, already know.

These tests reveal many gems to the savvy teacher. Pretests for the beginners of English learners allow teachers to get answers of several questions: what is the level of students? From where should he/she start? How should be the planning of lessons and activities? For example, if you are teaching first year graduate students, you might give a pre-test to see how well students' basic English is. If they all know particular portion then the teacher can skip that one. If only a couple of students have a problem, then the teachers can provide them with individualized instruction. If the majority of students are struggling with the information then they can continue with the portion.

Pre-tests help to measure true learning. By comparing pre and post-tests, teachers can see what students actually learned from the lessons that were developed. Pre-tests can give students a preview of what will be expected of them. This helps students begin to focus on the key topics that will be covered. Pre-tests can help generate ideas for future lesson. Depending on the way the pre-tests are created, teachers might find knowledge gaps that they did not expect. Armed with this knowledge they can make changes to lessons to include further instruction and review. Pre-tests can be extremely effective tools and are an excellent way for teachers to grow in their field. By providing students with pre-tests and using that information wisely, you can give students better and more individualized instruction (Kelly, 2012). With the help of the pre-test, I am able to answer my own question that from where do I start the teaching of English language? The result of the pre-tests helps me to assess the level of the students as per their command over LSRW skills in English.

(4) Activity Based Learning:

The principles behind the activity based approach are to create a real atmosphere in the class-room. Students are the future professionals. They are going to encounter the English language in their day-to-day routine professional life. Activity based learning will enhance their confidence and performance in learning English language as they are going to know about their weaknesses and strengths very easily. It aims to teach language and address a child's linguistic intelligence while at the same time, developing a child's other intelligences [Gardner, 1988]. By learning English through investigations, creativity or problem solving, it is hoped that students are more likely to see the purpose for their learning. The key characteristics of an activity based learning curriculum are that it is student centered and learning centered. Task based learning gives enjoyment and an element of fun, uses authentic/ realistic tasks and situations, acquires knowledge and skills and reflects the world around them. Activity based teaching tries to make students active, real, and challenging, offering learning experiences beyond the purely linguistic. Sometimes teachers consider a particular activity type and try to integrate it into their planning to ensure a wider range of learning and teaching styles (Superfine, 2012). The following are some of the activities which teachers can choose to teach English.

- Ice-breaking activity (Group task)
- Role-play (Giving various situation to group)
- Dialogue preparation (Pair work using cue-cards)
- Grammar through games
- Reading comprehension and discussion
- Mock power point and oral presentation
- Developing story (Games like Chinese whisper and Spin-a-Yarn)
- News paper reading and preparing news headlines
- Movie review and article review
- Mock Group Discussion and mock interview
- Quiz
- Movie/Video clips showing and interpretation of message from it etc...

(5) Use of Audio-visual Aids:

Audio-visual aids in the classroom can enhance teaching methods and improve student comprehension. Today's technology offers many choices which educator can use to make learning interesting. Auditory learners focus more on the spoken word rather than the written one. Taped recordings of lectures or movies are helpful to auditory learners because they pick up on speech nuances such as tone and pitch. Computers with speech-recognition devices will also help auditory learners to process and retain information better than just reading from a textbook. Students with hearing disabilities will also benefit from teachers who use microphones while lecturing. Slide projectors have given way to PowerPoint presentations in the modern classroom, but the concept is the same. Visual learners understand meaning through graphic portrayals such as charts, illustrations and diagrams. Teachers that take the time to compose or find visual supplements to accompany their lectures help to greatly augment learning potential. It is said that "a picture is worth a thousand words" still rings true, especially in today's image-submerged society. You Tube video or any other instructional video clip into a lesson

plan can greatly increase understanding as well as enjoyment during the learning process.

If an interactive white board with internet is available, many video clips from the web can be downloaded and embedded in a PowerPoint presentation for classroom purposes. Be sure to prepare students before watching the clip by telling them what to expect or what to look for and then following up with discussion questions that tie in to the lesson plan (Byk, 2012). When I used video clips of the speeches of Barak Obama, Steve Jobs and other good speakers, the kinesics and paralinguistic clues of these speakers encourages the students to develop their public speaking and presentation skills in English.

(6) Motivation:

The word “motivation” means a lot. It is the spiritual force that helps crippled to climb the mountain. Motivation can be defined as a concept used to describe the factors within an individual which arouse, maintain and channel behaviour towards a goal. Another way to say this is that motivation is goal-directed behaviour. Motivation has long been a major problem for most students of English as a Second Language (ESL) or as a foreign language (Noamen, 2009). Motivation in the ESL/ EFL classroom is easily one of the most important factors as I’m sure most teachers would agree with me.

The main reason is that most of our students have low motivation to learn English. In addition to that, while most of them have a vague sense that whether “English will be useful for my future” or not, they don’t have a clear idea of

what that means, nor is that a very strong motivator; it’s too vague and too far off. The teacher has to solve these puzzles and activate motivational components to be the motivational source for students. Teacher can use various surveys, articles, research papers, interviews of employers and so on to motivate and activate students to learn English. In this journey of the English learning many time students give up and students stop trying but teacher has to keep motivating and keep encouraging their learners.

(7) Feedback:

Providing feedback throughout learning process is important. Feedback should be used to encourage students to work hard and indicate what they need to focus on when they are having difficulty. Regardless of how often you use different types of feedback, it is important that students are given a clear image of their performance as well as their goals. This will help them focus of what is most important. Giving constructive criticism and providing students with both the materials and support they need to succeed are important. Teacher is the pioneer person who has to play the role of guide, mentor and counselor to show the path of success. Efforts by the teacher will help students to maintain a positive attitude towards learning of English as a second language and excelling their professional objective and goals. When my students are on the stage for presentation, my feedback over their fluency, grammatical errors, and body language will help them to perform better for the next time. Providing appropriate feedback, the teacher needs to develop keen observation skills for each student to help students more, further and better.

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From Standardized Test to Multiple Assessments: Strategies for Improving Assessment Practices at the P.G Level

Anand Mahanand

Introduction

Responding to the societal changes, in the classroom there are also new positive developments taking place in the field of education. The concept of learning has been influenced by the insights and ideas developed within other allied disciplines such as cognitive psychology, learning sciences and instructional psychology. There is a perspective that believes that learning is a social process and self-reflection is enriched by critical reflection by peers. As pointed out by an expert, "Constructivism is the umbrella under which learning perspectives that focus on mind-world relations are commonly grouped. Post-modern social constructivist theories on the other hand, reject the notion that the focus of knowledge is in the individual. These approaches are a reflection ...on the distributive nature of cognition and focus on students' participation in socially organized learning activities. Social constructivist theories include among others, socio-cultural constructivism in Vygotskian tradition (Vygotsky, 1978), symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969) and social psychological constructivist approach" (Gergen 1994). Biggs (1999) defines instruction as a "construction site on which students build on what they already know"(P,72).The teacher is the manager of the construction site job. Their job is to supervise, direct, counsel and participate in knowledge building. The learning environment leads to conceptual development and change is rich in meaning making and social

negotiation. In such an environment, students are engaged in activity, reflection and conversation. They are encouraged to ask questions, explore, conduct enquires, hypothesize and suggest.

Influence on English Language Education and Assessment

We can note the impact of these developments on English language education and particularly in the assessment procedure. Language learning has been seen as a social activity. Hence, there is preference for learner centeredness and collaborative learning. The significant development in the field of assessment is that there is an urge to integrate assessment into the learning process. Theorists also have suggested that new modes of assessment such as portfolio writing, project based assessments and performance based assessments show better outcome of learning (Seeger2003: 3).

The Experiment

Here, I would like to share my experience of assessing a group of PGDTE students I taught last year. The course I offered was called *Interpretation of Literature*. The class consisted of about 67 participants drawn from different regions of India and from varied backgrounds. Most of them were from regional medium backgrounds and from rural areas. Some of them were first generation learners and from the deprived backgrounds. Through my initial interactions with them I could gather that

Anand Mahanand, EFL University, Hyderabad

though they joined the programme after completing their M.A. in English from various universities, most of them had little proficiency in English language and also little exposure to literary skills. So my first job was to make them feel at ease without making them feel disadvantaged and inadequate. I could gather information regarding the texts they had really read before joining the current programme.

I gave them the course outline which clearly indicated the course duration, contact hours, components to be covered in the syllabus, mode of assessment and a suggested reading list. Since the objective of the course, and other information were before them they were clear about it and also confident for smooth sailing. The participants were informed beforehand what text to be discussed as they were required to have read them. The texts prescribed for the course were made them available in the library. The tutor saw to it that those texts were available. He also made copies available through a book seller to those participants who wanted to buy. The classes were mostly discussion based building on their previous knowledge about conceptions of literature and juxtaposing them with the new theoretical developments in the field of literature and criticism. There were also group presentations and enactment of a few scenes which made them participate in the course with ease and enthusiasm. These also gave them opportunities to appreciate scenes and analyze characters. This also provided them model activities to follow in their class room when they become teachers in future. Apart from enacting the text, they were also encouraged to do presentations of different aspects of a text such as plot, character, style, and so on. On the whole, the whole class participated in the enjoyment and appreciation of texts.

My Experiment with Assessment:

For assessment the University has a common pattern i.e. 40= Sessional and 60= final. But a teacher has the freedom to devise their break up. I had the option to conduct one test for 40 marks and another for 60 marks and award marks accordingly. But I decided to do some innovation in assessment without disturbing the university pattern. I wanted to give the participants scope to work hard or put more efforts and do well in the course. The two written tests would not have allowed them to do so. I wanted to split the 40 marks into two twenty marks each. I gave them four assignments as we had covered four major components in the course spread for four months. Out of those four they were required to do any two. So they had a choice to choose any two. Their four major skills such as literary interpretation, critical thinking, writing and speaking were also assessed. And they did fairly well in their assignments by putting hard work. They loved to do the projects on the subjects they liked. There was a visually challenged participant in the class. For him a different mode of assessment was adopted as he preferred to appear in the test through an interview instead of submitting written assignments. It was arranged for him and he was comfortable. These modes of assessments helped them to do better. Most of them were happy about their performance. I was also happy to see them happy.

Following is the Comment given by a Participant:

I got a different look of the class. I got interested and enjoyed every class. Because it was discussion method used in the class, I understood all the lectures. I

participated in the activities. This course was useful for me. I was happy to attend all the sessions. (Kishan Kumar PGDTE 164/2011).

Their write up in the written (final) exam also gave evidence of their improvement in the areas of critical thinking and writing skills. They could appreciate literary texts with more a more analytical manner and presented them in coherent and structured manner.

Implications:

As mentioned above students were happy not only for their good results, but also for their sense of achievement. They felt that they could manage small projects and felt a sense of ownership and authorship. They got a sort of training to carry out small scale research the experience of which may help them in their teaching situation. Thus I could adopt multiple assessments using the limited freedom I had been given without disrupting the overall assessment system of my university just to make some ways for my learners to facilitate learning in the process of assessment. As teachers we are bound by institutional restrictions but there are ways and subways of overcoming such restrictions. This is also termed as compliance of the subordinates or as “ways of operating” by the cultural theorist Michael de Certeau (1988,P. 3). I am not sure whether teachers of English will be able to apply the same at their levels, but if it is done it will certainly do a great deal of good to the learner.

The Following Ten Things I Learned from the Course:

1. Adopt multiple modes of assessment
2. Give multiple assignments

3. Make the course outline/assessment pattern & criteria clear
4. Make the reading list available
5. Make the primary texts available
6. Involve the learners in the assessment process
7. Assign group activities, projects, portfolio writing
8. Encourage them to put their best efforts
9. Don't be constricted by norms, use opportunities available
10. Pay a lot of attention to their writing. It is a serious job.

These are applicable to my teaching context. I request you to choose the ones application to yours.

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Multimedia Technology Aided Language Learning: A Classroom beyond Chalkboard

Priti Vyas & Gajendra Singh Chauhan

INTRODUCTION

Change is being experienced in all walks of life, in society, in the sciences and in political, economic and educational practices. Change is a fact of life, it is irresistible and education is an integral part of these broader currents of society and change. Change in education is nothing new. There have been great pedagogues such as Rousseau, Dewey, and Montessori who invented new systems of education. However, while these changes were relatively few and far in between, change is now on the acceleration because of the widespread adoption of technology in educational sphere. A change in the language teaching methods is also witnessed with this widespread adoption of technology. It has given an opportunity to introduce more efficient instruction into the classroom. With this widespread adoption of technology in the English Language Teaching (ELT) classroom the traditional blackboard approach and verbal-only paradigm are on its way out to gradually give way to more interaction between the instructor and students [1]. With these changes there is also a shift from the structured teaching of the teacher to learner's construction of their own knowledge, which is known as the constructivist view of learning. Constructivism concerns with the process of how learners create meaning during the learning process.

The infusion of Information Communication Technology (ICT) and, in particular, multimedia technology into education has created a significant impact on the instructional content development and the methods of communicating information to learners. This leads to the evolution of new concepts and innovative teaching techniques in the instruction-learning process, changing the way teachers teach and students learn. This changing landscape of education focuses on learning, rather than on teaching. It also encourages better student learning through the learning objectives of project-based learning, or learning by doing. In addition to these, multimedia technology has been shown to affect students' motivation and self-esteem levels. It also allows them to become creative and self-directed thinkers [2].

Thus this paper is designed to provide a clear insight into the use of current teaching practices in ELT through multimedia technology which enables learners to create their meaning by their own in the language classroom. The present paper intends to cover different multimedia technologies along with their application in English Language Teaching [3].

CONSTRUCTIVIST PEDAGOGY AND MULTIMEDIA APPLICATIONS

The rapid development of increasingly powerful computer and communication systems has great implications for the constructivist approach to education. It

Priti Vyas, Asst. Prof. JKT University, Jhunjhunu
Gajendra Singh Chauhan, Asst. Prof. BITS, Pilani

offers a tremendous amount of information, tools for creativity and development, and various environments and forums for communication. Within a student-centered curriculum based on student performance or research, new technology tools provide many opportunities for students and teachers to build knowledge in an engaged setting [4]. Constructivism has now one of the dominant pedagogies used in education. It encourages learners to build their own knowledge based on individual experience and apply this directly to their environment. In constructivism the focus is on learning rather than teaching with the individual at the centre of a social process. Now-a-days, constructivism is considered the ideal pedagogy for e-learning as it both draws upon the strengths of the medium and best overcomes its weaknesses.

Constructivist pedagogy sees the learner at the centre of the learning experience rather than the tutor. Internet forces the student to actively engage in their learning and gives them such a degree of choice – of what to study, where to study, how to study and with whom thus the student occupies the central role in the learning experience. Constructivist pedagogy sees knowledge being built and applied according to individual experience and different multimedia applications enable context-based, work-based learning and easily allow students to record and reflect upon their learning. Constructivist pedagogy sees the learner as an active participant in their learning experience rather than a passive vessel to be filled with information. In constructivist pedagogy, dialogue and collaboration are crucial and multimedia technology easily enables communication between learners and teachers without the barriers of time and place [5].

In a constructivist environment instructors utilize a variety of tools to enhance their teaching and create a classroom which is active and productive [6]. By incorporating multimedia into a constructivist learning environment, students experience critical-thinking, creative presentation and communication skills. It enhances their motivation and understanding of various levels of the subject domain all of which would be useful in their future undertakings. A lot of studies support the incorporation of multimedia technology and constructivist learning into the ELT classrooms for the enhancement of teaching and learning [7]. Learning with multimedia is promising and evolving as it has changed teacher's perception as well as learner's about learning. Studies show that multimedia instruction with constructivist paradigm motivates learners to work in a pair and construct their own solutions to problems. Multimedia motivates learners to continue learning and obtain knowledge faster and above all sustain the gained knowledge. In fact, multimedia when it is combined with proper teaching materials can be an excellent substitute to the present traditional methods. The promise of multimedia is simple; learners enjoy learning by using computer assisted multimedia instructions. Multimedia instruction assists students to learn more deeply and above all to enjoy such a learning environment. Students learn because the instruction is presented to them in a meaningful way using sounds, pictures and animations. Undoubtedly, these little animations and pictures foster deep learning [8]. When multimedia technology is employed as the centerpiece for an emerging pattern of instruction it promotes independent and cooperative learning, and improves performance of

low achievers as well as of special student population, while heightening interest in learning, writing, and research. This paper attempts to provide an overview of how constructivist pedagogy is linked to e-learning and explores the various multimedia tools which can be used by tutors to embed constructivist ideas into their courses and also to enhance students' learning [9].

USE OF E-MAIL IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

E-mail has been used for a variety of purposes in second language classes. Many teachers in college and university writing classes have used e-mail discussion groups within their classes to give students opportunities for authentic writing assignments. Teachers at all levels have used long-distance e-mail exchanges to give students greater opportunities for authentic communication either with native speakers or with other learners of the language and for carrying out collaborative projects, such as comparisons of film and literature[10]. When e-mail communication is kept within one class, the teacher can easily connect communicative tasks to the topic currently being covered in class and thereby extend the learners' communicative time and involvement with that topic. Instructors can also design e-mail assignments as pre-class, post-class, or supplementary activities to increase students' language learning opportunities [11].

USE OF WEBLOGS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Weblogs are also an important multimedia technology that can be used in ELT. A weblog (or 'blog') can be thought

of as an online journal that an individual can continuously update with his or her own words, ideas, and thoughts through software that enables one to easily do so. Unlike a standard website, weblog entries are made by typing directly into the browser and with the click of a button they are instantly published on the internet.

Furthermore, as weblogs are interactive, readers can respond to any given entry with a comment and even threaded discussions can take place. Now blogs are used for different purposes such as: personal, educational, journalistic, and commercial. There are three possible ways in which weblogs can be used in ELT classroom.

The Tutor Blog

This is a type of weblog that is run by the tutor for the learners. It serves the following purposes:

- It gives daily reading practice to the learners.

- It promotes exploration of English websites.

- It encourages online verbal exchange by use of comment buttons.

- It provides class or syllabus information.

- It serves as a resource of links for self-study.

The Learner Blog

These are blogs that are either run by individual learners themselves or by small collaborative groups of learners. In ELT classroom, learner blog may be best suited for reading and writing classes. A common reading assignment can be followed by blog postings on the thoughts of each learner or group of learners.

Furthermore, the act of constructing the blog may encourage the use of search engines and net surfing in English to find the appropriate sites to which links can be made. This will empower the learner to direct the reader to sites of choice for further reading. The idea here is that students can get writing practice, develop a sense of ownership, and get experience with the practical, legal, and ethical issues of creating a hypertext document. In addition, whatever they write can instantly be read by anyone else and, due to the comment features of the software, further exchange of ideas is promoted.

The Class Blog

This type of blog is the result of the collaborative effort of an entire class. The following are some possible uses of the class blog in ELT:

In conversation-based classes it could be used like a free-form bulletin board for learners to post messages, images, and links related to classroom discussion topics. It could also be a space for them to post thoughts on a common theme assigned for homework.

With intermediate and advanced learners, class blogs might also be useful for facilitating project-based language learning, where learners can be given the opportunity to develop research and writing skills by being asked to create an online resource for others.

Class blogs could also be used as a virtual space for an international classroom language exchange. In this scenario, learners from different countries would have joint access and publishing rights to

the blog. The entire exchange would then be transparent to all readers and could be followed and commented on by other learners, tutors, parents and friends [12].

USE OF ONLINE FOREIGN NEWSPAPERS OR MAGAZINES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Mostly it is observed that when the students don't know the necessary vocabulary, reading an English newspaper or magazine article becomes very cumbersome and tough task which require a number of trips to the dictionary to look up a word's meaning. This deters students from reading authentic material. It will become easier if they familiarize themselves with writing style, vocabulary, and effective reading techniques. Advantages to reading authentic materials include:

Improving vocabulary - The vast majority of vocabulary words are learned gradually through repeated exposures in various contexts. By repeated exposure to vocabulary items they soon become a part of active vocabulary.

Choice of reading – When students read online newspapers or magazines they have a choice of reading topics and can choose items they find inherently interesting.

Reinforces vocabulary – Reinforcement of vocabulary and grammatical structures also occur in the class by providing real-life examples of usage to the students.

Variety of perspectives – While reading online newspapers and magazines, students gain a variety of perspectives on topics in the news.

ENHANCING VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR THROUGH BROWSER AND A SEARCH ENGINE

According to many linguists, students need 10 to 12 exposures to a word before they learn it well and to put it to use. Mostly, simple working with more than one example can help students better understand a word, phrase, or grammatical structure. With a Web browser and a search engine such as Google or Yahoo, students can perform a simple search under vocabulary or grammar and get hundreds of real-world examples to strengthen their vocabulary. The advantages of using browser and a search engine are:

It provides students with thousands of examples.

The majority of examples come from authentic texts.

It also helps students to build knowledge of vocabulary or grammar without relying on English translation.

It can be easily done from any Web browser.

While reading online article students should always look at the pictures which provide excellent clues to what the piece is about. There is no need to look up every word they don't know as students can guess its meaning from the context of the article or the sentence [13].

PODCASTING IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM:

Constructivist approach of learning emphasizes the importance of teaching and learning languages in a collaborative learning environment. It also suggests that students should receive

comprehensible input and produce output, optimally in a meaningful context so that their motivation rises. Podcasting can accomplish these aspects of successful language learning and teaching. Students can access authentic material in form of podcasts, listen to them and are able to create their own podcasts. Podcasts can be accessed and shared within seconds on the World Wide Web [14].

What is Podcasting

Podcasting is the name given to the publishing of audio (usually mp3 files) via the Internet, designed to be downloaded and listened to on a portable mp3 player of any type, or on a personal computer [15]. The use of podcasting is wide and diverse. The teacher can provide students with podcasts that are explicitly designed for Foreign Language Learners (FLL). Students can listen to podcasts at their individual learning pace. They can re-listen the material if they have any difficulty in understanding. The SLLs can also develop their own podcasts, upload and share them in the internet. Their recordings can be conducted in the classroom or on field trips. They can be shared with a selective or universal audience. Furthermore, podcasts can be used as study tools as they allow for repeated listening. The use of podcasts demands for speaking and listening and enhances these skills in a meaningful context. Moreover, students develop self monitoring skills and thereby move towards becoming autonomous learner [16].

Podcasting has now become an alternative way of providing 'radio' type content that can be listened to whenever, wherever and as many times as the listener

wants. In ELT its appeal lies not only in providing additional listening input for students, but also that students themselves can become involved in recording and producing the podcast.

Types of ELT Podcasts

There are various types of podcasts that can be used with students:

Authentic podcasts

Podcasts that are not aimed at ELT students can often be a rich source of listening. Most of these will only be suitable for use with higher level students.

Teacher podcasts

Produced by teachers, often for their own classes, these podcasts are usually aimed at helping students learn by producing listening content that is not available elsewhere, or that gives a local flavour.

Student podcasts

These are produced by the students, but often with teacher help. The students can listen to these, experience the culture by listening about the lives and interests of other students from around the world.

Using podcasts in class and for homework

Most podcasts use a weblog as their homepage and when the student visits the blog s/he finds links to audio files. Podcasts can then be downloaded and transferred to a portable mp3 player. They can also be recorded to CD-ROM for use in class, or students can be directed to them for self-study purposes on the computer

as many of the ELT podcasts come with transcripts to help understanding.

One advantage of recording a show and uploading it to the Web is that students will probably take more care with the preparation, knowing that it can be potentially listened to by people all over the world. After discussing and planning the contents, the learners should be involved in writing and rewriting scripts which they will revise with their classmates (and later their teacher) ensuring that the content is understandable and there are no mistakes. The students can then rehearse the show before finally recording it. Finally, the students can invite their family and friends to listen to it. The fact that they have a real audience for their show should act as a great motivator [17].

CRITICAL READING PROCESSES THROUGH COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

Computer technology support and promotes critical reading grounded in constructivist theory, through the use of software that is interactive, that encourages the use of the strategies used by effective readers, and that approximates a real context. First of all, it leads to a high level of interactivity which means there is a two-way communication between the user and the computer to involve the learner in the instructional process. From a constructivist perspective, interactivity consists of not only of students punching response keys but also of students generating questions, concept maps, summaries, etc. for which the software provides the prompts. Interactivity also extends beyond one student using one computer to many students using many computers, such as with electronic journals, which can

be used for forums to discuss readings. A high level of interactivity encourages students to become more actively involved with what they are reading.

Second advantage of computer technology in enhancing the critical reading is that it encourages the use of those strategies that research indicates are used by effective readers. For example, an electronic journal, in addition to providing a forum for students to discuss readings, may also be used to help students become more aware of the strategies they use (or don't use) by providing prompts pertaining to strategy use. The strategy of accessing one's prior knowledge about a topic of a reading can be fostered through prompts in the software that ask students to write what they already know about the topic of a reading. Such prompts might also ask student to analyze the sources of their prior knowledge. In addition, where there are gaps in prior knowledge, various forms of technology, such as interactive video, may be used to fill some of those gaps. For example, if students will be reading about George Bush and some know little about him (One of my students once told me that he had been a president of the U.S.), they could access this knowledge on video. On-line tutorials can provide modeling of strategies (summary statements of portions of readings, for example) in addition to prompting to help students develop their strategy use.

A third advantage of computer technology in promoting critical reading is that it approximate a real context. One aspect of a real context is that the reading is available in print, in addition to or in place of on screen. Until computer technology provides higher resolution

as well as larger screens so that larger "chunks" of text may be viewed at once, the initial reading of a selection is best done from paper copies, with interaction with computer software following. Another aspect of a real context is that it involves interactions among persons or in a social environment, since the process of constructing meaning is often negotiated through collaboration with others [18].

CONCLUSION

It is a well realized fact that English Language Teaching has seen the development of a variety of methodologies and approaches such as the grammar-translation method, the total physical response, the silent way and the communicative approach. These practices have involved the use of a whole range of tools like the language lab, the cassette player, the VCR, and DVD players; which have concentrated on the development of language skills, grammar, vocabulary and communicative competence; and have basically relied on teachers and course books as the main source of information and guidance. But today's interactive multimedia instructions have enabled learners to learn cooperatively and above all to learn meaningfully. This rapid development of increasingly powerful computer and communication system has great implications for the constructivist approach to education. It offers a tremendous amount of information, tools for creativity, development, and various environments and forums for communication. There are several things which inspired this study such as the democratic environment of the constructivism classroom where the activities are student-centered and teacher is only a facilitator. It also

encourages students to create their meaning, knowledge and behavior by their own through undirected experience. After analyzing the different tools of multimedia technology in ELT it is felt that today English language teachers have a wide variety of methodological options based on technology. They can choose methods and materials according to the learners needs and constrain of their institute or educational setting. Different multimedia tools provide authentic and updated materials to learners which are more interesting and appealing to learners in comparison to traditional resources of English language teaching. Moreover, they provide constructive and collaborative learning environment and better opportunity for interaction which are important principles of constructivist approach of learning.

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An Experiment to Enrich Second Language Acquisition through 'Edmodo'

Krishna Parikh

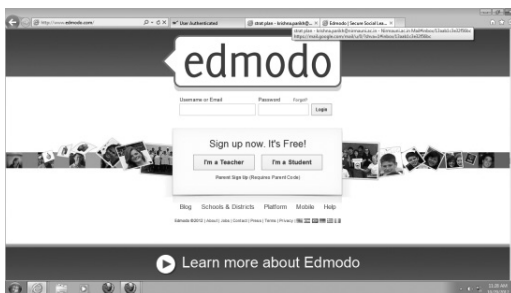
Introduction:

There are numerous ways accepted by practitioners to enhance and promote Second Language Acquisition. According to educational researcher Jim Cummins (1979), English language learners acquire basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) - known as social language-within the first two years of their exposure to English. This is the language of personal conversations, expressing opinions, requests for information, and expressions of need.

Why Web 2.0 tools?

Web 2.0 tools are beneficial in that they support and even entice students to become creators and not merely recipients of knowledge. Tools like, boodo, linkin, DeviantArt, Facebook, MySpace, Google Plus+ can enable students to “meet” virtually with classmates via the Web and work collaboratively on projects.

Edmodo: What and Why?



Edmodo is a free social learning network that provides “an intuitive way for teachers and students to stay connected in a safe and secure learning environment” (Edmodo, 2010).

METHODOLOGY

Significance of the Study:

We, as teachers, need to find and understand the learners’ experiences in Second Language Acquisition in order to implement effective strategies to guide. Hence, learners need to be given the opportunity to express themselves as well as their learning experience. The researcher, therefore, has chosen to investigate students’ perception on the use of Edmodo in their experience of Second Language Acquisition.

Research Question:

What are the experiences of English as Foreign Language (EFL) students in using Edmodo for language acquisition and what is its potential help?

Setting:

In order to answer this research question, a study was carried out with twenty Indian students in form of an Edmodo group who are studying at the under graduate level.

Krishna Parikh, Asst. Professor, NIRMA University

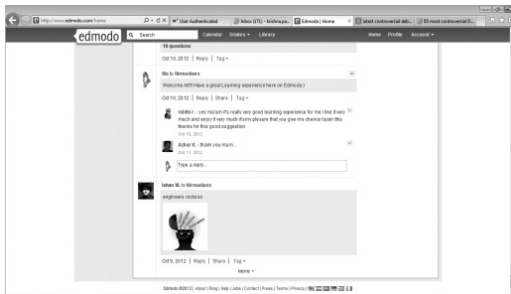
The screenshot displays a web browser window with the address bar showing 'http://www.edmodo.com/'. The page features a dark header with the 'edmodo' logo and navigation links: 'Home', 'My Profile', 'My Groups', 'My Assignments', 'My Calendar', 'My Messages', 'My Settings', and 'My Account'. The main content area is titled 'My Messages' and lists several messages from 'Mr. Hernandez'. The messages are dated 01/11/2012 and 01/10/2012, and include links to 'Whether Language is necessary for thought?' and 'Do not vote the day after!'. The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows various application icons.

The analysis of qualitative data was mostly based on categorizing the data collected immediately through a questionnaire at the end of the programme. A questionnaire (Appendix: 1) consisting 10 questions was framed with the view to find out the usefulness of Edmodo as a tool for Second Language Acquisition and given at the end of the programme.

Results and Discussion:

- A feedback was obtained by a survey at the end of two months. The questionnaire with a set of questions to explore the learners' participation and experiences of learning English through Edmodo was given to all the participants. Participants' perception on the use of Edmodo and interaction with the researcher varied in both content and degree. The result from the feedback suggests that 94% of learners view learning through Edmodo favorably good.

“It was altogether a new experience to take assignments online which were having pee-decided/due dates. This really helped and gave me enough time as well as space to work at my own space.” (Student using Edmodo)



Learners experienced and expressed the following feedback after using Edmodo as a tool to learn.

1. Edmodo provided them the sense of independence of time as well as location.
2. Students have composed/wrote a number of poems as a part of activity that helped them to know their own potential.
3. Many students voluntarily wrote a few stories from a picture posted by the researcher.
4. It provided students “forum” type online discussions where they were free to express their views without any hesitation.

The researcher also found the following benefits.

1. The teacher can send mass messages across groups including alerts and notes.
2. It also allows the teacher to upload documents for students/parents electronically and also to grade online, saving paper and reducing the possibility of lost assignments. Teachers can grade and comment on assignments through the site as well.
3. Researcher has also registered the visible changes and improvements in the writing skills of the participants especially in terms of expression.

4. This program allows teachers to post assignments, discussion topics, links and even videos. The facility of ‘due date’ that shows the calendar is appreciable. It will show assignments with links to document.

Limitations of the Study:

Downsides experienced by the researcher were few in number. The main out of which was, the internet access. Students who did not have internet access, for them it became a little more difficult to log on and to check assignments. Moreover, there was no student to student communication possible which could have given more opportunity to students to use the language in an informal yet conducive environment.

Conclusion:

It was a common idea that using Edmodo for language learning was an interesting experience in that it gave the group opportunities to interact with others who share many things with them in a virtual world.

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Drama: A Technique to Develop Communication Skills

Prajnesh Solanki

Introduction

Developing communication skills has become an important aspect of education. Over and above the domain knowledge, a student is expected to be a smart communicator. But it is challenging task for the teachers to impart adequate communication skills to students. Communicative approach has in fact created a space wherein several techniques can be incorporated for the learners to become active learner and make the classroom teaching interactive.

Scholars opine that using drama in a classroom helps the learners to attain communicative competence. Dramatising narrative provides the learners an opportunity to be competent in both verbal and non verbal language. According to (Chauhan, 2004) there is “an attractive alternative to teaching language through drama because it gives a context for listening and meaningful production, forcing the learners to use their language resources and, thus, enhancing their linguistic abilities”.

Beane (1992) states that “genuine learning involves and integration between the learners, the environment and the content, thus integrates what we experience into our system of meanings”.

The Experiment

This paper aims at describing an attempt on the part of the teacher who

involves the students of a primary school of Morad Village of Petlad Taluka of Anand district in dramatising activity.

The main purpose was to provide the learners an opportunity to use English language in context. In rural areas the teacher has to see that the learners get adequate care and attention that can help them open up and respond adequately to learning process.

It was decided to dramatise ‘Dala Tarwadi’ a lesson from the text book of English for standard VI second language prepared by Gujarat State School Textbook Board, Gandhinagar.

The Preparation Stage

In the beginning some of the enthusiastic learners were taken into confidence and selected for their roles. The teacher then offered them training in pronunciation, accent, intonation and gestures. The rehearsals and the sessions were undertaken in the classroom so that the non-participant members could see how leaning process took place.

The Procedure

As a part of a cultural programme, the students performed ‘Dala Tarwadi’ with minimum props. It was performed before the audience that consisted of parents, teachers and guests. The performance was appreciated by the audience. The

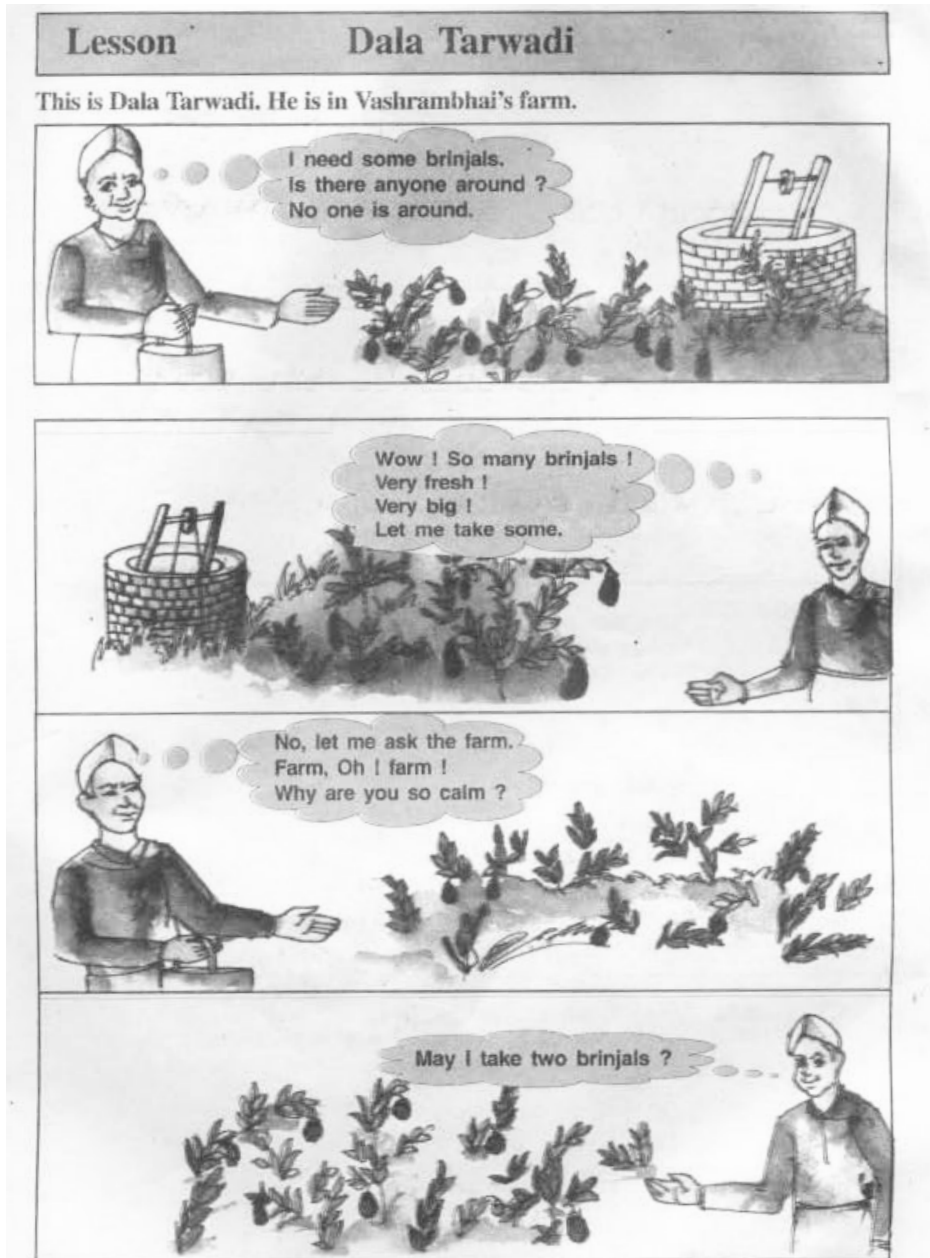
Prajnesh Solanki, Assistant Professor, Navsari Agricultural University

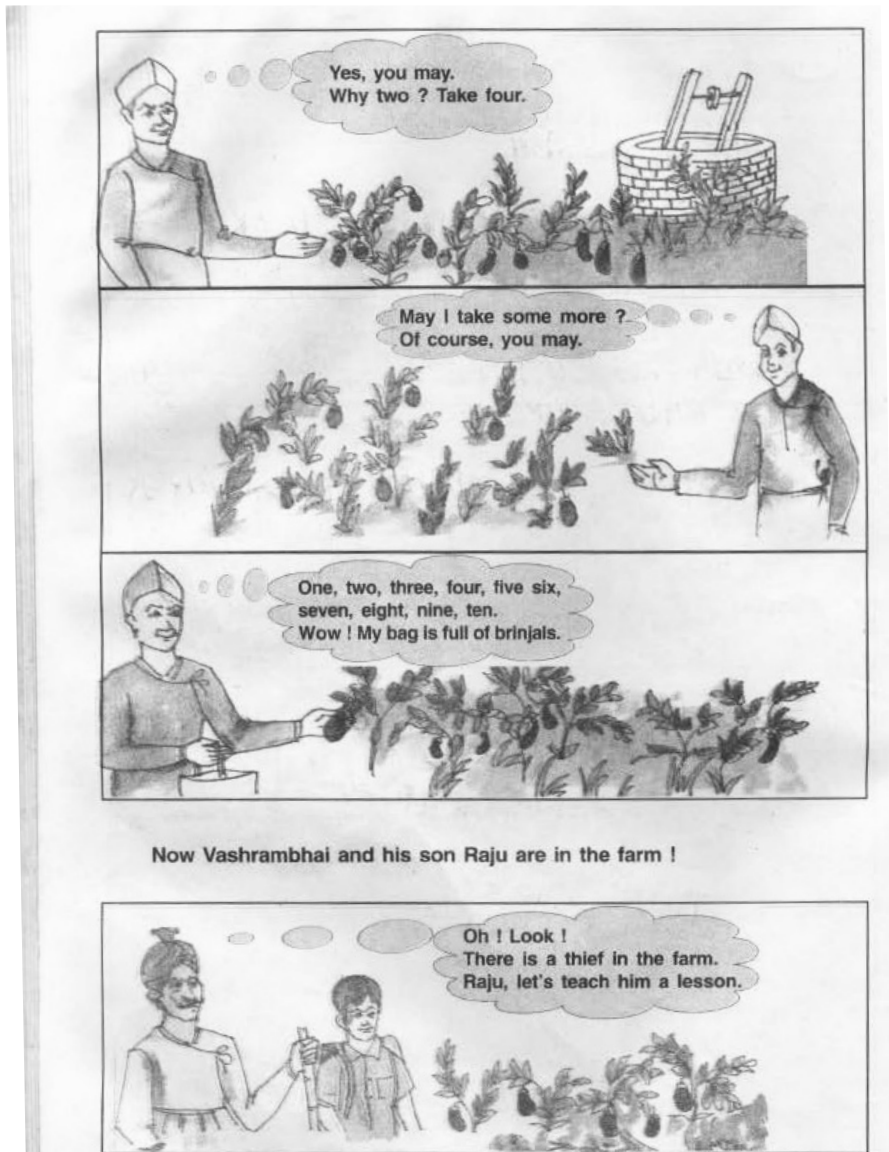
performers had satisfaction of speaking a few dialogues in English and the teacher was happy with the experiment though on a small scale, but significant one.

The performance exposed the learners to a learning process that was interesting and instructive. In the words of Siks (1983)

“ through drama, students explore both factual knowledge and content concepts while ‘trying on’ sound experiences”.

It was indeed a beginning of imparting communication skills to the learners to be a part of the inclusive society.





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*Book Review***Errors Analysis– Perspectives on
Second Language Acquisition****Publisher: Longman Group Ltd. (1974) • Edited by Jack C Richards**

Mayurkumar Parmar & Yagnesh Purohit

This is a collection of articles discussing different perspectives on error-analysis. The book is divided into four parts. Part I is introductory, discussing the significance of errors. Part II is about building a theory of errors. Part III talks of developmental stages of errors and Part IV deals with error analysis of adult language learning.

S. P. Corder in his article ‘The significance of learners’ errors’ points out that the earlier errors were not allowed or tolerated. There should not be errors. And if at all there were any; they were because of faulty learning. But recently the view has changed. Errors are regarded as inevitable. One cannot learn without goofing. He says errors are significant in three ways. First, the teacher can understand ‘how far towards the goal – the learner has progressed and consequently, what remains for him to learn’. Second, errors provide ‘evidence’ of how language is learnt. Third, ‘making of errors’ is a strategy employed by a first as well as a second language learner.

Another important paper is by Jack C. Richards entitled ‘A Non-contrastive Approach to Error Analysis’. He advocates comprehensive approach to error analysis. Contrastive analysis focused on errors caused by L_1 interference only. But the recent research reveals that there are many other factors that contribute

to errors. Jack C. Richards points out that overgeneralization has nothing to do with the influence of mother tongue. For example, if a learner says *He can sings* after listening to *he walks* he is over generalizing the grammar rule of L_2 . He also talks about other factors, such as, ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rules and false concepts hypothesized. In another article ‘Social Factors, Interlanguage and Language Learning’ he discusses social factors that cause errors. He has mainly talked about immigrant learners. Thus there is a change in tracing the sources of errors and also towards treatment of errors. M. P. Jain, in his paper ‘Error Analysis: Source, Cause and Significance’ reinforces Jack C. Richards’ position and gives a number of examples of L_1 independent errors.

There are three articles in this book describing nature of errors. Larry Selinker in his article ‘Interlanguage’ says that errors share the characteristics of L_1 and L_2 . In the early stages, errors are influenced by L_1 while in the later stages they are affected by L_2 . He elaborates on five central processes: language transfer, transfer of training strategies of second language learning, strategies of second language communication and over generalization of TL linguistic material. He also talks about fossilization of errors. William Nemser, in his article ‘Approximative Systems of Foreign Language Learners’, describes

L_1 as source language and L_2 as target language. Learners' performance that is errors are described as 'Approximative systems'. The earlier performance is close to L_1 while later performance is native-like, that is, very close to L_2 . Thus, essentially SL learner is moving from L_1 to L_2 .

S. P. Corder, in his article 'Idiosyncratic Dialects and Error Analysis', points out two important characteristics of learner errors. He points out that each learner has a different personality, background and intelligence. And this is reflected in his errors. So, just as we have idiosyncracies in manners, likes and dislikes we have idiosyncracies in producing errors as well. These are errors of individuals. But there are group errors also. For example, the

group may have some similarities like language, culture, age etc. They may make common errors. This is like again a group speaking a dialect. Thus he mentions that there are individual as well as group errors and hence they should be tackled at different levels.

To conclude, it can be said that the book is a valuable document on error analysis touching upon important topics like nature, source and classification of errors. It advises a good practising teacher not to ignore errors.

*Book Review***Title: Creative Teaching: Getting it Right****Author: David Starbuck • First copyright date:2008****Type of book: General subject matter • Price: Rs. 150****ISBN: 978-1-8468-4134-7 • Publisher: Viva-Continuum Edition • Pages: 143**

Sunil Shah & Amita Prabin

In the opinion of David Starbuck, the book “creates a coherent picture of how teachers can make learning easier and more enjoyable for their pupils, including activity ideas, self-evaluation exercises and adaptable strategies for improving both classroom and whole-school ethos.”The book is meant to cater to the creative needs of teachers during the teaching-learning process.

The book basically deals with three areas, ‘being creative’, ‘the creative classroom’ and ‘the creative school’. The presentation of the book, at a glance, seems to be logical, clear and fluid. The book navigates its readers through a series of tests, fact boxes, checklists, anecdotes, diagrams, creative activities, etc. The readers confront scientific facts related to human brains and a lot of theorizing based on educational psychology and its significance when it comes to creative teaching.

Creative teaching is often equated with diligence, perseverance and painstaking. Starbuck, himself a teacher by profession, in a sense redefines creative teaching and relieves his teacher readers by stating that creative teaching does not always mean hours of preparation for the teacher. In fact, creative teaching, according to him, is a satisfactory experience for both teachers and students.

A major part of the book propounds setting up of right conditions in classrooms and schools for creative teaching to take place. Starbuck puts it this way, “The book is designed to provide practical ideas for getting creative learning and teaching techniques right in both the classroom environment and in the whole school environment.”The author places profound importance in creativity when he says, “Creativity is the key to successful independent learning and it is through creative teaching that pupils will best get a feel for creative learning.”

Here comes a voice from amongst the teachers, and for this matter, one ‘assumes’ that this book is not a top down propagation of some scientifically tested classroom techniques but one expects to be exposed to a lot of learning, almost all of which comes out of experience. The book delves so deep into the whole notion of setting up of right conditions for creative teaching in classrooms and the teacher entering into the ‘creative state’, that the book hardly seems to come out of it. The book heavily draws on the theories of educational psychology and the expectations of the readers to find some instant, readymade practices are shoved away at the very beginning of the book when Starbuck seems to dexterously say, “Please do not expect a range of “off-the-

shelf” activities for you simply to emulate in your lessons.”

However, the book does not come across as a prescription paying no heed to the ailments of the tough job of teachers who are often drained out of their energies to be creative. The book manages to blow in some sense of relief in its teacher readers when it dwells on the idea that creativity is a skill that can be learnt. Though the tests and the checklists in the book leads to introspection, diagrammatic description of exercises to relieve stress and brain cells is not what one would read the book for. The promise that the books makes with mentioning the accomplishments of the ‘Learning to Learn’ campaign across various schools, in the first few pages of the book, seems to die a slow death as the reader proceeds with the reading of the book.

With informal language and avoidance of the use of too many technical terms, the book scores on comprehensibility. The book is lucid, quick to read and humorous at times. It cannot be denied that the

theories of educational psychology have been dealt with superficially. One does not expect these theories to be the subject of the book, yet they are dealt with at length, not depth, in the book, if the number of pages they occupy is taken into consideration.

Starbuck prescribes medications for dealing with various maladies ranging from stress to misbehaviour of students. The author changes his tone from being a teacher himself, to a psychologist and even to a health consultant. He seems to console those teachers who have bad days at work or in their classrooms.

For us, the book reinforced the significance of the awareness of the psychology behind teaching-learning to create a conducive environment in my classroom for teaching and learning to take place. It even helped us with a quick yet superficial revision of a few theories of educational psychology. All the theorizing and a few creative activities named as “lesson starters, middlers and enders” leave the readers wanting for more.

H. M. PATEL INSTITUTE



The Institute was born amidst a raging controversy in Gujarat whether English should be introduced in Class V or in Class VIII. In the early 60s, most English teachers in Gujarati medium schools did not have English as their subject of specialisation. It was at this time that Shri H. M. Patel established this Institute in 1965 with the primary objective of preparing a cadre of well-trained teachers of English.

A special feature of the Institute is that unlike other English Language Teaching Institutes in the country it offers a range of per-service professional courses as well as in-service training programmes. The Institute is actively involved in producing textbooks, handbooks, audio-visual as well as computer-based materials, radio lessons, and also designing syllabuses. Besides, the Institute offers its guidance and academic expertise to various other Institutions and organizations in and outside of Gujarat. Today, it serves as the Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE) in Western India, covering the states of Goa, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

The Institute started with a B.Ed. Programme in English and ever since it has been steadily growing with the addition of several other programmes such as self-financed M.A. [ELT], M.Phil. [ELT] and a Ph.D. [ELT], which have been a great success.

Besides these programmes, the Institute has regularly been conducting in-service training programmes for secondary and higher secondary teachers of English in Gujarat. The Institute trains a minimum of six batches of teachers every year. The In-Service

training programme is basically a need-based programme, focussing on the specific requirements of the secondary and higher secondary teachers of English in Gujarat. Its main objective is to raise the English proficiency level of the teachers and to enable them to handle the prescribed textbooks more effectively. Hence, it trains teachers in all the four skills, covering areas like phonetics and spoken English, grammar and written English, classroom techniques, preparation of teaching materials, etc. It includes other features like project work, peer teaching, and computer education as well. With the feed-back provided by the participants, the faculty constantly reviews and updates the course content to meet the changing requirements of the English teachers.

The main objective of this Institute is to build a cadre of well-trained and proficient teachers of English, to raise the general standard of English teaching in the state, and to undertake research projects in ELT in the region and to prepare suitable materials to be used in schools and colleges. Hence, the Institute lays emphasis not so much on classroom lectures as on interactive sessions through seminars, tutorials, group work, guidance classes, library and laboratory and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) sessions.

The Institute has a rich library with an excellent collection of over 30,000 books in the areas of ELT, literature, linguistics, education, etc. It has a 28-position audio-active computerized language lab and a studio complex consisting of video-recording floor, Audio studio and a Recording-cum-Editing cabin. The Institute has now introduced computer education in order to keep the students up-to-date on the latest developments in multi-media packages of education.



ELTIS & RIEs

No.	ELTI/RIE	Contact Details
1	Ms. Malsawmthangi Director SCERT, Chaltlang, Aizawl, Mizoram 796 012	Phone (O): 0389-2347790, 2306710 Tele Fax: 0389-2347790 /2306709,10 E-mail: awmithomte@gmail.com
2	Mr. Rajendra Singh Director English Language Teaching Institute 23 Allen Gunj Allahabad 211 002, Uttar Pradesh	Phone Tele Fax: 0532-2466709 / (O): 0532-6452859 E-mail: elti2006@rediffmail.com, rajendraelti@gmail.com
3	Mr. P.B. Chavan Director Maharashtra Institute of Planning and Administration Near Deogiri College Railway Station Road, Padampura Aurangabad 431 001, Maharashtra	Phone (O): 0240-2334448 / 2334692 Fax: 0240-2331034 / 0240-2334379, 65 0240-2331102, 0240-2321201, 2359750 E-mail: siem_mah@yahoo.co.in
4.	Mr. H. S. Rama Rao Director Regional Institute of English for South India Jnanabharathi Campus Bangalore- 560 056, Karnataka	Phone (O): 080-23218452, 23213243 Fax: 080-23211732 E-mail: elt@riesi.co.in; trg@riesielt.com
5	Ms. Kamlesh Sharma Director English Language Teaching Institute 81, Pustak Bhavan, 'B' Wing, Arera Hills, Bhopal. Madhya Pradesh – 462 011.	Phone (O): 0755-2760538 Telefax: 0755-2760538 E-mail: eltibhopal@yahoo.com,
6	Mr. Gangadhar Sahoo Director English Language Teaching Institute Maitri Vihar, Chandrasekharapur Bhubaneswar 751 016, Orissa	Phone (O): 0674-2301871 Tele Fax: 0674-2301871, 2502928 E-mail: elti_bbsr@dataone.in, postmaster@dataone.in
7	Dr. Sharda Kaushik Director Regional Institute of English for North India Sector 32C, Chandigarh Administration Chandigarh 160 047	Phone (Tele Fax): 0172-2676008 E-mail: sharda_kaushik@yahoo.com

No.	ELTI/RIE	Contact Details
8	Mrs. Chitra Lekha Sarma Director (In-Charge) English Language Teaching Institute 3rd Floor, Multi Storied Building Elementary Education, Kahilipara Guwahati 781 019, Assam	Phone (O): 0361-2380771 E-mail: eltiassam@rocketmail.com
9	Mr. Vipralhou Keseizie Director State Council of Educational Research & Training Government of Nagaland Kohima, Nagaland 797 001.	Phone (O): 0370 – 2270160-61, 2271476, 2271126, Tele Fax: 0370 - 2270160 E-mail: v_kesiezies@yahoo.com, akalakin@yahoo.com, eltikohima@gmail.com
10	Dr. Sampa Chatterjee Director Institute of English Calcutta 119, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Road Kolkata 700 026, West Bengal	Phone (O): 033-24663039,24635535 Tele Fax: 033-24663039 E-mail: krishnakishormukherjee@rediffmail.com Sampa16@yahoo.co.in, jrnms@yahoo.co.uk
11	Mr. Hasan Waris Director, In-charge SCERT, Mahendru, Patna, Bihar 800 006.	Phone (O): 0612-2370783 Tele Fax: 0612-2371117/2370292 E-mail: scert.bihar@gmail.com, scertbihar@sify.com.
12	Mr. Anil Rai (IFS) Director SCERT, BTI Campus, Shankarnagar Raipur, Chhattisgarh 492 001.	Phone (O): 0771-2443596 / 0771-2443796 Tele Fax: 0771-2443596 scert_raipur@yahoo.co.in
13	Mr. D. N. Singh Coordinator ELTI Jharkhand, DIET, Ratu Ranchi, 835 222, Jharkhand.	Phone (O): 0651-2521169 Fax: 0651-2521741 / 0651-2521169 E-mail: elti.jhar@gmail.com
14	Mr. B.S. Sandhu Director SIERT , Saheli Marg Udaipur 313 001, Rajasthan	Phone (O): 0294-2415171, 2427115, 2415202 Tele Fax: 0294-2415171 / 24183192 E-mail: siert_udr@yahoo.co.in
15	Dr. Rajendrasinh Jadeja Principal , HM Patel Institute of Eng- lish Training & Research, Vallabh Vidyanagar 388 120, Gujarat	Phone (O): 02692-230193 Fax: 02692-230079 E-mail: hmpietr@yahoo.com

ELTIS & RIEs

No.	ELTI/RIE	Contact Details
16	Mr. P.K. Jayaraj Director (i/c) State Institute of English, Kerala Ramavarmapuram, Trisoor KERALA – 695 012.	Phone (O): 0487-2323763, 2324601 Tele Fax: 0471-2325106 dpisecretsection@gmail.com siekerala@gmail.com,
17	Mr. C.M. Gangwal Director, ELTI (IASE) IASE Campus, Opposite to Karni Singh Stadium, Tirth Stambh, Bikaner -334 001. RAJASTHAN	Phone (O): 09929111199, 09460305331, eltirajasthan@gmail.com, dceiasebikaner@gmail.com
18	Prof. Kailash Chandra Baral Director North East Campus, Shillong ,(Nehru Complex) Umshing-Mawkynroh Shillong – 793 022, Meghalaya	Phone (O): 0364-2550038, 2550065 Tele Fax: 0364-2550038 E-mail: baral@ciefl.ac.in
19	Prof. Raj Nath Bakshi Director Lucknow Campus, Moti Mahal 2, Ranapratap Marg, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh	Phone (O): 0522-2616073 / 0522-2285771 Tele Fax: 0522-2885771 E-mail: rnbakshi@ciefl.ac.in, rajnbakshi@yahoo.co.in
20	Dr. K. Venkat Reddy Coordinator ELTI Support Scheme, Extension Service Schemes The English and Foreign Languages University Hyderabad-500 605	Phone (Tele Fax): 040-27090753, extn: 9577 Tele Fax: 040-27090752 (DCS) 9575 E-mail: eflu.eltiss@yahoo.com eflu.eltiss@gmail.com



**H. M. Patel Institute of English
Training and Research**

Vallabh Vidyanagar 388 120. Dist. Anand, Gujarat - India.

Ph.: (02692) 230193 • Fax: 230079

Email: hmpietr@yahoo.com • www.hmpenglish.com