
The English Classroom

Bi-annual Journal

Volume 23

Number 1

June 2021

ISSN 2250-2831

Chief Advisor

Dr S Mohanraj

Former Professor, EFL-U, Hyderabad-500007

Advisors

Dr G Rajagopal

Former Professor, EFL-U, Hyderabad-500007

Prof Jacob Tharu

Formerly, CIEFL, Hyderabad – 500007

Editorial Board

Mr Nagendra S Madhyastha

Director, RIESI

Bengaluru-560056

Editor-in-Chief

Prof Hitesh C Bhakat

Professor, RIESI

Bengaluru-560056

Editor

Ms Pooja Giri

Co-Editor

Faculty, RIESI

Bengaluru-560056



Regional Institute of English, South India

Jnanabharathi Campus, Bengaluru – 560056

Phone : 080-35101131, Toll Free : 1800-889-1790/1791

E-mail : riesi.bangalore@gmail.com

Website : www.riesielt.org

Copyright :

Regional Institute of English, South India
Bangaluru - 560 056

All rights reserved. No Part of this publication may be reproduced or stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, (electronic, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without the prior permission of the publisher.

The views expressed in the articles are that of the authors.

Editor-in-Chief : **Mr Gopalakrishna H N**
Director, RIESI, Bengaluru

Editor : **Prof Hitesh C Bhakat**

Co-editor : **Ms Pooja Giri**

Publisher : **Regional institute of English, South India.**
Jnanabharathi Campus,
Bangaluru - 560 056

Edition : June 2020

No.of Copies : 500

Printed at : **Deepthi Printers**
No. 15, Kanaka Complex,
80 Feet Road, Srinivasanagar,
Bangaluru – 560017
Ph : 080-26600173, 9980034496
e-mail: deepthiprinters@gmail.com

The English Classroom

Bi-annual Journal

Volume 23

Number 1

June 2021

ISSN 2250-2831

CONTENT

Title of the Articles and name of the Author (s)	Page No.
About 'The English Classroom'	
Homage: Mr. Jaykumar S , Former Director RIESI, Bengaluru Prof N Krishnaswamy , Former Professor Department of Linguistics and contemporary English, ELFU, Hyderabad.	
1. Collaborative Learning: Fostering The Needs of The 21st Century Learners Dr. Charul Jain	1-9
2. Common Errors in the English Language Communication Dr. Krishna Chaitanya E	10-20
3. Zeugma Dr R.Madhavi	21-28
4. Metonymy M. Naga Raju	29-33
5. Collocations Prof. S Mohanraj	34-41
6. Teacher Professional Growth: Some Reflections on Self Practices, Dr Hitesh C Bhakat	42-50
7. Strategies For Teacher Empowerment Dr G Manjulatha Devi and Ramesh Rajuri	51-61

8.	Writing Skills of College Students: A Quantitative-cum-Qualitative Study, Dr.Ruchi Kaushik	62-68
9.	Learning Problems faced in Primary Schools: A Fundamental focus in Teaching English with emphasis to Phonics and spellings. Dipika Vijay Sulebhavi	69-82
10.	Effects Of Karate On The Reading And Writing Skills of L2 Learners Dr Sajeena Shukkoor	83-89
11.	Why the sight words are to be taught? S Padma Priya	90-97
12.	The praxis of reading in esl classrooms at the higher secondary level in the schools of kerala. Preetha P.V	98-106
13.	Developing 21st Century Skills through Collaborative Learning in the English classroom Mamatha Sadu	107-111
14.	Book Review Prabhu N.S. (2019). <i>Perceptions in Language Pedagogy</i> by Prof. S Mohanraj	112-112

About 'The English Classroom'

The English Classroom Journal is a peer-reviewed bi-annual journal published in the month of June and December. The main objective of the journal is to publish articles pertaining to English Language Teaching. We hope, the research findings, strategies and topics discussed in the journal would enable the ELT Community garner better understanding and insights for further research ideas and for classroom practices. The current volume includes two obituaries, one of Mr. Jaykumar S , Former Director RIESI, Bengaluru and the other of Prof N Krishnaswamy Former Professor ELU Hyderabad and thirteen articles and a book review.

In the first article titled, **COLLABORATIVE LEARNING: FOSTERING THE NEEDS OF THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNERS** by, **Dr. Charul Jain**, discusses the salient features of collaborative learning and states that collaborative learning is the most suited language learning model to address the skills needed by the 21st century learner.

Dr. Krishna Chaitanya E, in the next article, **Common Errors in the English Language Communication** presents some of the most commonly made errors in English language and then suggests various feasible strategies to be tried by learners to avoid making common errors in speaking and writing.

The English literary term zeugma which is used by poets, novelists and in everyday conversation to create a sense of surprise is addressed by **Dr R.Madhavi**. In her article, **Zeugma** she gives ample of examples and shows ways in which this literary term can be used in everyday conversations.

m nagaRAJU in his article, **Metonymy** discusses a figure of speech which is used by many writers but not frequently discussed. In this article, metonymy is elaborated with ample examples.

Prof. S Mohanraj in the article, **Collocations** examines the term 'collocation' and states how collocations can be classified based on their structure and based on the meaning which can be divided into three categories depending on their stability. Finally gives with some suggestions on how to master them through a process of reading.

In the next paper, **Teacher Professional Growth: Some Reflections on Self Practices**, **Dr Hitesh C Bhakat**, talks about the concept of teaching and growth in teaching profession. He states that teacher professional growth can be achieved through successful progression in broad educational goals; a desire to sharpen

inner inquisitiveness; improving existing knowledge and constant endeavour in refining it.

Dr G Manjulatha Devi and **Ramesh Rajuri** in the article, **STRATEGIES FOR TEACHER EMPOWERMENT** discuss varied points on teacher empowerment. They stress on doing the tasks with creative and analytical thinking; recruiting highly effective teachers without any scope for any nepotism; the responsibility of educational institutions in helping teachers multiply their skills and relevant selection of materials, strategies etc.

Next, **Dr.Ruchi Kaushik** in the article, **Writing Skills of College Students: A Quantitative-cum-Qualitative Study**, has made a qualitative and a quantitative analysis of the writing skills of undergraduates studying in different colleges at the University of Delhi (DU) to design need-based materials accordingly as per the findings.

Dipika Vijay Sulebhavi, in her article, **Learning Problems faced in Primary Schools: A Fundamental focus in Teaching English with emphasis to Phonics and spellings** states various reasons for poor reading aloud ability of students at Primary classes. Then suggests Phonic method of reading aloud and gives a few strategies of practicing spelling.

Dr Sajeena Shukkoor in the article, **EFFECTS OF KARATE ON THE READING AND WRITING SKILLS OF L2 LEARNERS** has made an investigation on the effects of Karate on the reading and writing skills of L2 learners. It is an experimental method and the design adopted is Pre-Test Post Test Non Equivalent group design. The findings are mentioned in the paper.

S Padma Priya, emphasises on teaching sight words in the article, **WHY THE SIGHT WORDS ARE TO BE TAUGHT?** She states that according to the reports of National Achievement Survey (NAS) and State Level Assessment Survey (SLAS) the Reading Comprehension of the children is not at the desired level. Hence to improve their ability to graphically read the text, the solution could be drawing their attention to the sight words.

The importance of independent reading and meaning making is highlighted by **Preetha P.V** in her article, **THE PRAXIS OF READING IN ESL CLASSROOMS AT THE HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL IN THE SCHOOLS OF KERALA**. Through critical pedagogy, social constructivism and other strategies the paper attempts to improve reading of students of Higher Secondary levels in ESL classrooms.

Mamatha Sadu in the article, **Developing 21st Century Skills through Collaborative Learning in the English classroom** presents a report of the survey conducted to gather opinion of the students and the teachers regarding use of Collaborative learning for teaching to inculcate 21st Century Skills among learners. Based on the findings of the survey she suggests various strategies for practicing Collaborative Learning.

In the Book Review section Prof. S Mohanraj makes a detailed review of *Perceptions in Language Pedagogy* by N.S. Prabhu (2019).

All these articles have been reviewed by expert review committee members ensuring quality and variety. We thank Prof. S Mohanraj, Former Professor, EFLU, Hyderabad and Prof. Rajagopal Former Professor, EFLU, Hyderabad for detailed reading of the articles and providing constructive feedback for revision. We are thankful to the contributors of the articles because of their support we are able to publish the current edition of the journal.

The subscribers have also supported us in regular publishing of the journal and we express our gratitude to all of them.

Kindly share your feedback by emailing us to the institute: riesi.bangalore@gmail.com or to the editor – riesi.pooja@gmail.com

Prof Hitesh C Bhakat
Editor

Mr Gopalakrishna H N
Director

Homage to Mr Jayakumara S



Mr Jayakumara S was born on 20.05.1959 in a small village in Gubbi Taluq of Tumukuru district in Karnataka. He did his M. Ed from Bangalore University and Karnataka Educational Service cadre (KES). Mr. Jayakumara began his service as Headmaster and rose up to the highest position of Director of Primary Education, Government of Karnataka.

Mr Jayakumara S worked as a Director of the Regional Institute of English South India, Bengaluru from 31.07.2017 to 03.12.2018 and also continued in full additional charge from 4.12.2018 to 31.05.2019, where he involved himself passionately for the growth and welfare of the Institute. He was a dynamic administrator and a committed educator and above all, a helpful human being.

He passed away on 04.05.2021. His sad demise is a great loss to the teaching community.

**DIRECTOR,
Faculty and Staff**

Prof N Krishnaswamy

May 3rd 2021 did not begin on a pleasant note. In my phone, I had a message informing me that Prof Krishnaswamy is no more. For a moment, I couldn't believe it, for I had spoken to him a few weeks earlier, and he had sounded the same cheerful person he always was.

It is a difficult task to write about a person who you have known closely. I got to know him as a student way back in the year 1980. I was pursuing my research and he had just got back from Aden (South Yemen, those days) after completing a teaching assignment. He met a few of us and gave us a talk. This was my first introduction to him. Subsequently, I had several occasions to be with him on workshops as a co-tutor, as a participant on his lectures, as a host inviting him to give a talk, as a co-editor, as a trainer for the materials he had produced and best of all as an affectionate student-friend.

What is it I remember most about him? An exceptional teacher! This is no exaggeration. He had a way of teaching grammar which one needs to experience to believe. Grammar unfolded itself in his class through stories, anecdotes and largely filled with humour. It was never a boring subject wrought with rules and regulations. I am sure many students of his bear me out on this.

He was a genuine person. He loved his students and friends unconditionally and was ready to help them at any time. He never refused an invitation, especially when it came from his students. He would travel any distance to oblige them – whether it was the hot deserts of Rajasthan, or the wet forests of Assam, it did not matter to him. He would be there and fulfill the wishes of the students. A rare quality these days.

Another sterling quality he carried with him till the end was his passion for reading and writing. He has produced excellent books on Grammar, Linguistics, ELT, History of Language Teaching, Course books and what have you. It is difficult to list all the books he has written.

He was the man, and that he is no more with us today is difficult to believe. Let us remember him for the cheer he brought into our lives.

May his soul rest in peace

Mohanraj along with a host of other students

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING: FOSTERING THE NEEDS OF THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNERS

Dr. Charul Jain

Associate Professor

Department of English

The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

Vadodara 390002

charul.jain-eng@msubaroda.ac.ins

Abstract

Collaborative learning where learners work in groups moving towards accomplishment of shared learner goals, each being responsible for his/her learning and simultaneously contributing to the learning of all the group members promises a way forward in learning language skills in the 21st Century. It owes its genesis in principle to the Communicative Language teaching (Hymes 1972, Halliday 1970, Swain 1985) and the Social Cognitivist theories of language learning put forward by Vygotsky (1978, 1981) contending that learning takes place in the zone of proximal development and scaffolding provided by peers and adults facilitates in the process. Krashen's (1981, 1982, 1985, 2003) comprehensible input hypothesis suggests the necessity of language learning through progressive steps of building on the previous knowledge. The paper looks at the salient features of collaborative learning and argues that to address the skills needed by the 21st century learner, collaborative learning is the most suited language learning model.

Keywords

Collaborative learning, Social cognitivist theories, Input hypothesis, 21st century learning skills

Introduction

When communicative language teaching was introduced, it opened pathways for bringing about a change in the teaching and learning of second language. It allowed for introduction of various methods and techniques for teaching language which focussed on enhancing communicative abilities of students in the target language. Shifting focus from grammar, translation and strict adherence to structures of language, the approach laid emphasis on the ability to communicate in the second language and making meaning through communication. (Hymes 1972, Halliday 1970, Swain 1985)

Several practices of communicative language teaching have emerged in the last few decades which focus on the central tenets of the approach like, learner centred teaching, group and pair work, contextualised teaching through series of activities or tasks and holistic focus on all the four language skills as corroborated by Rogers and Richards (2001) and Jacobs (2006). One of the paths that communicative language teaching treaded is collaborative learning which encapsulates all the above characteristics and concerns but also has some distinctive features. It builds primarily on student interaction and “views learning as construction of knowledge” (Oxford 1997: 442). The learner in 21st century needs to learn not only the grammar, vocabulary and the intricacies of language, but also the skills necessary to survive and succeed in the times which, focus on creative and critical thinking, communicative abilities and problem solving. This paper attempts to explore the basic tenets of collaborative learning and throw light on its practicability in Indian classrooms. It argues that the earlier methods and approaches focussed on the individual learner and his/her individual learning needs but in the present times as social networking and group behaviour get focussed, there is a need to move towards more inclusive and collective forms of learning which collaborative learning provides.

Theory of Language Learning

There have been several theorists analyzing the process and basis of language leaning, particularly second language. Social- Cognitive learning theorists have had a deep impact on development of the principles of Communicative language teaching and Collaborative learning. One such theorist, Lev Vygotsky (1981) contends that learning is a result of social interaction through adults and peers. Through role plays with his peers, enacting as a teacher, parent or a professional, a child learns a lot of language and grows in knowledge too. He contends that “... a child is at once surrounded by sociocultural contexts that exert an immediate influence on development through interaction...” as cited in Jacobs (2006).

What this essentially means is that children are embedded in their socio cultural contexts and learn several things through association with their peers and adults. Vygotsky (1981) contends that learning does not take place in isolation. Children construct knowledge actively and learn by observing others or even by imitating others. They build up on their previous stores of knowledge (schema) by adding chunks from their environment and surroundings and use these chunks in performance when needed (Vygotsky 1978, Smith and MacGregor 1992). When they play with their peers or observe their family members or relatives they pick up a lot of mannerisms, lexical items and linguistic units which are never taught to them formally in a classroom or through a textbook.

Maximum learning takes place when the concepts of knowledge chunks lie between a zone of known and unknown, which Vygotsky (1978) calls the Zone of Proximal Development or ZPD. In this zone, certain things are known but not all. Through observation, repetition, or mimicry a child learns and moves from the zone of unknown towards the zone of known making self discoveries and applications. In the initial stages of language learning a child needs and takes the support of peers or adults or teachers who prompt, appreciate and motivate the child in acquiring additional chunks of language. In other words, the learners get support or 'scaffolding' from their better or more knowledgeable acquaintances and climb the ladder of knowledge. As the child learns better and is able to perform adequately well in the language, this support is gradually reduced till the child or the learner is able to function independently.

This concept of Vygotsky has similarities with that of Krashen (1981, 1982, 1985, 2003) in the Second language acquisition (SLA). Krashen propounding his Input Hypothesis conveys that language learning takes place when an input is presented which is more than the existing learnt database. He showed using a mathematical model how a learner using contextual and extra-linguistic clues is able to interpret the higher level input (he calls it "i+1") if the context is sufficient to interpret the message. (Jain 2018) Krashen's ideas are expressed in another concept, *comprehensible input*, where he contends that language is learnt best when sufficient exposure to the target language is provided in a measure which is understandable to the learner. Comprehensible input hypothesis provided... "an argument that language is best acquired incidentally through extensive exposure to comprehensible second language input." According to Grabe and Stoller (1997), "We acquire, in other words, only when we understand language that contains structure that is "a little beyond" where we are now... we use more than our linguistic competence to help us understand. We also use context, our knowledge of the world, our extra-linguistic information to help us understand language directed at us."

Putting the ideas of the three (Vygotsky's zone of proximal development and scaffolding, Krashen's comprehensible input and input hypothesis) together, we are able to conclude that learning takes place primarily through interaction and support between members of a language community, when the chunks of information are presented gradually adding on previous knowledge and when learners are presented with an avenue to display their learning. Collaborative and Cooperative learning address all the three vital ingredients for constructivist leaning in a learner centred invigorated classrooms with active participation of students where they mutually assist each other in producing the desired output and contribute eventually to language learning.

Collaborative learning

Smith and MacGregor (1992) believe that “Collaborative learning” is an umbrella term for a variety of educational approaches involving joint intellectual effort by students, or students and teachers together.” According to Laal (1992), “Collaborative learning is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product.” Srinivas Hari believes that it is “a relationship among learners that requires positive interdependence, individual accountability, interpersonal skills, face to face interaction and processing...”

All these definitions highlight that this teaching/learning approach aims at (a) coordinating efforts of more than one student (b) towards achieving a shared goal or (c) completing some task, assignment or project. Usually, students are grouped in small groups, and they search together for understanding, finding solutions, or meanings, or creating a product. It contends that ‘two (or more) heads are better than one’ in accomplishing tasks also involving language learning. They are dependent on each other for sharing ideas and completing the task, where each one is accountable for one’s own work and for the entire group’s performance. They are bonded together by communication, leadership, team work, decision making as well as assessing periodically, performance of the team and conflict resolving for better functioning. Collaborative learning activities vary widely, but most center on students’ exploration or application of the course material, not simply the teacher’s presentation or explication of it as Smith and MacGregor (1992) enumerates.

Though the two terms, collaborative learning and cooperative learning are often used interchangeably, experts prefer to differentiate between the two. “Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other’s learning” (Johnson 2018: 23)

According to Oxford (1997: 444) collaborative learning is meant for learners with higher academic backgrounds and intelligence where they can construct their own learning spaces and speeds and ‘collaborate’ with other equal learners to arrive at the end destinations. The teacher plays a less intrusive role and the activities or learning environments are less structured than in the case of cooperative learning. Oxford hence contends that “Collaborative learning has thus taken on the connotation of social constructivism, which holds that learning is acculturation into knowledge communities.”

Citing several similarities between these two like, group work, shared goals, individual as well as group accountability and peer learning, what primarily differentiates the two is the level on which each is implemented and the manner of implementation. Cooperative learning is considered for primary and secondary levels of imparting instruction where teacher plays a greater role in facilitating student learning. Learn-

ers are expected to perform their bits of the division of the work or task and put all outputs together to complete the objective, as in solving a jigsaw puzzle (Aronson and his colleagues 1978).

Whereas collaborative learning is a term used primarily for higher education where learner independence is presumed and there is more interaction amongst the group members and less teacher involvement. Learners are expected to explore and resolve problems to move ahead and achieve the goal rather than being led by the teacher at every stage. Both are learner centred activities which focus on active participation of learners in the process of making meaning and interacting to learn.

The learning process is designed to take care of certain important considerations regarding student learning:

- (a) **Learning is necessarily a social process.** A language is a user centred, two way activity necessitating a rich give-and-take and active user involvement and participation in language exchange.
- (b) **Learning is a constructive process** where students cooperate and collaborate to make sense of language rules and primarily how language functions.
- (c) **Peer teaching/learning is an essential resource.** In the zone of the proximal development using the scaffolding provided by their peers and adults, a lot of language learning and understanding of social behaviour takes place. (Vygotsky 1978)
- (d) Learners need to **work with language in meaningful, purposeful ways.** They need to integrate what they already know and create and add something new on their own either independently or with assistance from others (Krashen 1985). As Smith and MacGregor put it “They need to integrate this new material with what they already know-or use it to reorganize what they thought they knew.” (1992: 220) this inculcates in them critical and creative thinking skills necessary for survival in the world.
- (e) **Learning is contextualised** and it needs rich, meaningful and relevant contexts for them to associate and make meaning and learn problem solving skills. “Rather than beginning with facts and ideas and then moving to applications, collaborative learning activities frequently begin with problems, for which students must marshal pertinent facts and ideas.” (Smith and MacGregor 1992)
- (f) There is **diversity amongst the learners.** There are learners who vary on the scale of proficiency, academic and familial background, levels of motivation, capabilities, dedication and intelligence. This diversity should be harnessed for maximizing learning output in a language classroom.

- (g) **Learning is goal-centred activity** which requires feedback, motivation and encouragement. In a group task where each individual is responsible for independent and collective goals, sense of responsibility and accomplishment ensure the desired results.

One of the important aspects in collaborative/cooperative learning is grouping of students to maximize learning opportunities and output. All the above factors have to be in the focus for creating groups. Jacobs (2006: 16) quotes Freeman and Freeman (1994:154) “when students work collaboratively, diversity is an asset to be celebrated since the varied experiences, knowledge, and interests students in each group bring to the task at hand add to the potential for learning.” Whatever be the basis of formation of groups, research has proved that heterogeneous groups perform much better in terms of learning outputs (Jacobs 2006: 13).

Though there are apparent advantages of Collaborative learning, there are some challenges too that one has to accept and consider before implementing. There is a need to rethink and redesign syllabuses keeping learner in the centre. Time allocation to topics needs to be revisited. Since learner and teacher roles are swapped and this requires considerable thinking, sessions need to be carefully planned to engage the learners for maximizing output. Student interaction and group dynamics need close supervision at times requiring teacher involvement. One very big challenge is evaluation and its components. Since activities and learner involvement and development are continuous, ways and means to assess the progress need careful consideration.

Collaborative learning is best experienced when task based learning or project based learning are implemented in a classroom where the objectives and goals are clearly defined and time limits are set. When students work on a particular set of assignments over a period of time, their intelligences are coordinated to greater output and result in better learning. Meaningful, mind engaging problem solving activities not only result in enhancing critical and creative thinking but also improve communicative abilities and team work.

The 21st Century Learner

The present day learner and his learning environment is marked by networking and groupings. Learners do not sit isolated and aloof from each other while learning. They form communities using social media (networking sites like, Facebook, Instagram, twitter and chatting sites like, Telegram, Whatsapp, chat, etc.) and stay in touch much more frequently and on a real time basis with each other. They share, interact, discuss and grow together. The learning models of the past, like, grammar translation, S-O-S approach, Notional Functional approach which all focussed on the

individual learner are a passe. According to Irvine et.al (2013: 173), “the 21st century learners have expectations that are not met within the traditional and mainstream higher education.”

What the modern day learner needs is a model which is inclusive, cooperative and collaborative, where learning takes place by holding each other's hands and collectively. The learners require not merely knowledge of the content but also several vital life skills that are necessary for success in the 21st century like critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, team work and adjustment. According to Kivunja, the 21st Century Learning domain comprises four elements which are referred to as 4 Cs “i.e. i) critical thinking and problem solving, ii) communication, iii) collaboration, and iv) creativity and innovation” (2014: 41). The learners take control of their learning content, manner, time and space. The learning occurs not merely in the structured environment of a classroom but in an unstructured mode everywhere, anytime.

Irvine et.al rightly contend that “environments that foster lasting learning in collaboration with others in the community, whose interactions are much a matter of collective understanding and shared experience...” (2013: 174) are the most suitable for the learners in the 21st Century.

Conclusion

The above discussion hence points to the fact that Collaborative learning shifts the focus from teaching to learning and facilitates more conducive and participative learning environments. Students learn from their peers in their zone of proximal development and their group mates prove as scaffolding providers in the process of learning. As the input is progressively increased and as output is to be displayed, better and focussed learning takes place. The 21st century demands from its learners to be more creative, critical thinkers, collaborative and good communicators. To foster all these skills, it is vital that there is a shift from teacher centered individuated classrooms to learner centred collaborative /cooperative classrooms.

REFERENCES:

- Aranson, E., Blaney, N., Stephin, C., Sikes, J., & Snapp, M. (1978). *The Jigsaw Classroom*. Beverley Hills, CA: Sage Publishing Company.
- Arshad, Mahzan & Chen, Wu. (2009). Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory of literacy Scaffolding children to read and write at an early age. *Wacana, Journal of the Humanities of Indonesia*. 11. 319. 10.17510/wjhi.v11i2.164.
- Grabe, William and Fredricka Stoller. (1997). *Content Based Instruction: Research Foundations*, Longman.

- Irvine, V., Code, J., & Richards, L. (2013). Realigning higher education for the 21st century learner through multi-access learning. *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 9(2), 172. Retrieved April 28, 2021.
- Jacobs, G. M., McCafferty, S. G., & Iddings, C. (2006). Roots of cooperative learning in general education. In S. G. McCafferty, G. M. Jacobs, & Iddings, C. (Eds.), *Cooperative learning and second language teaching*, pp. 9-17. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Jacobs, G., & Shan, T. H. (2016). Advancing learner autonomy in TEFL via collaborative learning. *Leksika: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra dan Pengajarannya*, 10(1), 101.
- Jain Charul. (2018). Content Based Instruction: a Strategic Direction in Second Language Teaching in *International Journal of English Language and Literature in Humanities*, 6(8), 49-58.
- Johnson, D.W. & Johnson, R.T. (2018). Cooperative learning: The foundation for Active Learning. *Active Learning—Beyond the Future*.
- Kivunja, C. (2014). Innovative pedagogies in higher education to become effective teachers of 21st century skills: Unpacking the learning and innovations skills domain of the new learning paradigm. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 3(4), 37-48.
- Krashen, S.D. (1981). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Krashen, S.D. (1982). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon
- Krashen, S.D. (1985). *The Input Hypothesis: Issues and Implications*, New York: Longman.
- Krashen, S.D. (2003). *Explorations in Language Acquisition and Use*. Portsmouth: Heinemann
- Laal, M., & Ghodsi, S. M. (2012). Benefits of collaborative learning. *Procedia-social and behavioral sciences*, 31, 486-490. Retrieved on 20 April 2021
- Oxford, Rebecca L., and Martha Nyikos. (1997). "Interaction, Collaboration, and Cooperation: Learning Languages and Preparing Language Teachers: Introduction to the Special Issue." *The Modern Language Journal*, 81(4), 440-442.
- Oxford, R. L. (1997). Cooperative learning, collaborative learning, and interaction: Three communicative strands in the language classroom. *The modern language journal*, 81(4), 443-456. www.jstor.org/stable/328887. Retrieved on 31 Mar. 2021.

- Richards, Jack C. & Theodore S. Rodgers. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*, reprint, revised. Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, B. L., & MacGregor, J. T. (1992). What is collaborative learning. *Towards the Virtual University: International Online Learning Perspectives*, 217-232. <https://www.evergreen.edu/sites/default/files/facultydevelopment/docs/WhatisCollaborativeLearning.pdf>.
- Spivy, M., Young, D. & Cottle, A. (2008). Bridging the Digital Divide: Successes and Challenges in the Implementation of 21st Century Skills. In K. McFerrin, R. Weber, R. Carlsen & D. Willis (Eds.), *Proceedings of SITE 2008--Society for Information Technology & Teacher Education International Conference* pp. 1534-1539. Las Vegas, Nevada, USA: Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education AACE. Retrieved April 28, 2021 from <https://www.learntechlib.org/p/27411>.
- Srinivas Hari, Collaborative Learning. <https://www.gdrc.org/kmgmt/c-learn/> Retrieved on 26 April 2021
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1962). *Thought and language*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1981). "The genesis of higher mental function", in J.V. Wertsch (Ed.), *The concept of activity in Soviet psychology*, 144-188. Armonk, NY: Sharp
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). *Thinking and speech*. In R.W. Rieber & A.S. Carton (Eds.), *The collected works of L.S. Vygotsky, Volume 1: Problems of general psychology* 39–285. New York: Plenum Press. (Original work published 1934.)

Common Errors in the English Language Communication

Dr. Krishna Chaitanya E.

Asst. Professor,
MGIT, Hyderabad
ekcr.81@gmail.com

Abstract

Effective communication is considered to be an integral part of every language. By communicating precisely and clearly individuals can ensure that they are understood. Effective communication involves articulating views, responding to queries, building arguments and analyzing problems. To communicate effectively in a variety of personal and professional contexts, people need required competency in the language they speak. Competency in a language includes two important aspects such as accuracy (proper use of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) and fluency (ability to express ideas prolifically on any topic). These parameters are employed for assessing a candidate's language and competence by many language testing examinations. Further, they help people in articulating their perspectives, agreements, disagreements, and emotions besides equipping them in seeking and drawing information from others.

The purpose of the paper is to present some of the most commonly made errors in English language. It discusses various feasible strategies to avoid making common errors in speaking and writing.

Keywords : Common errors, Grammar, Strategies, Speaking, Writing

Introduction

Communication being a skill, we should put consistent efforts to practice and improve, show willingness and exhibit passion to learn and communicate with ease and confidence. In order to have successful communication, language learners should create opportunities to communicate in a wide variety of real time contexts. Therefore, people require command on grammar because it forms the groundwork and enables individuals to communicate well. Sharing the views on the essence of grammar for communication,(Johnson, 2020) mentioned "Just as an improperly configured telephone wire can cause static during a phone conversation, improper grammar can likewise affect the meaning and clarity of an intended message". Unawareness of grammatical elements cripples people's accuracy and fluency as they have to restructure their statements often in spoken and written communication.

Hence, correct usage of grammar helps individuals to succeed in academic and professional contexts besides strengthening their communicative competence. Also, the precise use of grammar acts as a change agent that can bridge the social gap and bring success in every walk of life. Moreover, people get habituated to think rationally and speak precisely in the course of time. Therefore, poor grammar (i.e. making common errors in language) is a major negative factor which limits individual's growth. For example, many research papers get rejected/sent back for modifications because of errors; job applications of job seekers are not shortlisted due to erroneous language. In all these contexts, inconsistencies in grammar handicap people's persona and professional development.

In spite of studying English as a language for more than 12 years in schools and colleges, errors creep into English communication in many non-native and native speakers. Although India is rated as the second highest English speaking country, many average speakers of English make errors in their communication. It leads to ambiguity and miscommunication. Some of the most common mistakes are: subject verb agreement, misplaced or dangling modifiers, parts of speech, run-on sentences/ comma splice, sentence fragments, redundancy in expression, tenses, noun-noun disagreement, spellings, punctuation, use of double negatives, etc.

Mother Tongue Influence, overgeneralization, casual approach to language, lack of exposure, omission and insertion of certain words, flawed learning process and using language without checking its accuracy (vocabulary and grammar) are other sources of errors. Additionally, such casual approach to language leads to acceptance and usage of the non-standard English. Understanding the reasons and nature of errors in English equips individuals with the ability to review, edit, proofread and modify theirs and others pieces of writing. The process of error analysis and error correction begins with identifying errors and practicing the right ones in writing and speaking.

Objectives of the paper:

- To present the background information pertaining to the common errors in the English language
- To discuss some of the reasons for making errors in speaking and writing in the English language
- To explore various kinds of common errors with examples and explanations in the English language
- To recommend strategies to overcome the common errors in the English language

The following is the list of areas where errors generally occur in English grammar.

1. Subject verb agreement

Concord is a prominent one and is a major source of common errors. According to this, every subject should agree with its verb depending on its number (singular subject or plural subject). In the following examples, the subject in each sentence is underlined and the verb is highlighted in bold. The erroneous sentence is followed by its correct alternative.

i. The subject of the sentence should agree with the verb:

An ideal **team leader** regularly **boost** the morale of the team. (X)

An ideal **team leader** regularly **boosts** the morale of the team. (✓) (team leader – singular)

Children **runs** helter-skelter all over the shopping mall (X)

Children **run** helter-skelter all over the shopping mall. (✓) (Children - plural)

ii. The verb agrees with the subject but not with the noun/pronoun in the phrase:

The people who watch the thriller movie **is** few. (X)

The people who watch the thriller movie **are** few. (✓) (Subject is People – not thriller movie)

The leader with all his followers **have begun** the campaign. (X)

The leader with all his followers **has begun** the campaign. (✓) (Subject is leader – not followers)

iii. Singular indefinite pronoun subjects (i.e. each, everyone, someone, and etc.) take singular verbs and plural indefinite pronoun subjects (i.e. few, many, several and both take plural verb).

Each player **contribute** to the team's success. (X)

Each player **contributes** to the team's success. (✓) (Singular indefinite pronoun)

Several visitors **has returned** homes after exhibition. (X)

Several visitors **have returned** homes after exhibition. (✓) (plural indefinite pronoun)

iv. When **compound subjects joined by or/nor**, the verb is in agreement with the subject nearest to it.

Neither the customers nor the painter **are** present in the gallery. (X)

Neither the customers nor the painter **is** present in the gallery. (✓) (Painter is the nearest subject to the verb)

Either the teacher or the children **is** informed about the holiday. (X)

Either the teacher or the children **are** informed about the holiday (✓) (children – nearest subject to the verb)

- v. Words such as team, jury, committee, group, etc. are called collective nouns and they can be used as singular or plural, depending on meaning.

The committee **was divided** in their opinions. (X)

The committee **were divided** in their opinions. (✓) (committee – used in plural sense)

The team **have performed** well in the match. (X)

The team **has performed** well in the match. (✓) (team – used in singular sense)

- vi. While using subject and subjective complement of different number, the verb in the sentence is generally in agreement with the subject.

Rahul's favourite sport in his schooldays **were** cricket. (X)

Rahul's favourite sport in his schooldays **was** cricket. (✓) (sport is singular and it is subject)

Plays written by Bernard Shaw **is** my loved ones in literature. (X)

Plays written by Bernard Shaw **are** my loved ones in literature. (✓) (Dramas - plural)

2. Misplaced or Dangling Modifiers:

A **modifier** is a word/phrase/clause which generally modifies rest of the words in the given sentence. It can be an adjective or an adverb. The role of adjective is to modify the nouns; and adverb is to modify the verbs or the adjectives or the other adverbs in the sentence. Misplaced modifiers lead to miscommunication/unintentional humor. A misplaced modifier is the modifier which is placed too far from the word or words it modifies.

The patient visited the doctor **with severe headache**. (X)

The patient **with severe headache** visited the doctor (✓) (Prepositional Phrase - Misplaced Modifier)

Chased by a tiger, the hunters saw a frightened deer. (X)

The hunters saw a frightened deer, **chased by a tiger**. (✓) (Verb Phrase - Misplaced Modifier)

Amar ate fruitcake that the waiter had brought **slowly**. (X)

Amar ate **slowly** the fruitcake that the waiter had brought. (✓) (Adverb- Misplaced Modifier)

A dangling modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that deals with a particular thing that is left out of the given sentence. In the case that there is nothing to modify such as the word, phrase, or clause, the modifier is said to dangle. In order to rectify the dangling modifier, the given sentence has to be rewritten to make it sensible. For example:

Watching carefully for hours, the group of robbers never arrived. (X)

While I watched carefully for hours, the group of robbers never arrived. (✓)

Driving down the street, the restaurant came into view. (X)

As we were driving down the street, the restaurant came into view. (✓)

3. Common errors in Parts of Speech:

Some of the frequently made errors in Parts of speech are presented below.

i. mixing possessive pronoun and subject pronoun is to be avoided

Myself I am Pramod Rathod (X)

I am Pramod Rathod. (✓)

Myself Ravi (X)

I am Ravi. (✓)

These are some of the most commonly made errors in conversations.

ii. Pronoun disagreement leads to errors in sentences: A subject pronoun should agree with its object pronoun.

Every woman must contribute to **their** societal growth. (X)

Every woman must contribute to **her** societal growth. (✓) (Every woman – her is object pronoun)

A boy is expected to perform **their** duties in life. (X)

A boy is expected to perform **his** duties in life. (✓) (A boy – his is object pronoun)

iii. Mixing up of possessives and plurals leads to errors in sentences.

The psychologists perspective was appreciated by everyone. (X)

The psychologist's perspective was appreciated by everyone. (✓)

The cats bowl was full of milk's. (X)

The cat's bowl was full of milk. (✓)

iv. Mixing up of adjectives and adverbs leads to errors in sentence formation.

Alok offered his grandmother **a real nice** bouquet of flowers. (X)

Alok offered his grandmother **really nice** bouquet of flowers. (✓)

Navya crafted **dexterous beautiful silver** brooch. (X)

Navya crafted a **beautiful silver brooch dexterously**. (✓)

4. Run-on Sentence/Comma Splice:

Run-on sentence and comma splice are other sources of errors. The former is a sentence which joins two principal clauses without punctuation mark or the conjunction. Comma splice uses a comma to join two principal clauses which do not have a conjunction. These two forms of errors can be corrected employing the following methods.

Run-on Sentence:

Gagana is an incredibly kind woman, she has cultivated the habit of giving back right from her childhood. (X)

Gagana is an incredibly kind woman. She has cultivated the habit of giving back right from her childhood. (✓) (Writing two main clauses individually makes the sentence correct)

Gagana is an incredibly kind woman; she has cultivated the habit of giving back right from her childhood. (✓) (Comma can be replaced with a semi colon to correct it)

Comma Splice:

People are not happy with the minister, they are not angry with him, either. (X)

People are not happy with the minister, **but they are not angry with him**, either. (✓) (it is corrected by adding a conjunction immediately after comma).

People are not happy with the minister; **they are not angry with him**, either. (✓) (replace coma with a semi colon to correct it)

5. Sentence Fragment:

This type of an error occurs in a main clause which lacks one of the three essential elements of a clause i.e. a subject, a verb, and a complete thought. In the absence of one of this, the sentence remains grammatically incorrect and semantically meaningless. Some examples:

While he was going to office. (X)

Because of the lockdown. (X)

When the teacher entered the class. (X)

They are incomplete and incorrect. To correct them, we need to add a main clause.

While he was going to office, **he met his old friends**. (✓)

Because of the lockdown, **people have remained indoors**. (✓)

When the teacher entered the class, **the students wished him gladly**. (✓)

Here, the error is rectified i.e. the fragment has become a subordinate clause attached to a sentence that has:

a subject (he), a verb (met), complete thought. Our thought is complete.

In the examples mentioned above, adding an appropriate main clause can fix the sentence fragment problems.

6. Redundancy in English:

Redundancy is the repetition of unnecessary words, phrases and ideas in the sentence. This generally takes place when we write two or more words together i.e. 'sufficient enough'/'leave out'/'foreign imports'. To avoid this, we should write precisely. Some of these are mistakes and others are not. This distinction depends on whether we use them for emphasis or differentiation.

The final outcome of the project will be fruitful. (X)

The **outcome** of the project will be fruitful. (✓)

Hari's response to the question was absolutely perfect. (X)

Hari's response to the question was **perfect**. (✓)

Additionally, the following table provides common redundancies.

Before the word	After the word	Most common Redundancies
Advance planning	Circulate around	Added bonus
Completely finished	Reply back	Ask a question
New innovation	Gather together	Basic essentials

7. Common errors in the use of Tenses:

Errors related to verb forms are confusing and tricky for many users of language. Consequently, we tend to choose the incorrect verb form sometimes. The following are common errors in tenses.

i. Confusion between present continuous and present perfect continuous tenses:

Many users tend to get confused and use these tense forms incorrectly. For example:

The project is going on for the last two years (X)

The project **has been going on for the last two years** (✓)

The toddler is sleeping for four hours. (X)

The toddler **has been sleeping for four hours**. (✓)

ii. Confusion between simple past and present perfect tenses: The present perfect is a form of present tense, so it can't be used with adverbs of past time.

It has rained heavily yesterday in Hyderabad (X)

It **rained heavily yesterday** in Hyderabad (✓)

Bala has invited everyone for the party last week. (X)

Bala **invited everyone for the party two last week**. (✓)

iii. Inappropriate use of present indefinite and future indefinite: If the verb in main clause is in future tense, subordinate clause should be in the present but not in the future tense.

Mahesh will lead the team **when his team will gather** required information (X)

Mahesh will lead the team **when his team gathers** required information (✓)

Latha will extend her helping hand, if her cousin will meet next week (X)

Latha will extend her helping hand, **if her cousin meets** her next week (✓)

iv. Wrong usage of Past Continuous Tense:

Pavan chopped the vegetables when his wife entered the kitchen. (X)

Pavan was chopping the vegetables when his wife entered the kitchen. (✓)

The manager presented the budget proposal before the CEO took part in the meeting. (X)

The manager was presenting the budget proposal before the CEO took part in the meeting. (✓)

8. Common Errors in using Articles and Prepositions:

i. Use of indefinite article before plurals and uncountable nouns:

The police officer is presenting a facts to the media. (X)

The police officer is presenting **a fact** to the media. (✓)

My neighbor needs an important information (X)

My neighbor needs **an important piece of information**. (✓) (Uncountable nouns)

Sheethal is searching for a scissors at home (X)

Sheethal is searching for **a pair of scissors** at home (✓)

ii. Use of a/an before adjectives instead of nouns:

I am an Indian and he is a Japanese (X)

I **am Indian** and he **is Japanese** (✓)

Prabhu is an intelligent. (X)

Prabhu is **intelligent**. (✓)

iii. Use of definite articles before proper nouns:

We have been travelling around the Africa for six months (X)

We have been travelling around **Africa** for six months (✓)

Kavya has never been to the New York (X)

Kavya has never been to New York. (✓)

Common errors in Prepositions:

i. Redundant Prepositions: Use of unnecessary preposition is called redundant preposition.

The philosopher discussed about the science of wellbeing. (X)

The philosopher discussed the science of wellbeing. (✓)

The students are awaiting for the semester results. (X)

The students are awaiting the semester results. (✓)

ii. Wrong usage prepositions with time, day, month, and years: Most of the people tend to get confused choosing the most appropriate prepositions (at/on/in/by) when they refer to time.

I shall meet you at July 2020. (X)

I shall meet you **in July 2020**. (✓)

Psychology class is scheduled in 9 am tomorrow. (X)

Psychology class is scheduled **at 9 am tomorrow**. (✓)

Jaidev's birthday is celebrated in 10th July. (X)

Jaidev's birthday is celebrated **on 10th July**. (✓)

iii. For and Since: the preposition 'for' refers to the period of time whereas 'since' refers to the point of time.

The seminar has been going on since two hours. (X)

The seminar has been going on **for two hours**. (✓)

The pilot has been sick for yesterday. (X)

The pilot has been sick **since yesterday**. (✓)

These are some of the commonly made errors in the English language. To overcome the density of errors in language, the following strategies can be adopted.

Strategies:

1. Make a note of the common errors that occur in your speaking and writing and practice corrected ones regularly to avoid them in future.
2. Request your teachers and peer group to underline the errors in your writing instead of correcting them. It helps you to identify the error and correct it yourself.
3. Read articles and columns dedicated to common mistakes in English and discuss them with your friends to remember them better.
4. Not hurrying while editing a document will help you to focus more on every part of the text and identify errors in the documents.
5. Practice correction of sentences in grammar books and online resources besides analyzing reasons for error correction.

6. Learn spellings on your own instead of depending on the computer because computer may not suggest the intended speakers every time. Typos will cost you dearly, if you are not careful.

Conclusion

Making errors while using English is common for almost all the individuals and hence following the strategies and putting consistent efforts will help everyone avoid such common errors and communicate confidently and concisely.

References

1. Admin, B., & *, N. (2017, July 11). Why is Grammar Important in Communication? - Bodhi Training. Retrieved October 20, 2020, from <https://bodhih.com/training-and-development/grammar-important-communication/#:~:text=Grammar lays the groundwork for effective communication.&text=Grammar is very important because,more accurate when using language>.
2. Benner, M. L. (2010, March). Self Teaching Unit: Subject - Verb Agreement. Retrieved September 18, 2020, from <https://webapps.towson.edu/ows/modulesvagr.htm#:~:text=Subjects and verbs must AGREE,verb must also be plural>.
3. Johnson, J. (2020, February). Why is grammar important? Retrieved October 12, 2020, from <http://ask.dailygrammar.com/Why-is-grammar-important.html#:~:text=Grammar lays the groundwork for,clarity of an intended message.&text=Grammar makes written content more readable and in turn more interesting>.
4. Miller-Wilson, K. (2014, July). 18 Most Common Grammar Mistakes. Retrieved May 23, 2020, from <https://grammar.yourdictionary.com/grammar-rules-and-tips/5-most-common.html>
5. Sunil Solomon, P. (2020. November). 16 Common Errors We Make In Everyday English. India Today. Retrieved October 10, 2020, from <https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/grammar-vocabulary/story/16-common-errors-in-everyday-english-1097590-2017-11-30#:~:text=Writing%20and%20speaking%20in%20English, and%20other%20parts%20of%eech.>>
6. Zantal-Wiener, A. (2018, August 8). 30 of the Most Common Grammatical Errors We All Need to Stop Making. Retrieved June 29, 2020, from <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/common-grammar-mistakes-list>

Zeugma

Dr R.Madhavi,

Assoc Prof, English,
Ch S.D.St. Theresa's College for Women
Eluru (Andhra Pradesh)
madhavi.ped@gmail.com

Abstract

Literary terms are figures of speech that add colour and a tinge of interest to language. Among all the English literary terms the zeugma holds a special place in that it creates shock, interest and wonder all at one stroke. It has been used by poets, novelists and in everyday conversationalists in a manner that is similar in that it creates a sense of surprise. This paper attempts to define the zeugma while bringing out its usage. What makes it different and what impact it creates, is what the paper will unravel. As a literary device the zeugma has been used widely by writers down the centuries. A look at some popular literary examples will enable a better understanding of this device. The paper also examines some of the ways in which this device can be used in everyday parlance adding zest and humour to life. The paper also examines how the zeugma shares similarities with other literary devices such as 'syllepsis'.

Key Words: Zeugma, literary device, humour, surprise, syllepsis.

Introduction

"She broke his car and his heart." This sentence is a perfect example of the literary term "Zeugma" /'zju?g.m?/. The verb 'broke' here refers to two words in two different ways- one his car, the other 'his heart'. The first one is literal and the second is abstract. When we use one word to link two thoughts in two different ways we are using a Zeugma.

Definition

A 'Zeugma' is a literary term for using one word which modifies two other words in two different ways. Though the word governs two or more words it agrees in number and case with only one. A Zeugma is a device where language can thus be used literally and figuratively. This adds a startlingly refreshing quality of surprise, interest and variety to expressions. Example: 'He held the door and his breath.'

The person is literally holding the door. He is also in a sense of shocked wonder or surprise and is curious to know why the person is holding his breath. The word play suddenly switches in meaning from being literal to figurative.

Etymology

The word 'Zeugma' comes from the Greek word '**zeugnunai**' or 'to yoke', that which is used for joining. Thus the word zeugma means yoking or joining one word to two ideas.

Confusion and Interest

Zeugma is a device that demands the reader to switch between two meanings or thoughts--- all in one sentence. The end result is surprise, delight and confusion experienced by audience or readers. The very word "Zeugma" rouses interest as it is quite an unfamiliar and quaint sounding word. Another such device is "**Antanacsis**" which is a literary device that uses a play upon words. The following is an example of this device that bears some resemblance to the Zeugma:

Time flies like an arrow
Fruit flies like bananas

This is an example of **antanacsis** where a word is used in two different ways. In the first sentence 'flies' is a verb and in the second 'flies' is a noun. This figure of speech is different from zeugma. In Zeugma the word that changes in meaning occurs only once and thereby 'Zeugma' makes a greater demand on the listener who needs to work harder to reconcile the first meaning of the word with the second.

In the sentence "He held the door and his breath" the device used is Zeugma. In this device the two elements complement each other---the person in question is passionate and in love and he also holds the door. The two different meanings create a comic, dramatic and powerful effect.

Zeugma in Literary texts

A good example of Zeugma is found in Tim O'Brien's short story The Things They Carried. The story revolves around a group of soldiers in the Vietnam War who are struggling to overcome the death of one of the members of their troop, a man called Ted Lavender. The story is told in a repetitive way adding to its peculiarity. There are repetitive lists of clothing, weapons and communicative devices that make the first part of the story maddeningly repetitive. Around one third the length of the story the author uses a Zeugmatic statement.

"Jimmie Cross carried a compass, maps, code books, binoculars and a 45 caliber pistol

that weighed 2.9 pounds fully loaded. He **carried a strobe light** and the **responsibility for the lives of his men**".

Here we can see that Jimmie Cross carries various objects related to war, literally but he also carried something figuratively i.e. responsibility. Thus the final sentence can be taken as a Zeugma.

The narrative gives us two different ways in which 'carry' is used and asks the reader to recognize how these ways are related to each other. The things that can relate to 'carry' change from physical objects such as maps, code books, binoculars, 45 caliber pistol to abstract, immaterial things-- responsibility. This change has been well represented by the device 'zeugma'.

Tim O' Brien makes use of a number of zeugmas in his story to show how soldiers carry their weapons, their grief and responsibility at the loss of their colleague. Thus the horrors of war are brought out effectively through the use of this literary device. This also makes one realize that this device can be used to reflect upon the serious aspects of life.

Other examples of Zeugma in Literature:

1. Lust conquered shame; audacity; fear; madness, reason (Cicero)
2. Here thou, great Anna! Who three realms obey, dost **sometimes counsel take- and sometimes tea**" (The Rape of the Lock, Pope).
3. Miss Bolo rose from the table considerably agitated and went straight home **in a flood of tears, and a sedan chair** (The Pickwick Papers- Dickens)
4. Where **washing is not put out, nor the fire, nor the mistress** (Walden, Thoreau)
5. They tugged and tore at each other's hair and clothes, punched and scratched each other's nose, and **covered themselves with dust and glory** (Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Mark Twain)
6. Then she brought the cup to each of the company, and **bade them drink and farewell**. (The Fellowship of the Ring, JKR Tolkien)

Examples of zeugma in ordinary life:

In ordinary life situations zeugmatic expressions can be used to create fun, frolic and laughter. Sometimes they also aid in creating enigmatic expressions with a certain shock factor.

1. She tossed her hair back and the salad.
2. He killed flies and boredom.
3. Hold your breath and the door for me.
4. She arrived in a taxi and a flaming rage.

5. The teacher took his hat and his leave.
6. They tugged and tore at each other's hair and clothes, punched and scratched each other's nose, and covered themselves with dust and glory (Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Mark Twain)

The Uses of Zeugma are many:

a. Zeugma adds zest to prose:

A zeugma plays quite a risky role in the sentence as it confuses the reader. It is best to tread lightly when adding this kind of device to writing. However, once used, it adds the element of surprise, humour, zest and shock thereby adding zest to the writing.

"You are free to execute your laws and your citizens."

This example from the popular T.V series Star Trek, the Next Generation has a shocking effect as the word 'execute' applies to both citizens and laws. This illustrates the fact that when a zeugma is used there can never be boredom or dullness as it jolts readers out of their complacency.

b. Dramatic impact through the use of Zeugma:

There is no doubt that the use of zeugma creates a dramatic and emotional effect bordering on the surprise and shock. Writers deliberately use this device to create an underlying sense of confusion. Therefore, it can be surmised that this device is purposely used to confuse and shock on the one hand and delight and create laughter on the other.

"He fished for trout and compliments"

In this sentence, the person appears to be both positive and negative. He does a mundane task demanding patience like fishing for trout, yet he is a weakling seeking compliments.

"She kicked the bad habit and soon after the bucket"

In this example, the positive outcome of getting rid of a bad habit is countered with a negative one of ultimately dying which is humorous.

"She had already exhausted her kids and patience"

This is another example of zeugma which points out to two negative effects of the lady and kids becoming impatient and tired respectively.

The above example of zeugmas tends to have a particular purpose of emphasizing the state of mind of the person along with the depiction of a mundane activity.

‘The storm sank my boat and my dreams’

This example provides a tinge of pathos and poignancy. In this sentence a powerful meaning of sadness and loss are juxtaposed over the loss of a treasured boat. The loss of a life-long dream becomes more poignant and sorrowful. The boat sank and with it all his hopes and dreams cherished.

c. Creates Deliberate confusion

Zeugma not only adds drama and shock value to a sentence but also intentional confusion. In the novel *Oliver Twist*, Charles Dickens writes “He was alternately cudgeling his brains and his donkey”. This zeugma is not meant to be taken seriously as the man was not beating his brains out along with his donkey.

“When you come over, bring salad and your husband to eat”

In this example, it is hard to tell whether it is the salad or the husband that should be consumed. The confusion and shocking discovery arises as there is an alternative to whether the husband may be consumed also. This is where the use of zeugma is deliberately confusing to add humour. In this way, zeugma becomes a clever “one-liner” which aims at entertaining and creating fun.

Other examples such as the above:

1. He fell out of the favour and the window
2. Her teeth and ambition were bared
3. She left in a flood of tears and a BMW
4. I live by the river, please drop in.
5. He gave me his hand and a slip.

Zeugma and Syllepsis:

Both zeugma and syllepsis seem to be similar. Zeugma is “Yoking together” different ideas, while syllepsis is a device where there is “taking together” of different ideas. Zeugmatic expressions fall into any one of the following categories

Type I Grammatical Syllepsis:

A single word is used in relation to two other parts of a sentence although the word grammatically applies to only one.

e.g.: He works his work, I mine (Tennyson, “Ulysses”)

The error here is used for stylistic effect. The correct sentence would be

‘He works his work, I work mine’. Yet the expression is acceptable as it is Zeugmatic.

In Zeugma a single word is used with two other parts of a sentence but must be understood differently in relation to each.

e.g.: He watches afternoon repeats and the food he eats.

The meaning of the verb changes according to the nouns that follow. The first is literal and second figurative.

Type II Semantic Syllepsis:

In this type of zeugma also called semantic syllepsis a single word is used with two other parts of a sentence but must be understood differently in relation to each.

e.g.: He took his hat and his leave.

Type III

According to a broader definition for Zeugma according to the Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms a zeugma, ellipsis or parallelism are figures of speech working together so that a single word governs two or more other parts of a sentence.

e.g.: "Lust conquered shame, audacity, fear, madness, reason" (Cicero)

References

Baldwick, Chris. (2008). Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms, 'Syllepsis', Oxford University Press: New York.

Oxford Dictionaries Online. (2013). 'Zeugma', Oxford University Press,

Metonymy

M NAGARAJU

Former Principal and Teacher Trainer

Hyderabad

lionnagaraju@gmail.com

Abstract

Dull paragraphs become as delightful as poetic stanzas with effective use of figures of speech. While similes and metaphors are as well-known as rhymes and songs, metonyms are quite frequently used by every quill and pencil without even realizing that they are what they are. This article describes with ample examples what metonymy is and how it facilitates the enrichment of literary symbolism.

Keywords: metonymy, literary symbolism, synecdoche,

Introduction:

If you call doctors engaged in essential services “Corona Warriors” or “Aproned Angels”, you are using a metonym. A metonym is a figure of speech in which a thing or concept is called by another name that is related in meaning to the original thing. In Greek, metonymy /mitanimi/ means ‘another name.’ It replaces a concept or object entirely with a related term.

Metonymy can be achieved in many different ways:

- a. Effect to name the cause
(e.g., “cancerstick” for a cigarette)
- b. Body part to name a person or persons
(e.g., “shoulder” for a supportive person)
- c. Material to name an abstract idea
(e.g., “gold” to represent wealth)
- d. Part to name the whole
(e.g., “the wheel” referring to a vehicle)
- e. Container to name the content
(e.g., “bottle” to represent water)
- f. Leader to name the party
(e.g., “Trump” for the USA government)

g. Location to name what is there

(e.g., “Delhi” for Indian government)

Metonymies are found in everyday language and are understood without any difficulty. They are popular in poetry, prose and everyday speech because of the brevity, beauty and creativity they offer. They enhance literary symbolism and as such are very popular with writers.

While a metaphor suggests a direct comparison between two unrelated concepts and a synecdoche suggests a part referring to the whole, metonymy suggests one concept called by another related word. All these three are figurative uses of language that use one expression to represent something else.

Let's consider these three examples to see the difference:

- a. He is a tiger in the class (metaphor – a comparison)
- b. The loud mouth is marking attendance. (synecdoche – part for the whole)
- c. The boots are marching into the enemy kingdom. (metonym – association)

Synecdoche and metonymy overlap so strongly that often they are considered inseparable. The general agreement is that synecdoche is a type of metonymy, i.e., metonymy is an inclusive term. Strictly speaking, “Delhi” or the “Parliament” representing Indian government is synecdoche, but in more general terms, it is a metonym. When we use a metonym, it is a golden principle to consider if the reader or listener understands the connection between the metonymous words and the objects they are intended to represent. To a large extent understanding metonym demands knowledge of cultural and literary associations.

Some more examples of metonyms:

- 1. Avoid those “hotspots.” (dangerous situations).
- 2. Man cannot live by “bread” alone.
- 3. Something is rotten in the “State of Denmark.”
- 4. I was the first to offer my “shoulder” to the flood victims.
- 5. They both speak two different “tongues.”
- 6. We need to constantly encourage “fresh blood.”
- 7. He has finished the entire “plate.”
- 8. “The suits” from the chamber are engaged in a “battle of words.”
- 9. We need at least “500 hands” to move it from here.
- 10. “The store” has suddenly turned courteous.

Abstract

Collocation is a concept common to all languages. The term suggests the coexistence of two words and their relationship is unique. These combinations need to be learnt with exposure and drawing rules to establish their proximity do not exist. This article examines the meaning of the term 'collocation' and establishes how the collocations can be classified based on their structure. Besides the structure, in terms of meaning, the collocations can be divided into three categories depending on their stability. The article ends with some suggestions on how to master them through a process of reading.

Key words

Collocation; strong collocation, weak collocation, fixed collocation and miscollocations.

Introduction

Collocations are not peculiar to English. All languages have their own set of collocations, and often these are picked up without any conscious effort by 'native speakers,' as well as others who learn the language. It is often said, 'use of collocations is a mark of native competence'. (Anon) In this section, let us take a look at some aspects of collocations, how we can classify them and see if there are some ways in which we can learn them easily. Let us begin with a definition, look at a few examples and then proceed to classification and learning strategies.

What are collocations?

The term 'collocation' is made of two parts as follows: CO + LOCATION. Co is a common prefix which is used in several words to suggest together, team work, etc. From this prefix we have words like cooperation, coordination, colleague, coincidence, etc. You will notice that in all these words, the prefix 'co' has a role to play in bringing together individuals, work, people or events. The second part of the word 'Location' is a fairly frequently used word and means a 'place'. This word comes from the root 'Loc' which has given rise to other words like locate, and local, and their derivatives. When we put these two parts together, the meaning we derive can be loosely expressed as 'stay together' or 'be in the same place' or 'occur in one place'. When two

words tend to occur together almost always or regularly, we call such expressions collocations. Look at some of these expressions: **strong coffee; hot shower, cool breeze, melodious music**, etc. We know that the first word in each of these expressions is an adjective and it can be replaced. Suppose we do such an exercise and come up with alternative expressions like – muscular coffee, boiling shower, freezing breeze, etc. we feel a little uncomfortable in using such expressions. The reason is the two words in the second set, though acceptable in terms of meaning, are not used together by native speakers or anyone who can use English reasonably well. They sound odd, and most good users of English avoid such expressions. We have looked at the definition of collocations in the course of our discussion earlier, (in the WhatsApp group) let us recall two of them for our better understanding:

- a. A familiar group of words which appear together without deviating from the original meaning of the constituent words.
- b. Word combinations or words that are commonly used together.

Having arrived at one or two definitions, we will proceed to look at the classification of collocations.

Classification of collocations:

There are different ways of classifying collocations. In the first instance, we take into account the composition of the collocation. Based on this, we have seven categories of collocations:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| i. Adverb + adjective. | e.g. Speedily delivered (letter), widely spread (disease) |
| ii. Adjective + noun: | e.g. warm toast; early riser. |
| iii. Noun + noun: | e.g. rain coat, sleeping bag |
| iv. Noun + verb: | e.g. leaves trembling, monkeys chattering |
| v. Verb + noun: | e.g. Take (some) rest; ride a bike, |
| vi. Verb + preposition: | e.g. catch up with (work/reading) |
| vii. Verb + adverb: | e.g. hit violently, burn fiercely, scream/shout angrily/loudly. |

There are other ways in which we can classify the collocations. In English we have words which have almost similar meanings, but need not necessarily be synonyms. For example look at this pair of words: Make and Do. Though both have a similar meaning, we cannot use one in the place of the other. Look at these eight pairs of sentences. Do you find the second sentence in each pair a little quaint or strange to accept?

Do your homework
Make your homework.*

Make your bed.
Do your bed.*

Make some tea for me.
Do some tea for me.*

Do some shopping.
Make some shopping*

Make an appointment.
Do an appointment.*

Do the washings quickly.
Make the washings quickly.*

Do your exercises regularly.
Make your exercises.*

Make a phone call.
Do a phone call.*

(All unacceptable sentences are marked with an (*) at the top.)

Using words of the type mentioned above is another way of classifying the collocations. We will look at some more words which are obvious synonyms but do not always collocate with similar words. Try and use these words and see which other words they collocate with them: Some examples are given.

- | | |
|---------------|---------|
| a. High | Tall |
| b. Large | Big |
| c. Huge | Large |
| d. Glitter | Shine |
| e. Bright | Shining |
| f. Delicious | Tasty |
| g. Decorative | Gaudy |

(High school but not a tall school; a tall building but not a high building: A large buffet but not a big buffet; a big ceremony but not a large ceremony: A huge figure but not a large figure; a large meal but not a huge meal.)

You can add a few more pairs of words to the list given.

Types of Collocations:

In this small section we will look at a few types of collocations which are not classified using the criterion suggested above. These are a few common types that have been illustrated here. There are more of these which we can find in books mentioned at the end of this write-up.

There are certain collocations that are called '**strong collocations**'. These are integral part of language use, and substitutes in any other form are not acceptable. For example, when we refer to a skyscraper, we generally use the term 'tall building'

and not 'high building'. High building just doesn't sound right to either a native speaker or a non-native speaker. If you want to use the word 'High' you would also change the second component of the phrase to 'rise' and say 'high rise building'. You would then say, I live in a high-rise apartment. 'Tall building' is a strong collocation. In your daily use of language, you use quite a few strong collocations. You can become conscious of these and make a list. Later try to deliberately change one of the components and see if the combination sounds natural.

Similar to strong collocations, we have what are called **fixed collocations** where neither of the components can be replaced. Take for example **to and fro**. In this collocation, neither word is replaceable (though 'fro' is sometimes replaced with 'from', but the meaning changes.) Similarly, we have **see-saw**. Though this is a piece of equipment found in the parks where children entertain themselves, it is also used in common language to suggest unsteady surfaces or experiences. Some authors consider all the idioms as fixed collocations.

We also have some collocations which are called '**weak collocations**'. The first word can collocate with several other words. From the list of words given above, look at words like large and big. They collocate with several other words: a large hall, a large city, a large place, a large gathering, a large stone, etc. Similarly, we can have a big hall, a big city, a big place, a big gathering and a big stone. Such collocations where the user can take some liberty are called weak collocations. These are strict opposites of the strong collocations.

Conclusion:

Collocations are not idioms. What is the difference? Idioms do not retain the meaning of the words they include. e.g. '**Bell the cat**' has nothing to do with either a 'bell' or a 'cat'. The meaning was established because of a popular fable, and has now an extended meaning to suggest 'take the responsibility' or 'take an initiative'. In a collocation, the words that form parts of the collocation retain their meaning. In some aspects these are like phrases, but once again there are subtle differences between phrases and collocations. When we mention 'Hot coffee' the two words retain their original meaning as does the entire collocation. Contrast 'hot coffee' with a similar looking idiom '**hot potato**'. A hot potato is not a description, but suggests something that makes you feel uncomfortable, or a task that is difficult to accomplish.

Phrases, unlike the idioms, are grammatical structures and governed by certain rule restrictions. (verb + prep; prep + noun; adjective + verb; etc.)

Now let us conclude with some thoughts on why we should use collocations, and how we can master these.

When we use collocations, our language tends to be more natural. There are three important signals we send by using collocations in our speech. It makes our expression richer or appear sophisticated in terms of language use. Secondly, it helps the user to remember the pairs of words (their association) easily. In other words, the use of collocations conditions us to use the two words together. Finally, it reflects the proficiency levels of the speaker and stands out as a mark of fluency.

A word of caution needs to be given. Collocations should be considered as cemented blocks. The words in a collocation should not be separated (as we do in phrases). Strong coffee has to be strong coffee, unlike 'look up' which can be split as 'look the word up' (in a dictionary).

Secondly, when you come across a collocation, try and change the combination and see if it still sounds natural. You can also explore if one of the words collocates with a few other words and by examining thus, you can classify the collocation.

Best way to master collocations is through extensive reading and conscious using. In fact, reading has been a proven strategy to develop your vocabulary. Reading helps one become familiar with language use and unconsciously, we tend to imitate what we read or use a set of phrases and words we have become familiar with in our own expressions. Since collocations form part of vocabulary development, the same strategy of learning holds good for them. In the classroom, a teacher can draw the attention of the learners to 'miscollocations' and remedy the errors at an early stage.

References:

- Lewis, M. (1993). *The lexical approach: The state of ELT and a way forward*. s.l.:Language Teaching Publications.
- O'Dell, F. & McCarthy, M. (2008). *English collocations in use*. Second Edition ed. s.l.:Cambridge University Press.

Teacher Professional Growth: Some Reflections on Self Practices

Dr Hitesh C Bhakat

Professor

Regional Institute of English South India

Jnanabharathi Campus

Bengaluru

hitesh_elti@yahoo.co.in

Abstract

The paper talks about the concept of teaching and growth in teaching profession. Teaching is a complex activity consisting of a host of elements of knowledge and wisdom that grows naturally with constant striving in the process. The paper begins with concepts of teaching by analyzing variegated phases and components that contribute to the advancement of an individual in the profession. The paper delineates some insights to the successful progression in it like broad educational goals, a desire to sharpen inner inquisitiveness, improving existing knowledge and constant endeavour in refining it. The paper analyzes varieties of components that contribute to the advancement of an individual in the profession. The paper outlines some of the elements that endorse successful progression in it: curriculum, syllabus, teaching goals, methods involved in it. The paper portrays teaching learning materials and their roles and preparation of lesson plans and execution of such plans in classroom practices. The paper highlights learner's achievement in the expected skills and confidence in order to function successfully in life.

Key words

Phases in teaching, ideation, inquisitiveness, refining, acting, reflecting, improving

Introduction

Teaching is a composite activity. Language teaching is much more multifaceted undertaking in the profession. It takes its evolution in an organic growth in course of time. The teaching profession begins with a simple decision with an interest to explore the possibility of the unexplored fields of study and taking learners to the said expedition with constant endeavour for achieving a higher goal in life. Teacher professional development is based on the Latin injunction *ignoramus*- 'we do not know'. It assumes that we do not know everything. Even more critically, it accepts that the things that we think we know could be proven wrong as we gain more knowledge.

Having admitted ignorance, we need to move ahead aiming to obtain new knowledge. Knowledge, that enables an individual teacher to perform. “The real test of knowledge is not whether it is true, but whether it empowers us...the real test of knowledge is utility. A theory that enables us to do new things contributes knowledge” (Harari, 2011:279) Language teaching can be conceived in many different ways. The paper talks about the concept of teaching and growth in teaching profession. Teaching is a complex activity consisting of a host of elements of knowledge and wisdom that grows naturally with constant striving in the process. The paper begins with concepts of teaching by analyzing variegated phases and components that contribute to the advancement of an individual in the profession. It delineates the sum total of insights to the successful progression in it like broad educational goals, a desire to sharpen inner inquisitiveness, improving existing knowledge and constant endeavour in refining knowledge on concept of curriculum, syllabus, teaching goals and methods involved in it. The paper portrays teaching learning materials and their roles and preparation of lesson plans and execution of such plans in classroom practices. The paper highlights learner’s achievement in the expected skills and confidence in order to function successfully in life.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching constitutes a variety of mental competence in causing ideas and engendering learning. Different views of teaching lead to different interpretations as to what the essential skills of the teaching are and to diverse approaches to the preparation of teacher. Teaching as seen has three distinct phases “science-research conceptions, theory-philosophy conceptions and art-craft conceptions” Zahorik (1986). Growth of a teacher lies in taking off and soaring up in exploring the vast horizon of knowledge and wisdom, step by step approach to unlock the principles beginning with the related concepts and keep moving in the journey. Teaching profession requires an individual to meet the preliminary course of study and familiarization of the technical terms related to the profession. The profession needs a striving “a rage to know and a rage to reform or improve” (Judson: 1985); a “mathetic’ function ... learning, thinking and making sense about the world; and ‘pragmatic’ function ... doing things that one wants to do, getting things that one wants to have, or making others do things for one... language as reflection... language as action”, (Halliday, 1975:7). ‘A rage to know’ is key to break the limit of thought and go beyond the boundary of existing knowledge. Every human being is inclined to explore the unknown. Unwilling to get stuck in own surrounding and hindered in the commotion, an individual should keep striving in the expedition. ‘A rage to know’ connotes an unrestricted urge to expand the existing knowledge of certain items. For instance, the basic language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Every individual teacher has some

idea of each skill. 'A rage to know' creates an urge in some teachers to go beyond the present state of knowledge and enables them to explore the mechanics, sub-skills and mental skills involved in each skill leading to developing the next higher skills of 'a rage to reform or improve'. This rage to know and rage to reform or improve' enable one in exploring language and language teaching skills, methodology, listening, speaking, reading, writing and thinking; exploring language elements: vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and discourse and gaining insight in supporting the learning process: content-based instruction, course books, use of technology in language learning, learning styles and strategies, learner autonomy and classroom-based assessment. In other words, adding and refining existing body of knowledge on each of the areas related to teaching profession. This can be done by developing keen insight on ideation and ideology.

Ideation and ideology refer to developing learning tasks for practice "the process of developing ideas or concepts with which an individual can gain an understanding of the nature of the world we live in and "an effort to gain understanding in response to an inner need of the mind", (Prabhu, 2019:265-6). Understanding the significance of all such concepts enable an individual in the making of a teacher, in developing professional competence, making self-comfortable in profession "a sense of plausibility about teaching" Prabhu, *ibid.*), becoming a better professional. It empowers a teacher to actively participate in curriculum developing, evaluating, developing material and undertaking research activity to become a reflective practitioner so as to enable an individual teacher act in language and reflect own action using language.

Becoming a Teacher

Teaching profession remains a highly valued and a long-established career. The profession continues to involve in exploring inner ignorance and exploring the potential in expanding the horizon of wisdom. It is an act of preparing young minds to gain knowledge and skills to adapt to future needs and to explore inner potential of understanding and ability to manage emerging conditions of life. During the journey, the individual involves in developing necessary basic cognitive competence, consequence, affective and exploratory based competencies and with a little bit communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic discourse and strategic competence. The individual can develop those competence by following different models like apprenticeship, course-based, reflective and professional development models. The process of such endeavour leads one to reshape their body of knowledge using language and technology, skills as communicator, organizer and attitude about learners, learning materials and self in terms of psychology, philosophy and sociology of language learning. The course also leads to understanding of teaching and learning styles, types of strategy training enabling the teacher and the learners to develop

discourse for classroom management and as input. The progression of the individual in the journey enables one to become a better professional by understanding the fact that a teacher has to be a perpetual learner and has to keep on learning from learners, peers, association, publication and learning from other disciplines.

Preliminary stage in teaching profession is crucial. The initial phase requires loads of researching. This segment of the profession continues to be the phase what Zahorik (ibid.) as cited by Richards (2002:19) terms as “science-research conceptions.” The science-research conceptions refer to practices in teaching based on findings of research and supported by experimentation and empirical investigation. Zahorik suggests that an individual teacher should explore those tested models, practicing what some effective teachers have already practiced and found those practices result-oriented in language learning. For example, if a teacher follows the lessons plans and tasks followed in ‘The Bangalore Project’ conducted by Dr. N S Prabhu (Second Language Pedagogy: 1987), one is sure to gain the similar effectiveness in classroom practice.

The next approach “theory-philosophy conceptions” refers to an idea that it is not what works but what ought to work or what is morally right (Zahorik, op cit:22). In other words, the teaching is not only based on theories but also on beliefs about what is found as morally right. It requires a little advance level of experience in the profession to arrive at such a decision.

The last approach “art-craft conceptions” is to view teaching as an art or craft; something which depends on the teacher’s individual skill and personality... The essence of this view of good teaching is invention and personalization. A good teacher is a person who assesses the needs and possibilities of a situation and creates and uses practices that have promise for that situation.” (Zahorik, op cit:22). The crucial point here in this conception is the competency in teacher’s decision-making. It requires a high level of experience in the course of professional practices and thus the last phase. In this way, the teacher professional development can be viewed as a process of on-going self-discovery, self-renewal and a constant endeavour to replace the top-down approaches to teaching by the bottom-up approaches and an act of blending between the two.

Progression in Profession

A better professional in teaching requires to participate in discussion and understand the concept of curriculum or syllabus design; i.e., in the study of and development of the goals, content, implementation and evaluation; involves in preparing different content-based, topic-based and process-based syllabus and educational goals. The systematic requirement calls for a systematic understanding of the phenom-

enon. A classroom practitioner should be able to develop an insight about the concept of evaluation, act as a good evaluator to identify targeted items like students as learners of second language, materials provided for acquisition of English language, components of English language learning, available standardized text and their impact on teaching and scope for teachers to confirm one's competence and professional growth.

A curriculum is an all-inclusive widespread plan. It provides a comprehensive picture about the learner, learner expected learning objectives, learning materials, process of helping learner learn, expected outcome and learning achievement. In other words, a curriculum is the study and development of the educational goals, content/material, implementation and evaluation of educational system indicating learner needs, setting goals, finding learner needs, setting achievable objectives, developing a syllabus, process of teaching and evaluation of learner language development. A syllabus is a specific "plan of what to be done and achieve through teaching and out of students' learning" (Breen: 1984:47), more specifically "the selection and organization of linguistic content-vocabulary, grammar, notions, functions to be taught" (Rodgers:28). Lesson planning is a conscious decision in making meaningful interface between gained knowledge and successful implementation of such wisdom in classroom practices.

A better teacher professional acts as a better material developer. Understanding the importance of materials for result-oriented learning or development of expected skills in the language, an individual should be able to judge and develop materials that help in translating abstract curriculum, provide carefully selected materials delimiting the scope of the topic, develop language teaching skills, provide language models and integrate content area that addresses multilevel and differently-abled learners in a classroom. When required, the teacher should be able to choose and use appropriate and wide range of purposive, interesting and motivating realistic content called authentic materials.

A Growing Teacher

A better language teacher acts as a researcher in pursuit of new knowledge arising out of professional practice. The act of research remains one of the best practices of teacher professional growth. Involvement in research in regard to classroom practices enables one to develop an ability of systematic probing into a situation or a problem. The process enables one to develop clear thinking, careful and extensive study, keen observation, collection and analysis of gathered data and arriving at a scientific conclusion. The gained knowledge in the process conducted in the area of English language teaching and learning is considered research in English Language Teaching (ELT). This involvement in research in ELT develops an ability

into reflective practices. Reflective teaching refers to an ability to reflect on own classroom practices. The quality of being reflective has been seen as very constructive quality among teachers. It develops open-mindedness, proactive skills, critical thinking and reasoning. The reflective teaching enables teachers to analyze, discuss, evaluate and modify own classroom practices and to adopt an analytical approach towards teaching and mostly facilitates teachers to arrive at language teaching theories based on the understanding of educational practices. Reflective practice is a cycle of activity of mapping, informing, contesting, appraising and acting. The cycle provides a professional, answer to queries about self and learners as to what a teacher should do as teacher in the classroom, concept of teaching and its significance, agreement with own ideas and structures on teaching, searching for alternative ways of dealing things, and acting on the basis of new ideas and rearranging classroom practices. Reflective teaching develops own competence in second language and ability to use language knowledge, knowledge of culture and the language learning process. It enables the teacher to gain an insight of the language thought, knowledge of theoretical and practical basis for language teaching and learning in school. The gained knowledge equips one to undertake and carry out classroom centered research programmes both as an individual and as a collaborator.

Lessons Planning

A classroom lesson is a complex event. It has many dimensions. Richard Allwright (1989) considers it a social event apart from being a pedagogic event. Prabhu ((1992) considers a language lesson as four different types of event: a curricular unit—matching a corresponding point the learner's progress; implementation of a method—how learning takes place and specification of activities to be done in a class; a social event—with roles and relationships established and with ritualistic aspect to the action performed in the class; and an arena of human interaction—handling a collection of people trying to act in a way that protects or enhances their own varied self-images. An initiative in gaining insight on the concepts is crucial in professional growth. A strong craving to achieve a clear idea on it is a proactive action of continual professional development.

Evaluation of Learner Achievement

Evaluation is a process of assessing a variety of elements in a language classroom. It is a collaborative action in judging effectiveness to different types of actions of the teacher so as to find the best of tasks and activities and process of implementing. Prabhu (2013) finds six levels of possible relationship between teaching, learning and evaluation. The most focused aspect of evaluation is to measure the level of learner achievement. Evaluation is conducted to adjust the pace of teaching and to provide feedback to learners about their progress. It is also conducted to encourage

and enable learners to make extra effort in learning especially in a task that is difficult but achievable and collaborating with other colleagues in gaining better insight about appropriate procedure of measurement and get a correct appraisal of achievement.

Discussion

Professional development is an effort of explicit and conscious changes in daily routine and activity. As cited in (Food (2010), Alison Perkins (1998) comments “If we are doing something we enjoy, then continuous Professional Development is a natural component of our daily work life. It is an attitude.” Professional development is something gradual and inevitable, it may be influenced by conscious efforts or may happen naturally. There is always a conscious effort to improve something “rage to reform or improve”. Making a better teacher refers to efforts by individual teachers to improve themselves. There are four areas in which an individual teacher can focus; i.e., skills, knowledge, awareness about what happens in classroom practices and an attitude—learning from own assumptions about teaching, learning, self, learners and culture. Making oneself a better teacher is a constant conscious effort in gaining insight about various elements of language and pedagogy. It has to be a life-long process.

Conclusion

Language teaching can be conceived in many different ways. Different views of teaching lead to different interpretations as to what the essential skills of the teaching are and to diverse approaches to the preparation of teacher. Main areas to focus on as part of professional growth are curriculum, syllabus, teaching goals, methods, teaching learning materials and their roles and preparation of lesson plans and execution of such plans in classroom practices. A growing teacher needs to constantly involve oneself in research and discussion on pedagogical issues and proactive course planning in classroom transaction. It is definitely essential to create an inner indomitable urge in learners enabling them to take extra effort in challenging tasks and provide a sense of confidence in their achievement. Teacher professional development is a responsibility of individual teacher. The individual effort empowers a teacher to reflect own needs and interest, feels ownership of the learning, enables one to connect with organizations and allows them to take charge of own profession and impact positively on their attitude to learning.

References

Allwright, D. (1989). Interaction in the language classroom: Social problems and pedagogic possibilities. Paper presented at Les Etats Generaux des Langues, Paris, April 1989.

- Breen, M. P. (1984). Process syllabuses for the language classroom. In C. J. Brumfit (Ed.), *General English syllabus design* (pp-47-60). Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Food, D. (2010). *The Developing Teacher*. Viva Education.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1975). *Learning how to mean—Explorations in the development of language*. London: Eduward Arnold.
- Harari, Y. N. (2011). *Sapiens—A Brief History of Humankind*. Penguin Random House. UK.
- Judson, Horace Freeland. (1985). The rage to know. In Jeane Fahnestock and Marie Secor (Eds.), *Readings in Argument* (pp.65-76). New York: Random House.
- Prabhu, N. S. (2013). 'Trends in second language evaluation.' The summary of a plenary address given at the all-India seminar. Regional Institute of English, South India, Bengaluru.
- Prabhu, N. S. (1992). Dynamics of Language Lesson. *TESOL Quarterly*, 26(2), 225-41.
- Prabhu, N. S. (1987). *Second Language Pedagogy*. Oxford University Press.
- Perkins, A (1998). In 'Continuing Professional Development—Some of our perspective' Edge, J (Ed) *IATEFL Publications* 2002.
- Richards, J. C. (2002). Theories of teaching in language teaching. In *Methodology in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University press.
- Zahorik, J. A. (1986, March-April). Acquiring teaching skills. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 21-25.

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHER EMPOWERMENT

Dr G Manjulatha Devi

Asst Prof of English

Kakatiya Institute of Technology and Science, Warangal

E-mail : gmanjulatha@gmail.com

Mobile :99496905716

Ramesh Rajuri

Assistant Professor of English

SRI Indu Institute of Engineering and Technology, Hyderabad.

E-mail: ramesh1english@gmail.com

Mobile: 9989354404

Abstract

The purpose of teaching attains its objectives when learning outcomes are found quite appealing, and when the education goals are anticipated as a teacher's destination, a significant change in the education system, the purpose of which should be shaping the learners, becomes commendable. Possessing requisite knowledge in the subject concerned, a passion to achieve the objectives and enormous interest to implement effective strategies are the vital and uncompromising credentials to become empowered in teaching. Furthermore, deft managerial skills, traits of adaptability and power to facilitate the enormity of unforeseen problems in teaching and learning, and in addition to all these, social, political and religious awareness are the strengths of a teacher to empower the students. On the other hand the learners who aim at receiving education also need to be committed in their efforts. So empowerment in education is not confined to either a teacher or a student alone. It is a very broad concept that encompasses diverse requirements which cannot be overlooked either by the tutor or by the learner. In order to make the students successful achievers of their goals, the teachers have to adopt a methodical strategy, primarily by discovering the interests and needs of students, secondly by implementing effective instrumental strategies to detect the impediments and finally helping them overcome the hindrances in learning.

Key words: Managerial skills, adaptability, methodical, instrumental strategies

EMPOWERMENT IN EDUCATION

It is important that the persons involved in education (teacher & learner) need to have a perfect understanding of the term "Empowerment" and how they can empower themselves. Frymier defines empowerment as "the process of creating intrinsic

sic task motivation by providing an environment and tasks which increase one's sense of self-efficacy and energy." (Frymier & Shulman and Houser, 1996)

True empowerment lies in strengthening one's potential by doing the tasks with creative and analytical thinking. Hence the tasks designed as assignments should not be stereotypic. They should develop curiosity in students to think in a novice way to discover a new solution to a knotty problem. The assignments should consist of questions like:

- "Madhuvani left for Delhi by Rajdhani Express last night." Explain the different meanings of the sentence when the stress is shifted from one to another word.
- How would you convince your boss who is reluctant to sanction long leave to you?
- Read this passage and frame ten questions.
- How would you abridge this passage?

Persistent thinking would make the brains of students agile and they begin to believe in their self-worth. An unassailable effect will be left on the thinking faculty of students when an innovative task is given to them which inspires their longing for new learning.

Well, let us believe that the objective of teaching a particular teaching item to students is to empower them with a new knowledge which may help them to encounter an uncanny situation. But before this process is carried through, it is inevitable to convince the students by expounding the purpose of learning a particular subject item. If the teacher fails in performing this task, students begin to feel that they are simply fiddling away with time, and consequently become very unproductive.

Knowledge transmission is sacrosanct in the mission of education. For the uninterrupted transfer of this information from the teacher to the taught, the teacher should rightly gauge the dexterity of students and students in turn feel confident that they are qualified to perform the work efficiently. Such challenging work seems to epitomize the true empowerment in students. Sufficient freedom should be provided to students to learn under no constraints. The tyranny of the teacher mars the rapport between the teacher and the student which slackens the acceleration in learning.

Unfortunately lack of understanding of the concept "Empowerment" is abominably affecting the basic purpose of education and the teacher and the learner are concentrating not on the long term effects of learning but on the temporary fruits which would gratify their instant needs. It is at this juncture the viability of teaching or learning for empowerment has lost its essence and remained an elusive dream to materialize. A very lackadaisical mode of conducting the process of 'Teaching and

Learning' for empowerment has got its pervasiveness in educational institutions as the teachers are keen about the completion of the syllabus and preparing the students for examinations and as the students are too reluctant to perform any arduous task but are eager to be acquainted with strategies which would produce better results in less time and with less energy.

TEACHER EMPOWERMENT

The role of a teacher in education is of highest importance. Hence, teacher's empowerment is very crucial to empower students. According to Steven G Rivkin, "A teacher's effectiveness has more impact on student learning than any other factor under the control of school systems including class size and the quality of after-school programs." Prawatm states, "The term teacher empowerment is not merely fashionable but in fact has become mandatory in educational discourse." An empowered teacher is to a large extent successful in empowering the students. No doubt, the devices to empower the teacher are not insufficient but any superfluous usage of them tend to produce adverse results in education programme. This is like augmentation of responsibilities or academic work, assigning new roles, work stress and scandalous pressure etc. What is desirable on the part of teachers is, there should be relentless enthusiasm to update their knowledge and be informative of the latest happenings but it cannot be ignored that any undue pressure on them for self-check to assess themselves will erode their enthusiasm and attenuate their can-do approach to attain the objectives of teaching.

The power of a teacher is his/her knowledge. So there should not be any compromise in recruiting the highly effective teachers after thorough scrutiny and evaluation without any scope for any nepotism or waive in recruitment criteria. It is important that teachers should update their knowledge and prepare an agenda of teaching items to enlighten the students. It is for this reason measures are to be taken to help them elevate their standard. Though the traditional mode of teaching cannot be altogether discarded as unavailing, there should be greater focus on communicative approach in teaching. Teacher-student complete involvement in the activity as long as it is performed provides manifold opportunities to both to realign themselves with one another to achieve the objectives of performing it. In the process of teaching, both the teacher and the taught enjoy equitable share, and therefore, both of them should adhere to their roles and work with enthusiasm to carry out this task. The pedagogue should be keen about establishing the learning ambiance in the classroom where the students feel free to disclose their problems for appropriate solutions; maintaining rapport with students to gauge them by their attitude and determining the tasks which would foster learning the target language.

To be brief, commitment to work empowers a person. In this aspect, the love of a teacher for his/her work is sure to produce propitious outcomes for further furtherance of both parties in education. Besides, several other measures are necessary to confirm the rate of empowerment in a teacher. They are:

- Teacher empowerment evaluation (This stipulates teacher's attending workshops and conferences, paper presentations at National and International level, publications, extension lectures etc. Employment benefits ought to be decided based on the improvement status.)
- Increasing the responsibilities and allocating new roles.
- Students' feedback
- Incentives for performance and not for degree attainment.
- Feasibility to work in unconditional environment.
- Allocation of new topics to acquaint with unfamiliar knowledge
- Opportunities to promote introspective thinking

Students' response is a strong motivation to a teacher. The feedback of students is a veritable report that helps the teacher to mend his/her ways to perform more effectively. A meticulous study of the feedback and honest appreciation of it will lend power to a teacher to keep his/her teaching techniques or strategies on constant check to teach with confidence.

Cotton states

'A stronger and surer knowledge base and a greater command of methodology inevitably contribute to a teacher's power. They lend authority of the sort that allows a person to teach with confidence and to command the respect of students and colleagues.' Teachers need complete independence to implement any method of teaching which they judge to be appropriate. In the absence of democracy it is impossible to find empowerment. When the teacher and the student are constrained by any force their cognitive skills cannot develop and they perfunctorily perform their duties which show very disgusting outcomes. When the suggestive measures are proposed to empower the teachers it is also important to thrash out the factors that would cause negative impression on their minds as listed by Byham & Cox :

- Lack of responsibility, no authority and no time to solve the problems
- Meaningless work, no challenges and assignments that are always the same
- No way of measuring the performance
- Lack of trust and poor communication

- Rigid bureaucratic policies and confusion
- Not enough knowledge, skills or resources to do the job well
- Lack of support, coaching and feedback

During the process of teaching the teacher plays a dual role. Every now and then the teacher is astonished to realize his/her ineptitude or lack of knowledge regarding many issues and how s/he has reconstituted himself/herself as a learner. A teacher who wants to be empowered is clear about his/her goals, welcomes others' opinions and examines their adaptability to reach his/her targets and devotes energy to empower the learners to realign his/her ideas to get acclimatized to new environment.

The responsibility of educational institutions is one very crucial thing that should be painstakingly fulfilled in promoting the chances to teachers to frequently multiply their skills. To empower the teachers the educational institutions must be able to articulate the vision clearly because an obvious understanding of the vision of the institution will enable the teachers to toil for its fulfillment. Another essential thing is to provide resources for professional and personal empowerment and allow them to work in free environment where they can concentrate on their work without being meddled. Apart from all this teachers, as individuals, desire to be treated with reverence so a very civil approach is to be followed by the authorities while interacting with teachers. When they realize that their ideas are adored and their work is acknowledged, they work with extra zeal to prove their fidelity to their profession. The system of the institution must also include brainstorming sessions and orientation programmes which provide platform to teachers to come into association with several veterans to evaluate their standards and multiply their present knowledge. Frequent and reliable collaboration between the colleagues and the organization of teacher, seminars and colloquiums focused on new and different ways of thinking about methods enhance creativity in the classroom (Fatt,200; Ritchhart,2003; Storm & storm,2002, Weishbart,2001)

CRITICAL THINKING FOR EMPOWERMENT

To sustain existence in society or organization an individual needs to possess critical thinking as it is a prerequisite to overcome the hardships in life. In education the concept of critical thinking is very broad and is second to none to receive complete focus. To elucidate the concept critical thinking is not circumscribed by any subject analysis or classroom-confined activities or curriculum. There are various definitions about critical thinking. According to Facione PA, "Critical thinking goes beyond classroom." Paul and Elder define critical thinking as "The mode of thinking about any subject , content or problem in which the thinker improves the quality of

his/her thinking by skillfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them," Chance defines critical thinking as," The ability to analyze the facts, generate and organize ideas, defend opinions, make comparisons, draw inferences, evaluate arguments and solve problems." This is to animate students to strengthen their potential to think beyond common perceptions, to rise above common human deficiencies, to become sagacious decision-makers and to broaden their vision to analyze the problems to arrive at congenial conclusions.

Higher education is not merely viewed as the hands-on training to produce academic erudites but it is a holistic approach to prepare students as perfect individuals to protect the values and standards of the society. Facione PA says, " Teach people to make good decisions and you equip them improve their own futures and become contributing members of society than burdens on society." With growing concern to achieve academic success, the concept of critical thinking and its role in empowering the students is reckoned only as the necessity to creatively perform tasks in their prescribed texts or comprehend the reading material but not as an indispensable requirement to students to enhance their potential and consistency to overcome the hurdles in their practical life, the life which they lead independently helping and supporting themselves.

Why do students need critical thinking? What is its role in Higher education? When these questions are contemplated the findings speak that students should empower themselves with cognitive skills like interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference and self-regulation because in future they are sure to become administrators, educators, civil servants, business executives and policy makers. Mertters asserts, "Critical thinking is a conscious and deliberate process which is used to interpret or evaluate information and experiences with a set of reflective attitudes and abilities that guide thoughtful beliefs and actions." Lack of ability to perform their tasks as professionals results in violation of system and self destruction.

The teacher should collect information, prepare tasks which are connected with various branches of knowledge like history, politics, language, science, technology etc to improve the power of cognition in students. Questions like

- How would you interpret this situation?
- Explain how you would react in a particular situation?
- What decision would you take if you were in the place of..?
- Evaluate the positive and negative sides of...
- Can you prove that your conclusion is right?

- How would you evaluate this character?
- How would you convince your friend who opposes your decision?
- What would you do to overcome a particular situation?
- What measures would you take to control a particular situation or promote development?

To empower students with critical thinking the teacher need to have keenness of mind, appetite for knowledge, diplomacy to tackle a situation and dedication to profession. Improving critical thinking does not mean that students are void of it. The reason why students are frequently found unscrupulous in making use of their cognitive skills is never to be unknown or unfathomable to a teacher. So the teacher who makes a thorough case study of his/her students would succeed in believing that their cognizance of students would be unacknowledged if it is left unused.

Students in higher education possess maturity of mind. Their experiences at home or in the society, the conflicts they face, the failures they endure and their observations of the world invariably create constant mental debate in them that they are baffled to notice contrast between what they learn and what they observe. Prudent judgment, is beyond their reach as they struggle to discriminate between right and wrong. When they fail to make proper conclusions eventually they become cynic or anti-social elements. Creativity is different from intelligence. Feldhusen states, "Creativity is often defined as parallel construct to intelligence but it differs from intelligence in that it is not restricted to cognitive or intellectual functioning or behavior. Instead it is concerned with a complex mix of motivational conditions, personality factors, environmental conditions, chance-factors and even products." Critical thinking would save students in eerie situations and prevent them from becoming stand-still because it is the kind of thinking that provides an access to destinations, forms fresh goals, invents novel approaches and new ideas.

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT FOR EMPOWERMENT

Smith et al (1957) define curriculum as "The sequence of potential experiences which are set up in school for the purpose of disciplining children and youth in group ways of thinking and acting."

Curriculum is a window through which the participants of education can enjoy a palatable panorama of the highest grandeur of wisdom. As the objective of education is the complete transformation from obscurity to obviousness, curriculum which is a kingpin of it is a recipe to enable the students to be successful learners, impeccable citizens, responsible individuals and more than everything empowered soldiers to safeguard fundamental human rights. An education institution is a social agency and

the teachers and students are the assiduous workers where they work on mutual exchange of knowledge fund. Curriculum is an unflagging system of education to keep the teachers and learners always alert. The contents of it should have the capacity to keep the brains of students constantly agile and be helpful to them even after their academic life. So there has to be adequate check on this system to see that its effectiveness in education is not diminished. Ragan (1960) says “School is a social institution which draws inspiration from tradition. It is therefore, likely to be affected by the inertia to such an extent that constant effort is needed to keep this programme in consonance with life in a dynamic society.” Students thrive and their learning rejuvenates when they are provided with relevant learning materials which are prepared from the realities of life and social context which galvanize them into action.

When the components of teaching and learning are discussed, it is unanimously accepted that the usefulness of the curriculum, judicious selection of the methods, meticulous implementation of chosen strategies, dedication to work and most importantly, the rapport that is to built with student community are indispensable for empowerment. An empowered curriculum provides inspiration to teachers to design goal-oriented plans, creativity-based tasks and creates an environment that promotes learning through experimentation, interpretation, analysis and problem-solving. It is an encompassing learning system that empowers teachers who, in turn, empower students through transmission of knowledge.

Curriculum should provide guidance on how to empower teachers and students. It is a multi-faceted affair that encompasses manifold things like:

- teaching objectives
- teaching methodology
- teaching aids
- learning patterns
- subject knowledge
- critical thinking
- evaluation modes
- social, economic, scientific and historical interpretations
- ethical values

Barrow states, “There is not necessarily only one single correct method of designing the curriculum with its own fixed rules which is necessarily also valid for other situations without referring to the most basic question: “What is education and teaching about?”

Enormous size of curriculum is a source of abundant chaos that constantly subjects the teacher to inordinate stress. Consequently the vigour in teacher to get ahead with the teaching programme vanishes and in its place a very distinct vapidness is found which will produce viable negative outcomes of learning. Jackson asserts, "Encouraging teachers to decrease content coverage in lieu of active engagement and analysis within the learning process is one key element for the promotion of creativity." A teacher can also design his/her own curriculum besides the academic one by including various elements which are accessible in society. This will generate optimum results in learning because the students are thrilled to contribute their action in the matters which are within their daily perceptions. According to Ritchhart, 2003, p4 "Creative instructional practices often recognize the multiple ways in which human beings are smart and happens whenever the teachers ask themselves, "How can I make this content more engaging and meaningful for my students?"

CONCLUSION

To strengthen the quality of education it is necessary to empower the teachers at higher education level. Educational institutions must concentrate on the opportunities to be provided to empower the teachers to produce empowered learners. Curriculum must be designed in such a way that it improves critical thinking among learners. There has to be a vision to the system of education to help the teachers to carry through their jobs with determination and commitment.

REFERENCES

- Byham, W.C., & Cox, J. (1992). *Zapping education*. New York: Fawcett Columbine.
- Feldhusen, J.F. and B.E. Goh (1995). *Assessing and Accessing Creativity: An Integrative Review of Theory, Research and Development*. *Creativity Research Journal* 8 (3): 231, 17p.
- Facione, P. (1998). *Critical Thinking: What it is and Why It Counts*. California Academic Press.
- Frymier, A.B., Shulman, G.M. (1996). *The Development of a Learner Environment Measure*. *Communication Education*, 45 (3), 181-199.
- Jackson, N. (2003). *Nurturing Creativity through Imaginative Curriculum*. *Institute of Education Newsletter*, 11 (1), 1-3.
- Storm, R.; & Storm, P. (2002). *Challenging the Rules: Education for Creative Thinking*. *Journal of Creative Behaviour*, 36 (3), 183-200.
- Weisbart, C. (2001). *Introduction: K-12. Radical Methods, Radical Teacher*, 2 (60), 1-2.

Writing Skills of College Students: A Quantitative-cum-Qualitative Study

Dr.Ruchi Kaushik

Associate Professor, Shri Ram College of Commerce

University of Delhi

drruchi.kaushik@srcc.du.ac.in

Abstract

This paper presents an analysis of the writing skills of undergraduates studying in different colleges at the University of Delhi (DU). This was a part of a larger mixed-methods research study (Kaushik, 2018) carried out to explore the English language and communication skills required by students of commerce and to design need-based materials accordingly. Data was collected from 290 B. Com (Honours) Final Year students and their writing samples were analysed quantitatively as well as qualitatively. The findings of the study suggest that a large number of students face difficulties in developing their ideas and organizing their argument using appropriate grammar, vocabulary and punctuation. The paper concludes by suggesting some key recommendations to help students improve their writing competence in English.

Key words

Writing competence, mixed-methods research, need-based materials, communication skills

Introduction

In the Higher Education context, proficiency in written English plays a significant role as students are expected to submit their subject assignments, reports and projects in English as well as appear for tests, all of which are often used for assessing students' academic achievements (Raoofi et al., 2014). However, in the Indian context, there is a visible difference in the writing skills of students who pass out from English medium schools compared to a large number of college students who come from regional medium schools (Sheorey and Govardhan, 2000 as cited in Sheorey, 2006, p.180). One of the primary reasons for students' poor writing skills, as pointed out by Tickoo (2003, p.57) is a deficient methodology of "teaching by testing" wherein the focus is on the end product and very little attention is paid to the process of writing "with a series of planned learning experiences to help learners understand the nature of writing at every point" (Seow, 2002, p.316). Furthermore, very few studies in India have focussed on documenting the precise nature of problems confronted by learners in L2 writing by undertaking a detailed examination of their actual writing samples. Therefore, this paper aims at providing a quantitative cum qualitative analysis of

writing samples of 290 commerce undergraduates studying in different colleges of University of Delhi (DU). Subsequently, some writing strategies are suggested that may prove helpful in developing students' L2 writing competence.

Background

This study is guided by the author's action research leanings. According to Carr and Kemmis (1986) as cited in Burns (2009, p.115), Action Research "is simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices." The researcher reflected on her role as an English teacher teaching her students "Business Communication" and identified that the course she taught was not helping her students improve their language skills, particularly their writing competence. Being a reflective teacher desirous of transforming her teaching practices to bring out the best in her students, the researcher decided to probe the problem deeper. She also realized that her own college was one of the premier colleges of DU where only students with exceptionally high cut-off marks were admitted. Therefore, in one sense, they constituted a homogenous category and did not represent the varied English language needs of students in several other constituent colleges of DU. Thus, she conceptualized this study so that she could use the findings to become a more informed teacher and help her students improve their writing skills.

Research methodology

The researcher used the mixed methods approach which involves the collection/analysis of quantitative as well as qualitative data in a single study. The term "triangulation" (Denzin, 1978 as mentioned in Dornyei, 2007, p.165) refers to the generation of multiple perspectives on a phenomenon by using a variety of data sources, investigators, theories, or research methods with the purpose of corroborating an overall interpretation. Within the mixed methods, the researcher adopted the sequential explanatory design, which as Creswell (2009, p.211) explains, typically involves collection and analysis of quantitative data in the first stage followed by collection and analysis of qualitative data in the second stage that corroborates the quantitative results of the first stage. Thus, the researcher initially collected a large number of writing samples from students and analysed them through appropriate statistical procedures. In the second stage, she used the qualitative method to probe her research questions in detail for which the quantitative results served as the basis of investigation.

Research Questions

The study addresses the following questions:

1. Given the importance of effective writing skills in academic as well as professional contexts, what percentage of college students can write well?

2. What are some of the common errors committed by students and what steps can be taken to improve their writing skills?

Sample

DU is one of the premier universities of our country and B. Com (Hon) is one of its most popular undergraduate courses. DU has constituent colleges located in different parts of the city and students, having studied in English/regional medium; government/government-aided/private schools, from all over the country come to pursue graduate courses in commerce discipline in these colleges. Thus, there is a lot of heterogeneity in terms of linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds of students admitted into the course. Since the population for the present study (Third year B. Com (Hon) students) was large, the researcher decided to select a sample size appropriate for the present time-bound research and yet large enough to justifiably represent the population.

A multistage probability sampling technique was adopted to select the sample for the primary survey. In the first stage, random number generator was used to draw up a list of nine DU colleges offering B. Com (Hon). In the next stage, a list of all the B. Com (Hon) students in each of these nine colleges was procured and 50 students per college were randomly selected to respond to the questionnaire. The response rate varied from one college to another as some students did not turn up on the day fixed for the survey and some expressed unwillingness in participating or else handed in questionnaires with incomplete entries. Finally, 343 students participated in the survey and 290 students (142 girls and 148 boys) returned completely filled questionnaires which constituted the sample for the study.

Research Tool

According to Wagner (2010, p. 26), questionnaires are important data collection instruments used in survey research primarily because “questionnaires are designed for efficiency; they can be administered to a large number of participants easily, they can be objectively scored, and the data can be analysed quantitatively.” Therefore, a detailed student questionnaire (SQ) was designed for the study to capture students’ socio-economic and linguistic background, their perceptions regarding the importance of English language in academic and workplace contexts as well as their assessment of the effectiveness of the prescribed English Business Communication course. Last item 20 of the SQ was an open-ended question on a provocative yet general topic “Use of mobile phones should be banned in colleges” which the students were required to answer in about 150-200 words. The researcher used the responses to this item as the corpus for rating the English written skills of the undergraduates.

Data Collection and analysis

The researcher personally visited different colleges to collect the data. Students were ensured of confidentiality and also requested to answer questions earnestly. It is worthwhile to mention here that the presence of the researcher while students answered the questionnaire, proved to be beneficial as she could clarify their doubts and persuade them to answer all questions, particularly the last open-ended question which would be instrumental in analysing students' competence in written English. Most students were unwilling to write at first and had to be convinced to write even a small paragraph. Nevertheless, they appreciated the objective of the research and felt motivated with their involvement in the process.

Quantitative Analysis

Two language experts, with more than twenty-five years of experience in teaching and assessment at graduate and post-graduate levels, graded the collected samples ($n=290$) based on a five-point scale adapted from the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) handbook to suit the Indian context in order to assess the standard of writing competence of the students. The grading was done on a five-point scale with "5" being the grade awarded for "excellent" proficiency in written English and "1" being the rating given to "poor" proficiency. The average scores of the experts were considered for all statistical interpretations. As the table below displays, there was a high positive correlation with $r= 0.717$ at 0.01 level between the scores given by the two experts indicating that their ratings were congruent.

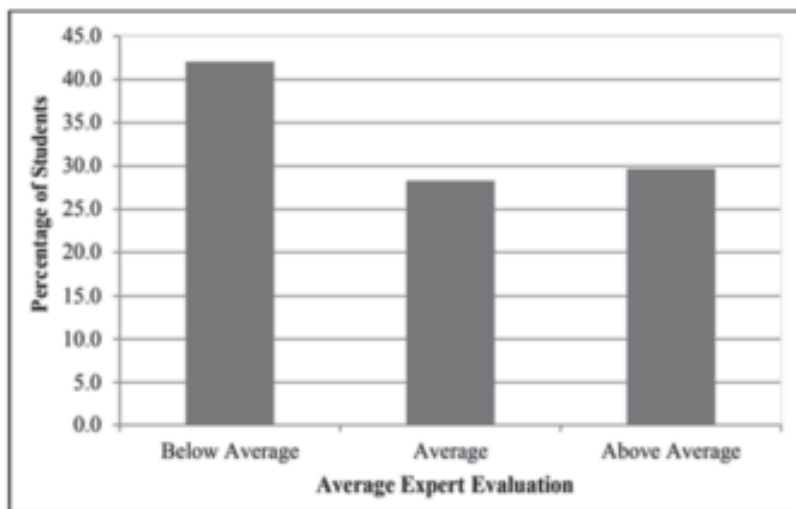
Table: Correlation Matrix: Evaluation of Written English by Expert 1 and Expert 2

	Evaluation of written samples by expert 1	Evaluation of written samples by expert 2
Evaluation of written samples by expert 1	1	
Evaluation of written samples by expert 2	0.717**	1

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

Based on the average scores awarded by the two experts, the students were divided into three categories comprising Above Average (students having scored more than 3), Average (students having scored 3) and Below Average (students having scored less than 3). The figure below graphically shows the average expert evaluation of the respondents' written competence.

Figure: Average Expert Evaluation of Students' Written English Skills



It is significant to note that the writing skills of around 70% students were rated by the experts as Below average or Average indicating that there were serious flaws in the writing samples of the respondents. Therefore, it was critical to carry out a qualitative analysis of the samples in order to explore the qualities and drawbacks in students' responses.

Qualitative Analysis

Subsequent to the language experts' ratings, the researcher categorized the students into three categories- high-level (score 4 and 5); middle-level (score 3) and low-level (score 2 and 1) and randomly selected students from each category to carry out a linguistic analysis of their writing ability. The shortlisted samples were carefully scrutinized by the researcher with the language experts' help and investigated in detail. The salient features of each level of written English have been discussed and one sample from each level is analysed in detail in the following sections. As mentioned earlier, the topic given to students was "Use of mobile phones should be banned in colleges" to be answered in 150-200 words.

Written English: High-Level Samples

The samples of students displaying high-level of competence in written English exhibit ideas well developed and organized, fully appropriate to purpose thus satisfactorily meeting the requirements of the task. The samples reflect clarity as well as precision in writing demonstrated through a smooth progression of ideas. The responses are of adequate length and have been written using a wide range of grammatical structures, vocabulary and linking devices with minimal or occasional errors.

A High-Level Writing Sample:

I strongly condemn even the idea of such a suggestion, namely that ‘use of mobile phones should be banned in colleges.’ Firstly, banning mobiles doesn’t lead to an improvement in students’ efficiency/results. Secondly, a mobile phone is a necessity these days and without such a useful device there could be multiple inconveniences suffered by students and teachers alike on a daily basis. For instance, students, especially girls, would be unable to contact anyone for help in case they were harassed while commuting. Within college, instant text messages sent by the class representative to the teacher as well as to other students of the class regarding a change in the timetable or a classroom would not be possible. Today, the world is increasingly dependent on instant communication and the Internet. Banning mobile phones in colleges would be another regressive diktat like several others imposed by the authorities-that-are without much rationale. However, being a student who spends twelve hours out of twenty-four in a day on his smart phone, I recognise the time it consumes without providing corresponding results. So, I believe students must be encouraged to not use them so extensively. What could be set as a classroom rule for students as well as teachers is ‘No use of gadgets for personal use during teaching time in class.’ Lastly, the use of mobile phones, particularly during the teaching hours has a lot to do with our monotonous education system. According to me, teachers could prevent students from using their phones by making the lectures more interesting and interactive. Thus, I feel limited use of mobile phones, with clear instructions about time and places where their use is prohibited in colleges, could be a possible solution to the problem.

Analysis

The respondent fulfils the requirements of the task quite effectively. She/he displays profundity of thought and expresses it through a consistent and smooth progression of ideas. There is a logical sequence in the argument and the sentences are joined with appropriate linkers. For example, the beginning sentence is the main statement which expresses the writer’s stance clearly and is followed by subordinate statements that support the main idea with examples. Appropriate use of linkers at various places such as ‘however’, ‘firstly’, ‘lastly’, ‘thus’ etc. help in maintaining cohesion throughout the answer. The point of view is developed well and the respondent shows the ability to think of the advantages as well as the disadvantages of mobile phones. Initially, the student repudiates the idea of banning mobile phones in college but later uses self-reflection to offer the counter argument by explaining the drawbacks of extensive use of mobiles. The respondent exhibits originality of thought for instance, consider this sentence, “What could be set as a classroom rule for students...” where the student offers a solution to the problem in a creative manner.

Again, evidence of critical thinking is seen when she/he writes, “Banning mobile phones in colleges would be another regressive diktat like several others imposed by the authorities-that-are without much rationale.” The response is replete with effective use of a variety of complex and compound sentences. Also, consider the use of phrases such as “increasingly dependent on instant communication” or “monotonous education system” which are aptly used and do not make the text long and unwieldy. There is a wide range of vocabulary used appropriate to the context. Words such as “condemn,” “regressive,” “diktat” etc. affirm the writer’s high level of awareness in using words suitable to the nature of argument being put forth. The response is also adequate in terms of the length expected to be written by the respondent (150—200 words) without being repetitive or ambiguous. On the whole, the text reflects lucidity and fluency. The response is appropriate to the purpose with rarely any error or repetition and the response concludes with a definite assertion of the writer’s point of view.

Written English: Middle-Level Samples

In the samples of students with middle level competence in written English, ideas are developed and organized to a limited extent, moderately appropriate to the purpose. The samples reflect some clarity and precision although there are lapses in the overall progression due to a limited use of linking devices. Students use an adequate range of vocabulary for the task, although there are some inaccuracies. There are noticeable grammatical errors but they do not affect communication. The response reveals some ability in critical thinking notwithstanding the overall inaccuracies.

A Middle-level Writing Sample

Mobile phone is part of technology advancement. Now in this era it becomes a basic need of all the people in the country. These persons may be poor or rich. Everybody wants mobile phone. It is good to some extent in developed country but India is a developing country and it adopts foreign culture very fastly. There are some advantages and as well as disadvantages of it. Mobile phone is very useful for all persons it may be student, a common person or lay man or a business man and so on. To contact with one another, it is also so useful for it. Apart from it, also useful for using Internet. Internet is very important for collecting information. If student want to collect some important information at any time in the college then they can use internet in their mobile phone. Some student use the mobile phone for good usage. They can restor many informations in it. But it also has some disadvantages because student misuse mobile phone in college. They most of the time engage in using Facebook, Whatsapp and clicking selfee. But these works are not so good for a student. These type of works for a student only for a free time or we can say that these type of works are only for time pass. According to my opinion a student doesn’t have so much

enough time for these types of work. A good student always engage in their study most of the time. I conclude from the above that mobile phone should be banned in the college. Because it has so many adverse effect exemption some advantages.

Analysis

The respondent's answer is moderately appropriate to the purpose and it generally addresses the task. Although some ideas are presented yet the progression of thoughts lacks clarity and is marred by grammatical mistakes. The student begins the response well yet the introductory sentences are full of errors. The first noticeable mistake is the omission of the article "a." In fact, throughout the text, the student has omitted using articles at the required places. For instance, she/he writes, "in developed country"; "everybody wants mobile phone" etc. Furthermore, while explaining that mobile phones have become a necessity for people nowadays, the student writes, "Now in this era it becomes a basic need of all the people in the country." Instead of using the past perfect tense, the respondent has erroneously used the simple present tense here. Limited knowledge of the use of adverbs of manner is displayed ("fastly"). Although the student is aware of conjunctions yet she/he commits mistakes while using them thus adversely impacting the quality of the response (consider the sentence: "There are some advantages and as well as disadvantages of it"). Throughout the text, there are repeated errors related to subject-verb agreement. Consider the following: "If student want"; "some student use"; "a good student always engage" etc. Moreover, respondent's erroneous use of pronouns is evident at many places. For instance, consider this sentence, "If student want to collect some important information at any time in the college then they can use internet in their mobile phone." Although there are only two spelling mistakes committed ("restor" and "selfee"), the text displays limited use of vocabulary. Let us look at the following extract: "But these works are not so good for a student...for these types of work." Not only is there a repetition of ideas but also repetitive use of the word "work" whereas the student could have used other options such as "activity," "exercise" etc. In the same way, in the concluding sentence, too, the student writes "exemption" whereas she/he intends to mean "barring." The student has hardly used commas or semi-colon in the text although there are several sentences that require a short or a longer pause. The respondent apparently has minimal idea of the difference between "much" and "many" and therefore, erroneously writes "many informations." Overall, the writer manages to convey the central ideas but is unable to develop and organize them sufficiently. There are flaws in the overall organization of ideas due to grammatical inaccuracies, limited vocabulary, mistakes in punctuation and repetition of points.

Written English: Low-Level Samples

The samples of students displaying low-level of competence in written English

fail to address the task due to inadequately developed ideas which are inappropriate or minimally appropriate to the purpose. The response shows poor organization of thoughts due to limited linking devices erroneously used. The samples are replete with repetitions. There are severe grammatical and syntactic errors leading to a difficulty in comprehending the meaning. An extremely limited range of words is used to present ideas that are expressed quite ineffectively. The responses usually fall short of the desired word-limit.

A Low-level Writing Sample

Mobile phones is luxury or nassessary good. This is wrong to say banning the mobile phone in the colleges space is to be helpfull in the dvelopmant of student. There is so many activities in the college which a student can track. Mobile phone is very benifishal or benifits to the student for the social activitiy also and acadimics also. Ristriction for mobiles has not been good dveloping option.

Analysis

As can be obviously noticed, this respondent, in a rather short response, attempts to express her/his views and the reader has to make efforts at several places to understand the meaning of what is written. The task is minimally appropriate to the purpose due to severe grammatical and spelling errors. The opening sentence itself is quite ambiguous. Is the writer trying to say that “a mobile phone is not a luxury but a necessity” or “a mobile phone is a luxury i.e. an unnecessary accessory?” The use of the article “a” has been omitted before “luxury” as well as before “nassessary good.” The text is replete with spelling errors: “nassessary”, “helpful”, “dvelopmant”, “benifishal” to mention a few. There are examples of other syntactic errors such as unnecessary addition or inadvertent omission of articles at relevant places. For instance, consider the following sentence: “This is wrong to say banning the mobile phone in the colleges space is to be helpfull in the dvelopmant of student.” While the definite article “the” is not required before “mobile phone(s)”; the omission of article “a” before “student” reflects the student’s inability to use articles appropriately. Also, “colleges space” is an example of another grammatical error. Moreover, the student uses “is to be” (used for future tense usually to suggest a command or an obligation) erroneously in place of “will be” (simple future tense). There are more such examples where tenses have been incorrectly used. Moreover, there are serious flaws in the subject-verb agreement throughout the response. For example, “mobile phones is luxury...” etc. Even the preposition “for” has been incorrectly used in the sentence “Ristriction for mobiles has not been good dveloping option.” The student is unaware of the use of conjunctions and places two conjunctions “and” and “also” in the same sentence “Mobile phone is very benifishal or benifits to the student for the social activitiy also and acadimics also.” The student is unable to express her/his ideas

cogently. The resulting lack of clarity impedes communication. The response shows no progression of ideas. Thus, on the whole, the low-level student has written a response that lacks clarity, original thinking and an overall logical development of ideas. Hardly any linking devices have been used and there are severe grammatical errors and spelling mistakes causing incomprehensibility in several places. An extremely limited range of vocabulary is used to express ideas making it inadequate for the task.

Recommendations

Although the present paper is limited to the study of writing samples of undergraduates from one Indian university enrolled in a specific course yet there have been significant findings that suggest that teachers must equip learners with strategies that can facilitate meaningful writing performance in L2 especially in the use of writing conventions, syntactic structures and cohesion and coherence devices. Moreover, findings also reveal that students with a high level of proficiency are able to express and organize their thoughts better. This suggests that students with lower writing proficiency require to be taught using a “scaffolded approach” (Cotterall & Cohen, 2003) wherein students may be given flexible support throughout the completion of the task ranging from being provided with “a predetermined structure, assistance with finding texts and data, staged instruction, focusing on one section of the essay each week” etc. (p.158). Teaching students using the “process approach” whereby learners are taken through the processes of “pre-writing, writing different drafts and finally re-visiting to present” (Tickoo, 2003, p.64) though a time-consuming enterprise yet leads to positive results in the classroom. Furthermore, it is important for teachers to provide timely feedback to learners while carefully distinguishing between “its functions as praise, criticism, and suggestions” (Hyland & Hyland, 2001, p.185). In multi-lingual classrooms, efforts must be made to encourage students’ creative abilities in their vernacular languages in a manner that it empowers them to build their creative writing skills in L2 (Canagarajah, 1999, Ramanathan, 2003). Last, creating a friendly, co-operative and stress-free writing environment and engaging learners in innovative and authentic tasks not only helps in developing learners’ critical thinking ability (Zhang & Cheung, 2018) but also motivates learners to express themselves uninhibitedly.

References

- Burns, A. (2009). Action research. In J. Heigham and R. Croker (Eds.), *Qualitative research in applied linguistics: A practical introduction* (pp. 112-134). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Canagarajah, S. (1999). On EFL teachers, awareness, and agency. *ELT Journal*,

53(3), 207– 213.

- Cotterall, S., & Cohen, R. (2003). Scaffolding for second language writers: Producing an academic essay. *ELT Journal*, 57(2), 158– 166.
- Creswell, J.W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage.
- Dornyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics*. Oxford University Press.
- Hyland, F., & Hyland, K. (2001). Sugaring the pill: Praise and criticism in written feedback. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 10(3), 185– 212.
- Kaushik, R. (2018). *Towards designing materials for English for business purposes: Needs, issues and challenges*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, IGNOU.
- Ramanathan V. (2003). Written textual production and consumption (WTPC) in vernacular and English-medium settings in Gujarat, India. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 12(2), 125– 150.
- Raoofi, S., et al. (2014). A qualitative study into L2 writing strategies of university students. *English Language Teaching*, 7(11), 39-45.
- Tickoo, M. L. (2003). *Teaching and learning English: A sourcebook for teachers and teacher-trainers*. Orient Longman.
- Seow, A. (2002). The writing process and process writing. In J. C. Richards and W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice* (pp. 315-320). Cambridge.
- Sheorey, R. (2006). *Learning and teaching English in India*. New Delhi: Sage.
- Wagner, E. (2010). In B. Paltridge and A. Phakiti (Eds.), *Continuum companion to research methods in applied linguistics* (pp. 22-38). Continuum.
- Zhang, W. Y., & Cheung, Y. L. (2018). Researching innovations in English language writing instruction: A state-of-the-art review. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 9(1), 80-89.

Learning Problems faced in Primary Schools: A Fundamental focus in Teaching English with emphasis to Phonics and spellings.

Dipika Vijay Sulebhavi

Graduate Primary Teacher (English)
Govt Urdu Model School, Somwar Peth Kittur , Belgavi.
sulebhavi1990@gmail.com

Abstract

Each individual is different from the other in physical appearance and in personality. So also, each child has a different way of learning. Some receive better through ears than through eyes. Some find comfortable to learn in a noisy environment than sitting in a calm place. However, what is to be learnt only that can be learnt successfully. Some children cannot learn effectively as there are certain barriers in memory, thinking, listening and in perceiving. They have a broadline intelligence and such children are called as slow learners. The reason might be some children have emotional disturbance or social and cultural disadvantage which results in poor performance. But counseling at the right time can help such children in performing better in their academics.

Today English has become a window to the world. Our children in India study English as a second language. Therefore, language plays a significant role in the development of grasping abstract concepts and thinking process that takes place as the child grows. Children face problem in listening, writing, forming spellings, forming sentences of their own.

How to learn English Language and why it is needed, a question arises here. The answer is to communicate ourselves with the world, to get and receive information. No doubt our children who are studying English as a second language in our schools express well in their mother- tongue. But some children fail to communicate in English due to fear and hesitation. Language plays a key role and a basic understanding of language and introducing the same to the children is needed.

Teaching of English includes Phonics, listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, spellings, prose, poetry, parts of speech, degrees of comparison, homophones, tenses, punctuations, idioms, precise writing etc. So, a proper planning, assessing and teaching is necessary. Therefore, all cannot be learnt in one sitting and hence the present paper emphasises only on the stages of learning phonics and spellings for learners.

Introduction: "Every child has a different learning style and pace. Each child is

unique, not only capable of learning but also capable of succeeding”- Robert John Meehan.

Every child learns in a different way and takes her/his own time to learn. Every child is born unique and is able to learn but also succeeds in his learning says Robert John Meehan. Some children receive through ears in a better way rather than by eyes. Some of them are comfortable in grasping in noisy environment whereas some are comfortable in learning in a calm and silent environment. Some hold grip in learning fast and some are slow. The major part that falls on the teachers' shoulders is by helping out the children who face difficulties in listening, thinking, memory and in perceiving. Such children can be called as slow learners. There might be several reasons that hinder their learning due to social, emotional disturbance and also because of cultural disadvantage. As teachers we can counsel them through our teaching in order to help them in improving their academic performance.

In our schools we come across pupils from diverse population who have different social, economic, political and religious backgrounds. Their interests, experience, abilities, learning styles are diverse. The students are benefitted in learning due to their wider community. But a proper planning, teaching and assessing to learn language is important. Our children in schools learn English as a second language as a result of this there is a necessity to train them with proper planning and assessment of phonics is a need.

Teaching of phonics

The most significant part of learning to write and read is to understand the letters, combination of letters which represent a particular speech sound or a syllable and forms words. Without having the knowledge of letter- sound correlation the child may find difficulty in reading. So, the learners need to recognize sounds. Blended sounds together synthesize the word. Phonics method teaches letter sound first. Later pupils are taught to blend sounds together to form a word.

The Basic Skills for reading and writing are as follows:

- 1) To learn the letter-sound relationship.
- 2) Learn to form letters.
- 3) Blending.
- 4) To recognize sounds in words.
- 5) To spell the difficult words.

1) To learn the letter sounds – There are 26 letters that can express 44 speech sounds. Teaching children just the letters of the alphabet is not enough. The speech

sounds also need to be introduced as the pronunciation of the word is not dependent on its spelling. To make them learn in an easy way. The sounds can be divided into seven groups. Some sounds can be written with two letters such as or and ee. They are called as digraphs. Further the sound oo and th can make two different sounds like in 'Took' and 'Noon'. Th as in 'Bath' and 'That'. Not making the learners complicated in recognizing such words with two different sounds the digraphs is shown in two different forms. They are as follows.

Group 1: s, a, t, i, p, n.

Group 2: c, h, k, r, m, d, e

Group 3: b, g, o, l, u, f.

Group 4: ee, oa, ie, j, ai, or

Group 5: w, z, ng, oo, oo ('oo' with two sounds)

Group 6: x, ch, sh, y, th, th ('th' with two sounds).

Group 7: ou, oi, qu, ar, ue, er.

2) Learn to form letters: This is important for the child to know the size, shape, and the direction of the stroke of the letter. Letters starting at the top and lifting. Parts of letters which form curves in "B", then the slanted lines in "K". Here an order can be maintained. First with long letters: l, u, j, y, t, i. Now the curly letters: a, g, q, c, e, s. Then the bouncing letters: r, m, n, b, h, d. Once the child is able to form the letters correctly it helps her/him to write neatly.

3) Blending. This is a process to say individual sound in a word and then making them to say it together in a word. For example, c- a-t and now saying it together (blending) CAT. This can be practiced and every child must learn it. Similarly, some simple examples viz d-o-g making DOG, d-i-g making DIG, h-u-t making HUT, g-u-n making GUN and so on can be taught. Here the teacher has to pronounce each sound and see if the child hears it and repeats.

Some sounds (Digraphs) are represented by two letters like ch, sh, oo, ee. In such cases the child must produce the sounds (Digraph) Ch together and not the individual letters as C-h separately. As they practice it daily, they can blend the digraph as one sound in a word. Words like B-ea-T and D-ee-P must be sounded. Although it may seem difficult but by daily practice, we can help children in blending digraphs by sounding them together and not with individual letters.

Another confusion that arises with these blends - sl, cl, dr and pl here in the blend two sounds can be heard. Ex- SL-A-P. In this blend 'S' and 'L' both the sounds can be heard. Whereas in the digraph of ch, sh, oo, ee here only one sound can be

heard. Encourage the children to say two sounds as one unit like in Cl-a-p and not as c-l-a-p. Practicing in this way can add fluency.

4) To recognize sounds in words: Pronunciation of a word is not dependent on its spelling. So, to spell any word easily it is important to listen to the sound of that word. This is reverse to that of blending. First the teacher must pronounce the word clearly so that the children will listen to it. Initially ask the child to listen to the first sound in the word and later the last sound. Here we need to be careful with digraphs. To start with three letter words like c-a-t. Here there are three sounds c-a-t. The easy way to say a word is by tapping out the sounds. Three taps mean three sounds. Each tap is for one sound. Similarly another example to elaborate on this three-sound tapping is b-a-t, b-a-g, c-a-p, d-o-g, f-a-n, g-u-n, h-a-t and so on.

Special care must be taken with the digraphs. Digraphs cannot be sounded as individual sound. Like sh is the digraph (sh-i-p) in this we see four letters but only three sounds. (ch -a-t, F-ee-t, F-ee-l) all these examples have three sounds but four letters. Hence it is significant to recognize the sounds in the words for simple and easy words.

Fun activity we can play. Ask children to tell the rhyming words once any word is given like in (tall, ball, call), (Bin, tin, kin), (dig, big, fig) etc.. Further we can go with another activity asking them to ADD A SOUND: What will I get if I add 'p' to the two letter word (A-T). I will get p-a-t, If I add 's' to the word T-O-P. I will get st-o-p which is a digraph.

5) To spell the difficult words: Mnemonics is a memory trigger, that is to recall something which is difficult. E.g.- Island – A land surrounded by sea, Please Stop playing with the top, Instead of tea I prefer coffee, Ear to hear, My friend goes cycling till the dead end.

****Another way to teach phonics with the following rules:**

1) Consonants

- i) When C is followed by e, i or y it sounds as 'S' as in City, Mace, Cell and fancy.
- ii) When g is followed by e, i, or y it sounds as 'j' like in ginger, giant, germs.
- iii) ch digraph sounds as 'sh' as in chef, machine,
- iv) ck ending words sounds as 'k' as in lick, stick, pick, duck.
- v) two consonants make one sound like ch, sh, fl, cl, pl. Although two consonants but we get only one sound.

2) Vowels:

- i) 'r' controls the previous vowel it either has a long or short sound. Ex- Tar, Bar, Jar.
- ii) when 'y' follows a consonant, it sounds long 'ai'- Like in sky, cry , try.

Rules for silent letters:

- i) 'k' sound is silent when the word begins with 'kn' – Knee, knife, knob, know , knight.
- ii) 'w' silent words – When 'w' is before 'h' – like in who, whom.
- iii) 'b' silent words – when the word ends with 'b' but has 'm' before 'b' in the spelling. Ex- comb, tomb, , limb and dumb.

****One more order for teaching phonics:**

- i) Start with simple consonants (b, p, m , w, h , d, t, n)
- ii) More difficult consonants: v, y, l c, r, q(kw), j, s(as), x(ks).
- iii) Consonants blends and digraphs: ng, ch, th , wh , ck , sh .
- iv) Simple blend of consonants: pl , cl , fl , st , fl , gr.
- v) Short vowels: a (hat), e (get), i (sip) , o (mop) , u (cup).
- vi) Long Vowels: a (cake), e (be) , l (Drive) , o (Sold), u (cube), Exception y (cry).

****To Introduce Spelling:** Formation of words with the arrangements of letters is called as spelling. If the child has the skill to spell then we can say that he/she is able to read written words correctly. In English we find the phonemes (known as speech sounds) are not dependent on the spellings. As a result of this we see the spelling of the words differ from the pronunciation. Hence most of the children face difficulty in spelling.

In order to spell the word, the child must be capable of reading, the words by applying phonics, then to write the word he needs to visualize it. There may be many hinderances to write spelling, it might be due to visual discrimination, memory, or because of the motor skills.

As a teacher of English first we need to check spelling errors by observing the child's writing, space between the words, formation of letters and also the size of the letters must be assessed. Further how to write the word and the sound, spelling of the word either by letters or syllables.

Way to teach spelling:

- i) To begin with three letter words where each letter is pronounced like c-a-t (repeat each sound) let them write (Dictation) and at the end ask them to pronounce it together. {Note: This can be applied where all sounds are pronounced but only simple three letter words work here}
- ii) As a memory activity + listening activity: Let the teacher say and spell the word. Repeat it twice / thrice. Now after listening allow the child to say and also spell the word.

Syllabification: It is nothing but dividing the word into its parts. Every syllable has a vowel sound. With the help of this syllabification, we can learn to make spellings provided by knowing the rules of syllabification.

The following are the rules of syllabification.

- i) Every syllable has a vowel sound like in Ant, ox, dog, cat.
- ii) Number of syllables is equal to the number of vowel sounds. Ex- re-turn (Two Syllables), ba-na-na(three syllables).
- iii) A word with one syllable cannot be divided. Ex- took, top.
- iv) Never separate the consonant blends. Ex- clap, Crum.
- v) If a word contains x or ck , then the division of the word takes place after ck or k. Ex- Foxes(fox/es).

Conclusion: Teaching of English includes phonetics, LSRW skills, prose, poems, grammar, vocabulary viz homophones, synonyms, antonyms, idioms, punctuation marks, precis writing, degrees of comparison, spellings. All this requires time and proper planning, assessing, teaching must take place. Hence English language learning is a long-term process but if we give basic foundation to teach and to learn English at their primary level especially phonics and spellings. Other things can be learnt at their own pace and as per the curriculum. He/ she can develop it further by their (both teacher and students) efforts. As it is said learning must take place in two ways. Although one way learning is useful, two-way learning is deeper and has a fruitful yield to the one who practices it.

Bibliography

Kelly, Barrett.(2018). How to help your child with mnemonics. Impact tuition and dyslexia center.UK.

Lloyd, Sue and. Sara Wernham. (2011). Jolly Phonics Parent Teacher Guide. UK. p.2-6.

Narayan, Jayanti., et.al. (2003). Educating Children with Learning Problems in Primary Schools: Resource book for teachers. National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped . Secunderabad: Sree Ramana Process Pvt, Ltd.

Narayan, Jayanti. (2003). 'Teaching English', Ch. Venkataramana.(designed). Educating Children with Learning Problems in Primary Schools. Secunderabad: Sri Ramana Process Pvt Ltd, pp55, 63, 71-75.

Website:

- 1) Ketty, Barret. How to help your child with mnemonics. Retrived from, www.impacttuitionurmston.co.uk. Impact tuition, 11Apr.2008.web.27May 2021.

EFFECTS OF KARATE ON THE READING AND WRITING SKILLS OF L2 LEARNERS

Dr Sajeena Shukkoor, (Post Doctoral Fellow),
HSST English, GHSS for Girls,
Madayi, Kannur
sajeenasi@gmail.com

Abstract

The study investigates the effects of Karate on the reading and writing skills of L2 learners. The method adopted was experimental method and the design adopted was Pre-Test Post Test Non Equivalent group design. The study was conducted on a sample of 69 students of Class XI of which 32 were girls and 37 were boys. A Pre-test was administered using the tools Achievement Tests to measure reading and writing skills. Dependent variables and independent variable were linguistic skills and Karate training respectively. The pre-test was followed by Karate training of 45 minutes imparted to the Experimental group for three months which altogether extended for thirty hours. After three months of training, post-test was administered to both the Experimental and Control groups with the same tools used in the Pre-test. ANCOVA, ANOVA and Paired test were the statistical tools used to measure the collected data. The results that followed showed that the Experimental group displayed significant improvement in both the reading and writing skills.

Keywords

Karate, reading skill, writing skill, L2 Learners, linguistic skills.

Introduction

Martial arts are popular around the world for many reasons. There have been studies on the effects of the physical fitness programmes and systems on psychosocial aspects which have established a positive correlation. But none of the studies have explored the effects of Martial Arts especially Karate on either academic performance on the whole or learning of languages in specific. Literature on physical exercise and Martial Arts made the research scholar aware of the fact that Karate is a well-organized and cohesive exercising system stimulating the whole body and mind into power and action. Therefore, the present research was designed to investigate the effects of Karate on the reading and writing skills of L2 learners.

A thorough examination of related literature revealed the fact that the researchers behind all those studies found out a link between personality factors and some form of Martial Art or physical activity. Jasnosky et al. (1988), Fox (1999), Kupfer

(1994), Leith et al. (1990) and so on established the positive relationship between physical activity and mood states. Dienstbeir (1984) also identified the relationship between physical changes and psychological changes accompanying exercise. Jin (1989), Kutner et al. (1997), Brown et al. (1995) and Baxter and Francis (2013) reported relation between T'ai Chi Chuan participation and psycho-social aspects while Jansen and Dahmen Zimmer (2012), Conant et al. (2008), Daniel and Thornton (1992) found that participation in Karate improved the quality of life. Richman and Rehberg (1986) proved substantial relationship between duration of training and self-esteem while Duthie et al. (1978) compared the personalities of advanced and average martial artists and found that advanced ones were extroverts. Trulson (1986), Nosanchuk and MacNeil (1989) found reduced aggressiveness among more advanced students in the traditional Martial Arts school. Roberts et al. (2012) identified that changes in white matter microstructure are connected with the Black belts' punching ability. Layton (1988) found that martial art training reduced anxiety. The finding of Lakes et al. (2004) established the influence of Martial Arts training on cognitive, affective and physical domains. Beneficial effects of Martial Arts, particularly Judo, Jujitsu and Karate was the topic of research for Yiannakis and Thomporovsky (2003) and they found that the programme reduced stress and depression and enhanced mood. Ripley (2003) also asserted the same. He found children with ADHD improving their academic performance and behaviour. Agnes et al. (2010) suggested that Shaolin Dan Tian Breathing Technique improved human neural activity and connectivity. The study of Zivin et al. (2001) was related to Kempo and its influence on psychological variables while Kurian et al. (1992) and Finkenberg (1990) conducted studies on the personalities of Tae Kwon Do practitioners. They found it positive.

The studies conducted in Kerala by Praveenlal (2010), Kunjikkannan (2010), Rajesh Kumar (2009) also established the relationship between physical activity and psychological variables like anxiety level. Bhaskar's study in 2005 supported the theory that Yoga enhanced mood state and self-esteem and Nair's study (1971) established the effect of NCC training on personality traits and academic achievement of students. Hapkido based study by Spear (1989) also proved the same. Discovery of telomere an enzyme associated with aging and its increased strength in connection with meditation is a radical finding by Blackburn, the Nobel laureate (2009). Pyecha (1970) proved that Judo training enhanced better personality traits. Back in 1960 Catell proposed that intense physical training helps one attain stability and low anxiety.

A growing body of researches establishes the theory that positive personality traits make the task of language learning easier. These traits range from motivation, self-confidence, self-esteem, low anxiety, and low level of stress and so on. Khorshidi

(2013) and Ibrahimoglu et al. (2013) related to the link between learning strategy in English and personality profile. The studies of Clement et al. (1994), Fogel (1993), Crookes and Schmidt (1991), Vitus (2006), David (1984), Gardner (1985), Spolsky (1985) etc. draw attention towards the influence of either adjustment variables or motivation or both on learning skills. Oxford (1990) laid stress in learning strategies in language learning. Vijayakumar (1992) studied the need for developing a set of study skills. Krashen's (1987) theories focused on importance of affective factors in language acquisition while Vygotsky (1978) put his theories in the context of social interactions.

The study showing the relationship between clenching fist and memory conducted by Propper et al. (2013) was a path breaking one. Similar finding was received when Schmidt Kassow et al. (2010) conducted their study to examine the relationship between physically active situation and verbal learning. The studies of Sandra et al. (2013), Kramer et al. (2011) and Gage et al. (1999) were related to the influence of physical activity on brain structures. The positive results were astonishing. Weiser et al. (1995) revealed that Karate training was helpful in verbal therapy.

A spate of studies probed into the link between Martial Arts and psychological factors. Among these Martial Arts, Karate, T'ai Chi Chuan, Tae Kwon Do, Kempo, Judo, Hapkido were included. All the studies proved that Martial Art training programme fostered a sense of personal worth, self-confidence and so on. In some studies, it was also found that spending more years of practice helped reduce tendency of aggression. In some other studies relation between physical exercise and personality factors was also established. Therefore, there are evidences that physical fitness leads to mental fitness. Among these studies, Blackburn's study (2009) on the relationship between telomere strength and meditation has empirical evidence. The study by Conant et al. (2008) also suggests the potential benefits of Karate. Both studies employed experimental methods and the time taken for both the studies is not more than three months. The effects were conspicuous within this short term.

The studies on relationship between psychological variables and second language acquisition show that certain affective factors play a vital role in second language learning. Motivational factors are major among these propelling forces in learning a language. Among these studies Krashen's (1987) Input Hypothesis and Affective Filter theory provide a strong base for the present research in the Indian context.

The studies on the relationship between physical training and language acquisition supported the proposition that physical activity can stimulate the parts of brain. The study of Weiser et al. (1999) which proved a connection between Karate and verbal therapy stands as a signboard in this context.

It is found that none of the studies show a direct correlation between a Martial Art and linguistic performance. There hasn't been any finding to prove that Karate practice influences the four skills in language namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing. The lack of research in this area inspired the investigator to conduct the present study.

A careful perusal of the above studies induced the researcher to accept the experimental method adopted by Conant et al. (2008). The theories of Stephen Krashen (1987) also formed the base to evolve a method for testing the affective factors like stability, adjustment etc. in the beginning and at the end of the experimental package.

Thus the present study is an original and innovative research which has extended beyond what was already established and which has explored new vistas in the domain of language learning.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study is aimed to investigate the effects of Karate on linguistic performance as visible through reading and writing skills.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. It was hypothesized that after thirty hours of Karate training there will be improvement in the reading skill of the higher secondary students.
2. It was hypothesized that after thirty hours of Karate training there will be improvement in the writing skill of the higher secondary students.

METHODS

a. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The investigator selected experimental method which is the application and adoption of the classical method of the science laboratory. The experimental design is the blue print of the procedures which helps the researcher to test the hypothesis, to make meaningful interpretations of the results of the study and to reach valid conclusions about the relationship between independent and dependent variables. There are different types of experimental design. Pre-test post-test Non-equivalent group design was selected for the present study. Such a design is ideal to identify and measure the change in the variables wished to be manipulated through the experimental package. The treatment is provided only to the experimental group for a stipulated period of time. At the end of the experiment, both the experimental group and the control groups are administered the tools of post-test as the measure of dependent variable. The difference between means of the tests is found for each group and these different mean scores are compared with the help of a suitable statistical technique.

b. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the effects of Karate on linguistic performance. In order to serve this purpose, 36 higher secondary girls from Cotton Hill G.G.H.S.S and another 33 higher secondary boys from Govt. Model Boys H.S.S are selected. These two schools are selected because these schools are located in the heart of Thiruvananthapuram city and students from different cross sections of the society and from different home environments study here. The Principals of the schools cooperated wholeheartedly as and when the purpose of the investigations was detailed.

The samples in these schools belonged to the science batch. Their previous year achievement scores were compared. All of them were of same standard, same age and same class. The investigator ensured that these students did not have any previous training in Martial Arts. They were provided with ample information about the purpose of the research, expected duration of their participation and the experimental procedures involved. The expected benefits of the results of the study were explained to their parents also before getting their consent. They were given adequate instructions regarding their cooperation and participation throughout the programme. Frequent meetings were held with the students in order to build a rapport for the smooth conduct of the programme. The students were divided into two groups. Group A, the experimental group underwent Karate training and Group B acted as the control group, without any Karate training.

c. TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

(i) Achievement Test to Measure the Skill of Reading

Two passages from His First Flight and Quest for a Theory of Everything from the Higher Secondary First year General English Course Book

I. Purpose:

The purpose behind giving these passages is to determine the reading skill of the students.

II. Procedure/Instructions:

Prior to the test, the students were provided with blank sheets. Then they were directed to read the passage and to write the answers on the blank sheets given to them. Time allotted was 10 minutes.

III. Validity:

The passages given for the test are considered valid because they are extracts from the lessons prescribed in their syllabus.

IV. Equipment needed:

Question Paper, stopwatch.

V. Scoring procedures:

One mark is awarded for each right answer. Scoring key is given as Table 1.1.

(ii) Achievement Test to Measure the Skill of Writing

Editing passage and writing paragraph answers to questions based on the lessons His First Flight and Quest for a Theory of Everything prescribed for study from the Higher Secondary First Year General English Course Book.

I. Purpose:

The purpose is to determine the writing skill of the students.

II. Procedure/Instructions:

Prior to the test, the students were provided with question papers and then they were instructed to write the answers on the blank sheets given to them. Time allotted was 10 minutes.

III. Validity:

The questions given for the test are considered valid because they are based on the lessons prescribed in their syllabus.

IV. Equipment needed:

Question Paper, stopwatch

V. Scoring procedures:

Cohesion of ideas, accuracy in the use of language, style employed, comprehensiveness of ideas, originality of ideas were the indicators of the test. Based on these indicators two and half marks were awarded to each comprehension question. In the section on editing the passage half mark was awarded for each error corrected.

The data thus obtained are to be tested and evaluated to ascertain the results and to find out the tenability of hypotheses. The following statistical methods were used for the purpose of analysing the collected data.

(i) The essential descriptive statistics that help to describe data distribution, measure of central tendency and measure of dispersion were calculated for summarising the data.

(ii) ANOVA for finding significant mean difference in pretest and posttest scores of different groups with respect to each parameter.

(iii) ANCOVA for finding significant adjusted posttest mean difference of control and experimental groups with respect to each parameter.

(iv) Paired t-test for finding significant pre to posttest mean differences of respective variables in the control and experimental group.

d. PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

In all the statistical tests, the level of significance was chosen to be 1% or 5% and if the calculated P-value (Probability of Type I Error, in statistical terminology) is less than 0.01 or 0.05, there exists statistically significant mean difference between the two groups. Alternatively, if comparison based on Statistical Table values may be carried out for conventional-method-followers, the inference will be the same. All statistical analysis was carried out with the help of the software package SPSS 16.0 version for WINDOWS.

The analysis of the post-test scores of the two groups reveal statistically significant difference in post-test means with respect to each parameter. Thus the investigator may conclude tentatively that Karate training is better for influencing the selected criterion variables in the groups. But it cannot be conclusively said that all the groups differ significantly by simply comparing the post-test scores of the various groups. There may be many other intervening variables which might have affected the experimentation. It is difficult to ascertain whether the differences in post-test result occurred as a result of the intervention of the experimental factor or from other intervening variables. So it became necessary that the scores be analysed using the technique of analysis of co-variance, rather than analysis of variance, for much more reliable results. The scores of participants belonging to the two groups were subjected to analysis of covariance to determine the effectiveness of Karate training by taking their pre-test scores as covariate (or auxiliary variable or concomitant variable or supplementary).

RESULTS

Finding one

When the pre to post-test reading skill scores in control and experimental group were compared, there exist statistically significant differences ($P < 0.01$) in the experimental group. There do not exist statistically significant difference in the control group. Hence the results show that thirty hours of Karate training substantially influences the higher secondary students to improve their reading skill.

Finding two

When the pre to post-test writing skill scores in control and experimental group were compared there exist statistically significant differences ($P < 0.01$). But percent-

age of gain by the control group is 213 while that of experimental group is 309. Hence the results show that thirty hours of Karate training substantially influences the higher secondary students to improve their writing skill.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

Relationship between reading skill and Karate training

The finding was that thirty hours of Karate training helps higher secondary students to improve their reading skill. This was deduced from the following results.

When the post-test scores of the achievement test of reading skill were compared, after eliminating the effect due to initial scores using ANCOVA, the difference between their adjusted post-test mean was found to be statistically significant between control and experimental group ($P < 0.01$, gain = 26.84%). In the paired t-test it is observed that, in the control group there exist statistically insignificant differences in the pre to post-test mean reading skill scores ($P > 0.05$) while in the experimental group, there exist statistically significant differences in the pre to post-test mean reading skill scores ($P < 0.01$). Experimental group reported higher gain in reading skill scores (gain = 24.85%) as compared to the control group (loss = -1.05%).

The conclusion is that the experimental group bettered their performance in the reading skill test as compared to the control group. Hence the influence of thirty hours of Karate training on the reading skill of higher secondary students is substantial.

Reading skill involves visual learning strategy. Learning Karate also involves application of visual methods. Karate sessions helped the students to become keen in developing their visual faculties. Another fact noticed here is that the control group showed a reduction in their reading skill scores in post-test. The passages given in the Achievement Test to test the reading skill were known passages in the textbook prescribed and the questions were closed type. The students were required to write a precise answer which tested their memory, attention and concentration. The pre-test was administered within two months after the lessons were taught. But another four months passed before administering the post-test. By that time the students might have forgotten the specific linguistic units and content based on the portion. The students in the experimental group could recall and retrieve the information they gathered months back. They could concentrate and be more attentive while reading the passages.

This finding is supported by researches by Propper et al (2013) establishing a positive relationship between clenching fist and memory. David (1984) concluded that study skills and self-concept are positively interconnected.

Relationship between writing skill and Karate training

The finding was that the thirty hours of Karate training helps higher secondary students to improve their writing skill. This was deduced from the following results.

When the post-test scores of the achievement test of writing skill were compared, after eliminating the effect due to initial scores using ANCOVA, the difference between their adjusted post-test mean was found to be statistically significant between control group and experimental group ($P < 0.01$, gain = 54.99%). In the paired t-test it is observed that, in both the control group and the experimental group, there exist statistically significant differences in the pre to post-test mean writing skill scores ($P < 0.01$). But the experimental group reported higher gain in writing skill scores (gain = 308.54%) as compared to the control group (gain = 213%).

The conclusion is that the experimental group showed an amazing performance in the writing skill test as compared to the control group. Hence, the influence of thirty hours of Karate training on writing skill of higher secondary students is substantial.

Cohesion of ideas, accuracy in the use of language, style employed, comprehensiveness of ideas, originality of ideas were the indicators of the test to measure the writing skill. The substantial improvement in the writing skill means that the students excelled in their mental faculties. Learning takes place only when mind is free. As Stephen Krashen (1987) puts it, 'a mental block, caused by affective factors ... that prevents input from reaching the Language Acquisition Device (LAD).' In the context of the present study Karate created a congenial atmosphere with less fear, less anxiety and greater motivation. It can be understood that through Karate sessions the students gathered immense faith in themselves which helped them to acquire language in a better way.

The studies of Jansen P and Dahmen Zimmer K (2012), which suggested that Karate helps cognitive functioning, are in tune with this finding. The positive relation between physical exercise particularly aerobic exercise and brain structure was studied by Sandra et al. (2013). It was found that aerobic exercise is ideal to enhance memory, executive function, visuospatial skills and processing speed. Moreover, the recent study conducted by Propper et al. (2013) also proved that clenching the right fist helps encoding memory and clenching the left fist helps recalling. The studies in the field of motivation also support this positive relation between Karate and writing skill. The researchers like Crookes and Schmidt (1991), Gardner (1985), Spolsky (1985) focused on the importance of motivation in language learning.

CONCLUSION

The research was triggered by real personal life experience and an earnest desire to find a truth that can positively alter the teaching learning mechanisms in our

classrooms. The findings of the investigation emphasize the need to incorporate Karate with a specific formula in our Physical Education Programme. This becomes vital especially in the higher secondary section in which the adolescents grope in a host of problems like identity crisis, attention shortage, diffidence and so on. Hence it is time we implemented suitable changes in our educational practices.

BOOKS AND JOURNALS

- Baxter, A. & Francis. J.P. (2013). A Cross-sectional Survey to Investigate Positive Impact of Tai' Chi Chuan Participation on Bio psychosocial Quality of Life Compared to Exercise and Sedentary Controls: A Cross-sectional Survey. *Journal of Complementary and Integrative Medicine*. Vol. 10 No. 1. 1-10.
- Bhaskar, V. (2005). Effects of Selected Yogic Asanas on selected Physiological and Psychological variable of Elderly Men. Ph. D thesis submitted to University of Kerala.
- Blackburn, H. E. (2010). *Telomeres and Telomerase: Ends and Means*. London. London: Oxford University Press.
- Brown, D.R., Wang, Y., et al.(1995). Chronic Psychological Effects of Exercise and Exercise Plus Cognitive Strategies. *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise* 27: 765-775.
- Cattell, R.B (1960). Some Psychological Correlates of Physical Fitness and Physique. In S.C Staley (Ed.), *Exercise and Fitness* pp 138-151. Chicago: Athletic Institute. (A Collection of Papers presented at the Colloquium on exercise and fitness)
- Chan, A.S., Cheung, M., et al.(2010). Breathing Fosters Relaxed and Attentive Mind: A Randomized Controlled Neuro-Electrophysiological Study Evidence Based Complementary Alternative Medicine. Published online 2010 Sep 22. doi: 10.1155/2011/180704.
- Clement, R., Dornyei Z., Noels K.A. (1994). Motivation, Self Confidence and Group Cohesion in the Foreign Language Classroom *Language Learning*. 44:3. 417-448.
- Conant, K.D., Morgan, A K., Muzykewicz, et al. (2008). A Karate Programme for improving Self-Concept and Quality of Life in Childhood Epilepsy: Results of a Pilot Study. *Journal in Epilepsy and Behaviour*. Vol.12.No1.61-5.doi:10.1016/j.yebeh:2007.08.011
- Crookes, G. & Schmidt, R. (1991). Motivation: Reopening the Research Agenda. *Language Learning* 44. 417-448.

- Daniels, K. & Thornton, E. (1992). Length of Training, Hostility and the Martial Arts: A Comparison with Other Sporting Groups. *British Journal of Sports Medicine*. 26. 118-120.
- Daniels, K. & Thornton, E.W. (1990). An Analysis of the Relationship between Hostility and Training in the Martial Arts. *Journal of Sports Sciences*. 8. 95-101.
- David, J.W. (1984). Study Skills, Self-Concept and Academic Achievement for High School Students. *Resources in Education*. ERIC. 19(12). 246-369.
- Dienstbier, R.A. (1984). 'The Effects of Exercise on Personality.' In M.L. Sachs and G.W. Buffone (Eds) *Running as Therapy*. 253-272. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Duthie, R.B., Hope, L. & Barker, D.G. (1978). Selected Personality Traits of Martial Artists as Measured by the Adjective Checklist. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*. 47: 71-76.
- Finkenberg, M.E. (1990). Effect of Participation in Tae Kwon Do on College Women's Self-Concept. *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 71: 891-894.
- Fogel, G. K. (1993) The Academic Adjustment of International Students by Country of Origin. *Ataland Grant University in U.S. Dissertation Abstracts*. International. 54 (11). 3946A
- Fox, K.R. (1990). Influence of Physical Exercise on Mental Health. *Public Health Nutrition*. Volume 2. Supplement 3a. 411-418.
- Gardner, R.C. & Lambert, W.E. (1972). *Attitudes and Motivation: Second Language Learning*. Massachusetts. Newbury House: Rowley.
- Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and Second Language Learning: The Role of Attitudes and Motivation*. London. London: E. Arnold.
- Ibrahimoglu, N., Unaldi, H., et al. (2013). The Relationship between Personality Traits and Learning Styles: A Cluster Analysis. *Asian Journal of Management Sciences and Education*. Vol. 2 No. 3.
- Jansen, P & Dahmen, Z. K. (2012). Effects of Cognitive, Motor and Karate Training on Cognitive Functioning and Emotional Well Being of Elderly People. *Front Psychol*. 2012; 3: 40. Published online 2012 Feb 20. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2012.00040
- Janoski, M.L., Holmes, D.S., & Banks, D.L. (1988). Changes in Personality Associated with Changes in Aerobic and Anaerobic Fitness in Women and Men. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*. 32(3). 273-276.

- Jin, P. (1989). Changes in Heart rate, Noradrenaline, Cortisol and Mood during Taichi. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*. 33(2).197-206.
- Khorshidi, H.R. (2013). Personality Dimensions in Distance Language Learning. *International Journal of English and Education*. Volume 2. Issue 3.
- Krashen, S. D. (1985). *The Input Hypothesis: Issues and Implications*. White Plains. NY: Longman.
- Krashen, S.D. (1987). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Prentice Hall International, London: Englewood Cliffs
- Kunjikkannan, R. (2010). Effects of Martial Art Exercise on Physical Fitness, Emotional Intelligence and Mental Health of Teacher Training College Students. Ph. D thesis submitted to University of Kerala.
- Kupfer, B., Wajerer, S. (1994). Effects of Physical Exercise and Psychological Health. *Journal of Sports Medicine*. 17(2). 108.
- Kurian, M., Verdi, M.P., et al. (1994). Relating Scales on the Children's Personality Questionnaire to Training Time and Belt Rank in ATA Tae Kwon Do. *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 79. 904-906.
- Kutner, N.G., Barnhart, H., et al. (1997). Self-Report Benefits of Tai' Chi Practice by Older Adults. *Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences* 52B. 242-246.
- Lakes, K.D., Hoyt, W.T (2004). Promoting Self-Regulation Through School Based Martial Arts Training. *Applied Development Psychology* 25, 283-302.
- Layton, C. (1988). The Personality of Black-Belt and Nonblack-Belt Traditional Karate ka. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*. 67. 218.
- Leith, L.M. & Taylor, A.H. (1990). Psychological Aspects of Exercise: A Decade Literature Review. *Journal of Sport Behavior* 13. 219-239.
- Nair, S (1971) Study on the Effects of N.C.C. Training on (1) Physical Growth (2) Adjustment (3) Academic Achievement and Certain Personality Traits of High School Pupils in Kerala State. Ph. D thesis submitted to University of Kerala.
- Nosanchuk, T.A. and MacNeil, M.L. (1989). Examination of the Effects of Traditional and Modern Martial Arts Training on Aggressiveness. *Aggressive Behavior* 15. 153-159.
- Oxford, R. (1990). *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*. Boston. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

- Praveenlal, M.S. (2010). Effect of Specific Training Programme on Psychological, Physiological and Bio-chemical Features Affecting Performance among Badminton Players. Ph. D thesis submitted to University of Kerala.
- Propper, R. E., McGraw, S.E., et al. (2013). Getting a Grip on Memory: Unilateral Hand Clenching Alters Episodic Recall. PLoS ONE 8(4): e62474. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0062474.
- Pyecha, J. (1970). Comparative Effects of Judo and Selected Physical Education Activities on Male University Freshman Personality Traits. Research Quarterly 41. 425-431.
- Rajeshkumar, K.R. (2009). Effect of Physical Activity Programme on selected Physical Fitness, Psychological and Sociological Variables of Juvenile Delinquents. Ph. D thesis submitted to University of Kerala.
- Richman, C. L., & Rehberg, H. (1986). The Development of Self-Esteem through the Martial Arts. International Journal of Sport Psychology. 17. 234–239.
- Ripley, A. (2003). An Awesome Alternative to Drugs: Martial arts Practice as Treatment for Children with AD/HD. Retrieved 26th October 2006 from http://www.capella.edu/portal/alumni/scontent/ProfOpp/EM_Ripley.pdf
- Roberts, R.E., Bain, P.G., Day, B.L., & Husain, M. (2012). Individual Differences in Expert Motor Coordination Associated With White Matter Microstructure in the Cerebellum. Cerebral Cortex 2012. doi: 10. 1093/cercor/bhs 219.
- Sajeena Shukkoor (2016). Effects of Martial Arts on Linguistic Performance in English with Special Reference to karate. Ph. D thesis submitted to the University of Kerala.
- Sandra, B. C., Sina, A., et al. (2013). Shorter Term Aerobic Exercise Improves Brain, Cognition, and Cardiovascular Fitness in Aging. Front Aging Neuroscience. 2013. 5: 75.
- Schmidt-Kassow, M., Kulka, et al. (2010). Exercising During Learning Improves Vocabulary Acquisition: Behavioral and ERP evidence. Neuroscience Letters. Vol.482 issue (1):40-4. doi: 10.1016/j.neulet.2010.06.089. Epub 2010 Jul 8.
- Spear, R.K. (1989). Military Physical and Psychological Conditioning: Comparisons of Four Physical Training Systems. Journal of the International Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation. 25: 30-32.
- Spolsky, B. (1985). Formulating a Theory on Second Language Learning. Studies in Second Language Acquisition. 7. 269-288.

- Trulson, M. E. (1986). Martial Arts Training: A Novel Cure for Juvenile Delinquency. *Journal Human Relations*. Volume 39. Issue 12. 1131-1140.
- Van, P. H., Kempermann, G., et al. (1999). Running Increases Cell Proliferation and Neurogenesis in the Adult Mouse Dentate Gyrus. *Nature Neuroscience* 2. 266-270.
- Vijayakumar, K. (1992). The Development of Study Skills in English at the Under Graduate Level with Special Reference to the Colleges in the Kerala University Area. Ph. D thesis submitted to University of Kerala
- Vitus, G.J. (2006). Influence of Select Adjustment Motivational Variables of Personality on Certain Basic Language Skills in English. Ph. D thesis submitted to University of Kerala
- Voss, M., Nagamatsu, L., et al. (2011). Exercise, Brain and Cognition across the Lifespan. *Journal of Applied Physiology*. 5: 1505-1513.
- Vygotsky L.S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge. Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Weiser, M., Kutz, I., et al. (1995). Psychotherapeutic Aspects of the Martial Arts. *American Journal of Psychotherapy* 49. 118-127.
- Yiannakis, A. & Thomporovski, P. (2001, June). Effects of Martial Arts Training on Mood. Paper presented at 10th World Congress of Sport Psychology. Skiathos Island, Greece.
- Zivin, G., Hassan, N.R., et al. (2001). An Effective Approach to Violence Prevention: Traditional Martial Arts in Middle School. *Adolescence*, 36. 443-459.
- Course Book General English First Year prescribed by SCERT (2014)

WHY THE SIGHT WORDS TO BE TAUGHT?

– S Padma Priya, PGT (English)
APMSchool, Gospadu, Kurnool
priya7278@gmail.com

Abstract

Generally, teachers teach lessons in the classroom following all the pedagogical principles using the most updated teaching technology. But the reports of National Assessment Survey (NAS) and State Level Achievement Survey (SLAS) say that the achievement of the children in Reading Comprehension is not at the desired levels. The real problem is that the child is unable to read any text graphically. So, the great responsibility lies on the shoulders of the teachers to make them aware of graphic reading and then go for all the other elements of reading viz., identifying stated facts, unstated facts, reading between the lines, reading beyond the lines, guessing the meanings of new words in the given context. It is clear that the children can use the words 'rice', 'dal', 'oil' in their spoken language. But they are not able to read the graphically written form using conventional spelling.

This paper aims at drawing the readers' attention towards teaching Sight Words as it could be the solution for overcoming this serious issue by establishing associations in the memory to read the words more quickly and the teachers can help them comprehend the text gradually.

Keywords

Reading - Graphic reading – Difficulty – Teaching Sight Words - Establishing Associations – See & Say – Spell Reading – Arm Tapping – Air Writing - Table Writing - Manipulatives – Most Frequent Words – Phonics.

Introduction

We Love Reading is one of the programmes that the government of Andhra Pradesh is strictly implementing all over the state as one of the measures to rectify the observations of NAS, SLAS and Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) The teachers were bewildered to see the results of NAS, SLAS and PISA. When we talk about Reading Comprehension definitely, we think of

- Reading and understanding the stated facts and unstated facts
- Guessing the meanings of the new words from the context
- Reading between the lines
- Reading beyond the lines

The above mentioned are higher level achievements regarding the Reading Comprehension. But evidently from the NAS and SLAS reports, we are not in a position to think of all these.

Observations:

The students of rural areas are unable to read and understand the question which is given in the examination. Let us consider the following examples of choosing the right option from the multiple choices given.

Case:1

Which of the following do you take more in your Mid-Day Meal?

a) Proteins

b) Carbohydrates

c) Fats

If the student provides a correct answer, it could be because of a guess work, yet it can be accepted. However, it is the wrong response that demands our attention for purposes of remediation. It is found that the following may be the reasons for his wrong choice.

1. The child does not understand the Question

2. The child does not know the technical words viz. proteins, carbohydrates, Fats...

In the case of 1, as the questions are generally set considering the level and class of the students, it is ridiculous to conclude that the child does not understand the question given. Then we have no other option except taking the reason 2 for granted.

Case: 2

Which of the following do you take more in your Mid-Day Meal?

a) Dal

b) Rice

c) Oil

Most of the children may identify the answer. However, the problem arises when the child is unable to identify the answer in spite of the options not being technical words. Although, the child is able to answer when asked orally.

Considering the level and class of the students, pedagogically and psychologically, we teach the lessons in the class. The real problem was the child is unable to read any text graphically. So, the great responsibility lies on the shoulders of the teachers to make them aware of graphic reading and then try all the other elements of reading viz., identifying stated facts, unstated facts, reading between the lines,

reading beyond the lines, guessing the meanings of new words in the given context. It is clear that the children can use the words 'rice', 'dal', 'oil' in their spoken language. But they are unable to read the graphically written spellings.

Hence, teaching Sight words could be the solution for overcoming this serious issue by establishing associations in the memory to read the words more quickly and the teachers can help them comprehend the text gradually.

Should Sight Words be Taught “By Sight?”

Reading is a complex skill that must be learned. True reading, being able to spot a word in any font, in any context, spontaneously identifying known words by sight and decoding unknown words, is achieved by processing the individual letters in words and the sounds they represent. This skill is based on knowledge of the oral language being read and must be learnt.

With repeated use and practice, neural pathways develop in the brain structure to facilitate communication between the three reading centers of the brain, resulting in automatic and fluent reading. Through the processes of creating orthographic maps and developing neural word form models the learner develops the ability to read “by sight.”

Sight words, frequently mentioned as high frequency words, can be defined as words that a child identifies instantly by sight. When a reader recognizes words, it makes the reading process more fluent and upsurges one's level of comprehension of the text. It is inevitable to teach sight words because students who aren't able to recognize sight words will most likely struggle throughout the reading process and may continue struggling even in the later stages. They will also spend more time in decoding unknown words throughout the text, which takes their focus away from constructing meaning.

Sight words have been a part of reading instruction since Dr. Edward William Dolch (1936) published “A Basic Sight Word Vocabulary” in the Elementary School Journal. Dr. Edward Fry developed his Instant Word list in the 1950s and updated the list again in 1980. These high frequency word lists have become classroom standards in reading instruction. The words include articles, prepositions, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and conjunctions but no nouns. He referred to these words as tool words and service words because they occur in all books, irrespective of the content, whereas nouns are precise to the content of a book.

Dolch's Sight Word List is always a valuable tool in reading instruction because mastering them is indispensable to reading effortlessly. The words are generally introduced in order of overall frequency (the, to, and, he, a, I, you, it, of, in etc.) or by the frequency in which they occur by grade level, with 40 – 50 words taught at each grade.

The purpose of these words is to help classroom teachers by giving them a research-based list for sight word instruction. Students may start with word 1 and progress through the words in the order of frequency. Some teachers group the words in sets such as numbers, colours etc.

Research Based Strategies for Teaching Sight Words

The student starting with a very small pile of sight words and gradually learning more is Incremental Learning. Flashcards are very effective. Reviewing the challenging words makes the students feel successful at the end of the day.

Recent researches have proved that learning and reinforcing of sight words can be made easy by following certain strategies viz., Look and Say, Spell Reading, Arm Tapping, Air Writing and Table Writing.

Look and Say — The child sees the word on the flash card and says the word while underlining it with her finger.

Spell Reading — The child says the word and spells out the letters, then reads the word again.

Arm Tapping — The child says the word and then spells out the letters while tapping them on his arm, then reads the word again.

Air Writing — A child says the word, then writes the letters in the air in front of the flash card.

Table Writing — A child writes the letters on a table, first looking at and then not looking at the flash card.

These techniques work together to trigger different parts of the brain. The exercises combine many repetitions of the word (seeing, hearing, speaking, spelling, and writing) with physical movements that focus the child's attention and emphasize each word into the child's long-term memory.

Focusing on Manipulative

Teaching students how to read is taking a major change from a very customary style of teaching to a more hands-on approach. This new idea of teaching “represents a shift away from the ‘learning by listening’ model of instruction to one in which students learn by doing” (Garris, Ahlers, & Driskell, 2002, p. 441). One way in which this teaching style is being achieved is through the use of manipulatives when teaching reading skills such as sight word recognition. Games such as Road Race, Race-tracks, Word Wall, and Word Trek were discovered to be effective.



Racetracks or Word Races are simply a track that consists of some cells; one sight word per cell. Children have one minute to go around the track pointing at each word while they say it. Children are instructed to say as many sight words as possible within the time allotted.

Word walls can be defined as bulletin boards that alphabetically contain high-frequency words used in texts or instruction.



Sight word games can also be spiced up by learning with fun secret code sight words. These are always a class favourite because students will have so much fun, they don't realize they are learning too! Students identify the beginning sound of each picture to crack the code and spell a secret sight word.

While these methods work well for many students, it may not be so with others. Most readers, with adequate instructions, learn to read without much effort; however, struggling readers have very poor access to the visual word form area; as a result, they are frequently unable to identify words by sight.

On the whole, high-frequency word instruction is often fully dissociated from phonics instruction.

The question is – should sight words be taught “by sight?”

The answer is – “No”

A New Model for Teaching Sight Words:

Integrating these words into phonics lessons allows students to make sense of spelling patterns for these words. To do this, the sight or high-frequency words are to be categorized.

For instructional purposes, these words can be put under two categories- phonetically decodable words and words with irregular spellings. Phonetically decodable words have a common spelling pattern. These words can be learnt and read in a

flash. Out of 220 words in Dolch list, 138 words are decodable, considering regular spelling patterns. They are sorted by vowel-spelling as in at, am, an, it, if, in, hot, had, can, ran, will, well etc., sorted by digraph as in that, then, them, this, wish, when, which; sorted by ending-blends and beginning-blends as in help, stop, just, must, fast and sorted by ending-letters as in sing, bring, thank, think, drink etc.,

The other 82 words in the Dolch list are irregularly spelt and to be learnt by heart. They are meant to be read and spelt automatically. Among these there are a few words again that can be grouped for the similarity in their spelling as in could and would, rhyming as in there and where, meaning as in one and once etc., Among these set of words certain words like very, does, carry, from, again, please etc., do not fit into spelling patterns. Anyhow these words can be learnt through the earlier drilling or repetition method and can be reinforced during the forthcoming classes. In addition to the sight words, other words can also be taught to the students, though they aren't in the list by grouping them under the same category. For example, while teaching could and would, 'should' can be included, that can also be considered as a frequency word.

Conclusion:

In this way, the students may not continue struggling with recognizing words immediately when they look at them in the various contexts they come across. Through commitment and accountability in teachers, students can read accurately and use the sound-spelling correspondence. We will soon hear that students learn to spell and read the words much more easily than with the traditional approach. Initially, if the teachers facilitate children in learning these sight words, they can recognize and read the words in various contexts when they come across these words. This establishment of meaningful associations with the words leads the children to read and comprehend the text easily which is said to be the higher-level reading competency.

References:

- Ehri, L. C. (2005). Learning to Read Words: Theory, Findings, and Issues. Scientific Studies of Reading, Mahwah N J: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dolch, E. W. (1936). A basic sight vocabulary. The Elementary School Journal. United States: The University of Chicago Press
- Ates, S., (2013). The Effect of Repeated Reading Exercises with Performance Based Feedback

on Fluent Reading Skills Reading Improvement. Corpus ID: 146552414

NAS & SLAS Reports

<https://keystoliteracy.com/blog/the-role-of-orthographic-mapping-in-learning-to-read/>
<https://iowareadingresearch.org/blog/teaching-sight-words>
<https://www.kindergartenworks.com/kindergarten-teaching-ideas/how-to-teach-sight-words/>
<https://sightwords.com/sight-words/lessons/>
<https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/for-educators/teaching-strategies/how-to-teach-sight-words>
<https://www.themeasuredmom.com/how-to-teach-sight-words/>

THE PRAXIS OF READING IN ESL CLASSROOMS AT THE HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL IN THE SCHOOLS OF KERALA

PREETHA P.V

Non-Vocational Teacher in English
Govt. VHSS VITHURA, Trivandrum, Kerala
e-mail id: preethsree@gmail.com

Abstract

Researches in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) throw light on the fact that the process of reading is regarded as a major source for the acquisition of any second language. In the state of Kerala, the presence of a wide reading public after Independence has in some ways facilitated the state to achieve an enviable position of total literacy. Though these are remarkable strides the state has achieved, in the case of second language learning the process of meaning making is always challenging for the teacher and the learner. Lack of motivation to read independently is a major obstacle confronted by the learners. For the teachers, it is the ignorance of how to motivate the learners effectively and how to process reading meaningfully in classrooms that troubles them the most. At the higher secondary level, learners are expected to be independent readers and meaning makers are envisioned in the curricular objectives of language teaching. But the practice of reading followed in the schools of the state falls much shorter to the objectives envisioned in the curriculum. The paper is an attempt to make the readers understand the need to redefine the theoretical practice of reading in the light of critical pedagogy and social constructivism and to suggest possible strategies that can be translated into action for teaching reading in ESL classrooms at the Higher Secondary levels.

Key words

Second Language Acquisition, curricular objectives, critical pedagogy, social constructivism, ESL classrooms, Higher Secondary levels

Dr. Samuel Johnson, the 18th century English writer is said to have given a faithful record of the language people used during the times and so, referred to England as a nation of readers. In the state of Kerala, the love for reading was primarily initiated by the missionaries and this gradually prepared the ground for the spread of literacy and consequently of the reading habit too. At the time of Independence, the literacy in Kerala was just 45% and by the 1980s it reached a stage of what is called total literacy. On a lighter note, most of the people of the state would admit that they hold on fast to the tradition of beginning their day's work with a cup of hot steaming tea or coffee alongside the opened pages of a newspaper. This is also one of the reasons that have paved way for the Kerala Model of Development.

Prior to the curriculum revision process (KCF 2007) that was initiated in the state of Kerala on the grounds of NCF 2005, an analysis of the reading practices that were followed in the secondary classrooms of the state where English is taught is necessary. The reading models the schools practiced grossly overlooked the collaborative and interactive scopes involved in the process of reading. A banking model of education was practiced then and learners were never considered as individuals with their own concepts and ideas. The method the teachers followed did not have any faith in the analytical or critical skills of the learners. Comprehension was the sole aim of all reading and to ensure this all reading tasks were replete with comprehension questions.

During the last four decades, researches in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) have placed greater focus on the process of reading as a main source for the acquisition of a second language. Reading, the art of meaning making from texts, has been the greatest source of acquiring knowledge, especially in the process of learning. By the time a learner reaches the higher secondary level, he/she is expected to independently unravel the meaning of a text in a second language. In the state of Kerala, the second language opted by the learners is largely English. But the practices of reading in the schools in Kerala fail miserably in achieving the objectives envisioned in the curriculum of language learning and teaching put forward in NCF 2005 and NCF 2020.

The conventional practices of reading in the higher secondary classrooms of Kerala grossly disregard reading as a meaning making process. Most learners read under compulsion and are not intrinsically motivated to read and for most of them it is not at all an enjoyable activity. And hence, unfortunately it is not sustained as a life-long activity too. Reading is confined to the information within the text and it does not go beyond it. The reading materials produced, the classroom processes followed and the teacher training given are not fully helpful in making the learners independent and meaningful readers. The practice of reading overlooks the need for breaking the conventions of reading and make it a meaningful, creative and to a certain extent a political process that has to be nurtured very carefully.

The 'praxis' or the 'theoretical practice' of reading at the higher secondary level has to be redefined in the light of critical pedagogy and social constructivism. Social constructivist perspective theorises that knowledge is not passively received but built by cognizing subject and is constructed through creatively intervening in social issues. Social constructivism, categorically conceives learning as a process of constructing knowledge and sharing it through individual and collaborative efforts. Critical pedagogy illuminates the relationship among knowledge, authority and power (Giroux, 1994). It enables learners to "recognise connections between their individual problems and experiences and the social contexts in which they are embedded."

Each reader comes to a text with very different histories of engagement and a particular cultural form. They read 'through' and 'against' a social history of encounters with other texts at other times (Buckingham, 1993). Reading is a socially situated and context specific activity. Construction of meaning of a text is always dependent on the knowledge of a particular group at a particular time and about that particular text (Alvermann, Moon & Hagood, 1999). Students' interaction with texts is never static but always changing depending on the particular participants that they are with and the social setting. Gee (2001) argued that we all have multiple identities which are connected not to our internal states but to our social performances. The kind of person one is recognized as being at a given time and place, can change from moment to moment in the interaction, can change from context to context, and , of course, can be ambiguous or unstable (p.99). He also pointed out that identity is very much a discursive practice and has to do with one's own narration of oneself as well as how people talk about you, and how much you resist or inhabit what they say about you. Hence, identity is constantly created and recreated in our interactions with people and it is very much shaped by collective discourses around us (Sfard & Prusak, 2005). The predominant focus on production rather than reception fails to see what has been read into a text by particular reading practices other than some pre-given textual or ideological reality. The effort, as Patterson (1997) pointed out, should be on locating the inter textual and situated meanings. Besides, multiple interpretations from students of different social backgrounds and history of literacy practices should be encouraged. Bearing in mind that there is no unmediated access to truth, different individual responses should only be the starting point.

The move away from conventional model of reading to a critical model of reading based on social constructivism and critical pedagogy demands a changed conception of teachers as the sole holder of truth. What this implies is that instead of an all knowing critical pedagogue, what we need is a self reflective practitioner – researcher who learns as he/she teaches. The Freirean perspective which emphasizes the centrality of learners and their communities, and their integration of research and pedagogy that starts with learners' concerns is needed. It is imperative that a second language program addresses the social and affective needs of the learners in their acquisition of the new language and culture so that their language learning becomes an additive rather than a subtractive experience which otherwise would render them in self doubt and shame about their heritage, language and culture. The range of activities initiated in the textbooks at the secondary and higher secondary levels both nationally and state wise, affirm to a large extent to the learners' identity. Cummins (2001) described the relationship between identity investment and cognitive development as a reciprocal one - the more positive students feel about their linguistic, cultural and personal identities, the more investment they will have in their learning.

Social constructivists see reading, like learning, as social practice. The social context affects when you read, what you read, where you read, who you read with and, of course, how you read. Luke and Freebody (1990, 2002) define four different reader resources: code breaking, meaning making, text using and text analyzing. The most fundamental is code breaking; which is deciphering text at letter, word and sentence level. For many students, decoding text is synonymous with 'reading' because this is the social practice they have been taught in schools. Decoding practices are usually the main focus of school reading classes. They include guessing the meaning from context, predicting, using background knowledge, and using text structure, looking up unknown vocabulary in a dictionary or glossary, working out sentence grammar, and deciphering reference chains. Classroom reading practices in reading are focused on students' development of reading skills. However, if students are not encouraged to go beyond these strategies, they may learn reading habits which are over focused on decoding to the detriment of other reading resources.

The reader has to listen and to struggle to make sense in her/his own mind of what the writer is saying, which is inter-mental dialogue, in Vygotsky's terms. In listening to the author's words, learners need to construct their own representation of the authors' message – intra-mental dialogue. Rarely do readers understand exactly what the writer had in mind (Lewis & Slade, 1994). Reading in a foreign language is particularly hard, because the words and grammatical structures, the text conventions and the cultural context are all less than familiar. In fact, there can be no perfect way to understand most texts. Even something as apparently factual as a train time schedule can be interpreted through different cultural lenses. Students need to understand that all readers construct meaning from texts differently, depending on their purpose for reading, their background, and even their state of mind. There is usually no single, unequivocal meaning in a text. Thus, reading entails constructing meaning from text through inter-mental and intra-mental dialogues.

Readers also have to know how to use texts. They can be read for pleasure, for gathering information, for writing essays, and for language learning. Our learners have expectations of how texts can and should be used based on their prior experience of texts as social practice. As teachers we need to encourage and facilitate students' use of texts in new social contexts. Finally as text analysts, students need to gain text awareness, this is in order to build their own skills as budding writers, by observing how language is used within different genres to achieve different purposes. They also need to develop a 'suspicious eye' (Wallace, 1995) detecting bias, and identifying the author's stance. They need to learn how writers use language to persuade, entertain, inform and influence their readers.

Some of the strategies that can be tried out in social constructivist classrooms for teaching reading in an ESL classroom are suggested below.

Providing a Context and Purpose for Reading

Students need to have a clear idea of why they are reading and to know how the text relates to other aspects of their course. For example, before processing a reading passage in a textbook, it is necessary to establish the context first by using either visual cues, discussion questions, or a link to their own lives. It is essential that the students know which reader role the teacher wants them to adopt, whether that be of making meaning, exploiting the text for useful vocabulary, looking at the text as a model for some other task, learning some new information in preparation for an assignment/project, finding out the author's opinion on the topic, or if they are merely expected to simply enjoy the story. A poignant question here is whether the text is meant to be used as a language resource, or as a means to stimulate dialogue. Students also need encouragement to move beyond this teacher- textbook controlled situation into reading texts which they themselves have selected for their own purposes as they progress gradually in this skill.

The processing of the text also involves relating one text to another and guessing the meaning of difficult words. This will demonstrate that reading is not necessarily a linear process, but involves jumping forward, linking back, and re-reading sections which are a bit too hard to digest. This kind of a process helps students to see what it means to enter into a dialogue with the text.

Asking Questions

Not enough research has been undertaken with the higher secondary ESL classes on the role of questioning in teaching reading. The art of asking questions which are easily within the students' grasp, but which lead them to engage more interactively with the text is very tricky. After all, the students will not have a teacher by their side asking questions forever. The goal is to enable them to become independent readers. Social constructivist theory emphasizes that we need to encourage students to create their own meaning from text, rather than to impose a teachers' interpretation of the meaning upon them.

Teachers may help as resources to bridge the linguistic and cultural gap that students experience in reading a text. Too often, however, teachers dominate the lesson by telling the students the meaning of the text rather than assisting them to create meaning by themselves. The question teachers ask need to show a genuine interest in the meanings the students construct on their own rather than on insisting on preconceived understandings. Perhaps the most effective text awareness questions are those which help students gain insight into the way texts are structured. Students must be encouraged to ask questions for them too. To scaffold this ability, one possible activity is to get students in groups to write questions for other groups to answer.

Integrating Reading with Writing

Texts of other people serve as excellent models for student's own writing. A close analysis of a reading text can enable students to emulate the text in their own writing. For example, if students are asked to make a tourist brochure, it is a good idea to have them analyse other tourist brochures first to gather useful vocabulary and sentence structures, understand the format and layout, compare texts to see which ones suits in best or even decide on which one to select to achieve the sort of effect they would like to give to the readers. These efforts will involve the students in informed and analytical choice of language for a defined purpose. The writing of the students can benefit greatly from borrowing liberally from model texts in creating their own texts and this is indeed a skill essential for our higher secondary ESL learners.

Creating Awareness of the Author and the Text

Analysing a text can develop a strong understanding in our learners that texts are written by real people for a range of different purposes and that some are more successful than others in achieving this purpose. An interesting exercise with higher secondary level learners is to compare two news reports of the same event from two different newspapers/ news sources and see how reliable they are. What sources have they used? What has been highlighted as the key point? What verbs have been used and to what effect? Which one concords most with their understanding of the event? Such an activity is not only motivating, but leads the learners towards a much better appreciation of the texts and the purpose behind its presentation.

Peer Scaffolding

A social constructivist class is a step ahead from the traditional teacher fronted classroom setting. Students need to unleash their innate talents and abilities in a congenial atmosphere. Peer scaffolding is a way towards independent use of the four reader roles they should have unknowingly imbibed. Working in collaboration with others on reading tasks can expand their use of these roles, helping them to become more effective decoders and users of the text, more participatory makers of meaning and more aware of how authors manipulate texts. Small peer work exercises may include information gap exercises (decoding), comparing texts (text analyzing), comparing notes others have made from texts (meaning making), or even reconstructing a paragraph based on the information in the text. Effective group tasks teachers can employ in language classes is to have learners read texts on any given topic first and then ask them to have a group visual presentation of it. It is very enlightening to see how diversely the young learners visualize the topics given to them.

Setting the Students Free

Allowing students to work independently is an essential aspect of any social

constructivist paradigm. Setting tasks which allow students to read in areas which interest them and for purposes which are important to them is the best motivator. However, freedom without support is a recipe for disaster especially for higher secondary level learners. Scaffolding before and during individual or small tasks is essential.

Using the Internet

With the pandemic COVID-19 reigning supreme over the affairs of the world now, the internet has provided solace to the victimized millions across the globe. In the field of education, never has the opportunity of online learning and virtual platforms been this exhausted. Internet comes in very useful in these times both as a source of abundance of reading materials and also as a publishing platform which reaches out to a wider set of audience. For example, having the class set up a web resource for other students in the school or the locality can be a great motivator. Some possible home tasks involving reading components in the virtual classroom set up are: producing a web based magazine for the school, planning a virtual tour of the class and making the students act as tour guides, conducting an online advertising campaign, etc.

Conclusion

The social constructivist approach and critical pedagogic methods to reading offer various tools and principles for ESL teachers to draw their learners into energetic participation in text events, entering into active dialogue with texts and their authors, not as outsiders, but as active participants. In umpteen ways, this approach may challenge the traditional beliefs of ESL teachers. 'Change' is the watchword in life and ESL teachers need to shoulder it for the 'tomorrow of the nation' to be creatively and critically sound.

References

- Apple, M.W.(2000). Official Knowledge: Democratic Education in a Conservative Age (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge
- Barnett, M.A.(1989). More than Meets the Eye: Foreign Language Reading, Theory and Practice. England Cliffs, NJ: CAL&Prentice Hall.
- Freire, P.(2005) Education for Critical Consciousness. New York: Continuum
- Gee, J. P. (2004). Situated language and learning: A critique of traditional schooling. London: Routledge. ISBN 978-0-415-31776-4
- Giroux, H. (1997). Pedagogy and the Politics of Hope: Theory, Culture, and Schooling. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Kincheloe, Joe L .(2008). Critical Pedagogy. 2nd Ed. New York: Peter Lang

Smith, F.(1986). Understanding Reading. A Psycholinguistic Analysis of Reading and Learning

National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005

Kerala Curriculum Framework (KCF) 2007

National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2020

Developing 21st Century Skills through Collaborative Learning in the English classroom

Mamatha Sadu

School Assistant (English)

ZPHS(Girls) Narsampet, Mdl. Narsampet

Warangal Rural District, Telangana State.

mamathasadu12@gmail.com

Abstract

The purpose of this classroom-based action research was to inculcate 21st Century Skills through Collaborative learning in the English Language Learners. During the research the researcher tried to find how Collaborative Learning may be helpful to our students in the classroom- transaction.

During the project, the researcher identified the problem and collected opinions from teachers and students using questionnaires. Most of the teachers and students opined that, "Collaborative Learning is very useful but there are many drawbacks like over-crowded classrooms, time consuming processes, chances of passive learning etc." After gathering information from teachers and students, a few activities were designed to help the students learn and improve their 21st century skills through academics.

Collaborative learning is an educational approach in teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. Through Collaborative learning one can develop social skills, building trust, peer learning, critical thinking and problem solving , creative thinking, confidence, and communication. Thus Collaborative learning, if successfully implemented, could fulfil the true purpose of education -- nurturing responsible citizens who collaborate with their fellow citizens to address social, economic and other such concerns, and also inculcate 21st Century Skills especially 4C'S (Collaboration, Communication, Creative thinking and Critical thinking).

Key Words

Action Research, Professional development, Mentoring, Collaborative learning , 21st Century Skills, 4C'S (Collaboration, Communication, Creative thinking and Critical thinking).

CHALLENGES:

Most of the teachers and people complain that students studying in Government Schools cannot communicate well and hence are unable to reach the needs of the

21st century. They fail to produce a sentence on their own, write applications or write simple letters. The CCE (Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation) methods and syllabus gave scope for developing language skills LSRW, as well as 21st century skills mainly 4C'S through various discourses. Although students participated during the whole academic year, yet under CCE pattern they were unable to cope with the requirements of the 21st century skills.



Fig1: My School

Research was undertaken at the Zilla Parishad High School in Telangana State Government. Medium of instruction at school was Telugu and English. The students who participated in this action research were from English medium background. Most of them were active and participated in all the curricular and Co-curricular activities. However, they failed to communicate with others in English Language and use 4C'S in their core subjects.

The Research Question:

"How can one develop 21st century skills through Collaborative learning among English language learners?"

Sub-questions:

- How can we encourage students to interact and discuss with both their Teachers and Peers?
- How can we ensure academic tasks are purposeful, relevant and applicable to students' lives?

- Why should we allow choice and decision making related to academic tasks and also allow them to think critically, creatively?

DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

Data was collected from teachers and students.

Teachers Data: They were teachers working in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu State government schools.

- Online questionnaire was created using Google forms. This was used to collect the opinion of the teachers working in similar context. Most of them expressed their opinions by using this tool which was shared on social media platforms
- Gathered information through Questionnaires and Interviews also

How Can We Develop 21st Century Skills - 4C's In Our Classroom Transaction.

Dear Teacher, This survey is designed to ask you about the 21st century skills, you implemented during the academic year. Your responses are very important to us. For this reason we would be thankful if you could provide honest responses to the questions we ask. There are no right or wrong answers.

*Required

Email address *

Your email address

Full Name *

Your answer

Your Designation *

Your answer

Fig2: Google Survey form

How Can We Develop 21st Century Skills - 4C's In Our Classroom Transaction.

Dear Teacher, This survey is designed to ask you about the 21st century skills, you implemented during the academic year. Your responses are very important to us. For this reason we would be thankful if you could provide honest responses to the questions we ask. There are no right or wrong answers.

*Required

Email address *

Your email address

Full Name *

Your answer

Your Designation *

Your answer

Fig3: Questionnaire



Fig4: Participated Teachers from School Complex

Student Data:

Class IX Students of ZPHS(Girls) Narsampet.... 35 Girls

Students Survey Questions:

- Do you like Group (Collaborative) learning in your class?
- Are you able to communicate freely and fluently with others?
- What kind of problems are you facing while collaborating and communicating in the classroom?

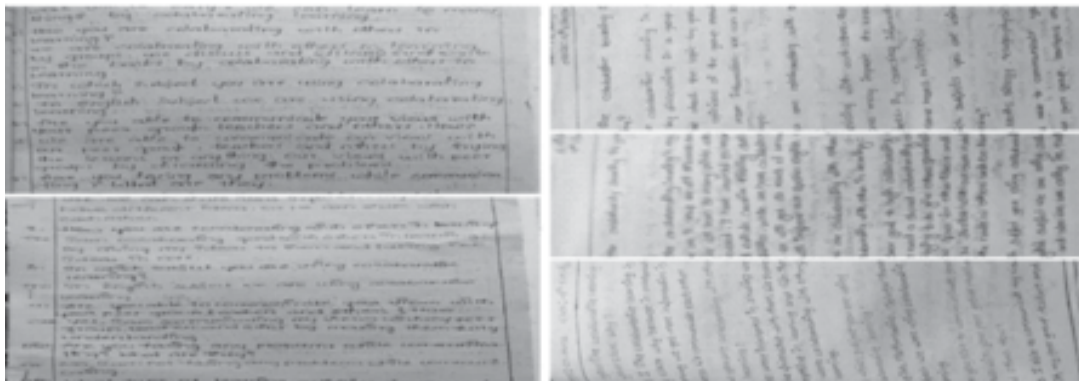


Fig5: Students' Questionnaire

In this way data was collected Qualitatively and Quantitatively.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

After the analysis of the data it was found

- As per the Teachers - the best learning takes place when students learn core subjects and processes, such as rules and procedures. They learn how to think and solve problems in collaboration with peers and teachers.

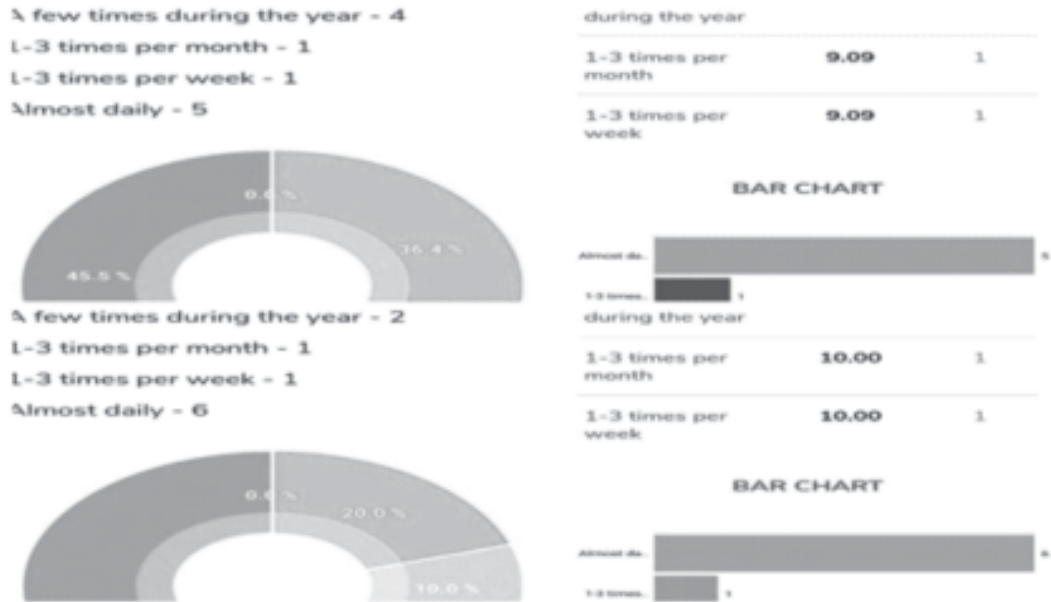


Fig6: Google Survey analysis

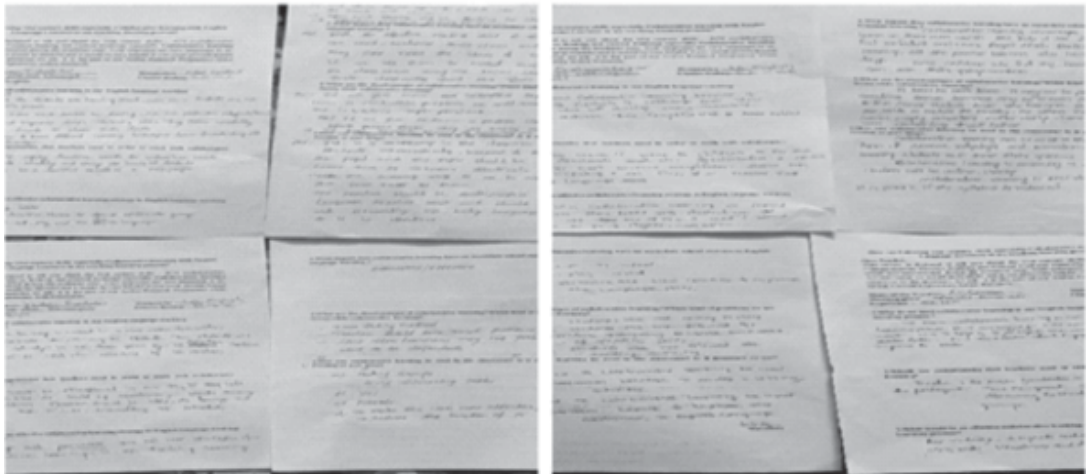


Fig7: Answered Questionnaires

- As per the Students also it is a good learning strategy

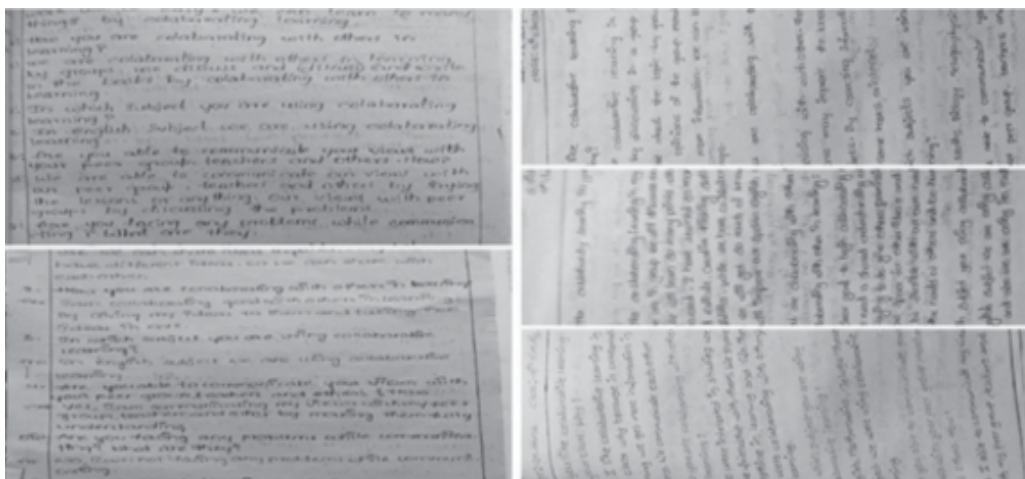


Fig8: Students opinion

- However both students and teachers expressed that collaborative learning has many drawbacks...like
- Practically not suitable for large classes
- Time consuming
- Chances of indiscipline
- Passive participation
- Grouping problem
- Encourages copying
- Increases teacher work etc..

ACTION / INTERVENTION :

By taking into consideration all opinions, strategies learnt in RIESI and other online courses, were followed in the teaching learning process for Collaborative learning. Those are:

Think - Pair-Share: In the class- room students were assigned a paragraph from the lesson to each bench and were asked to read individually and to note main points, doubts, thoughts. Then pairing them with their bench mates, they were asked to arrive with one opinion and share it with class. Then remaining class members asked their doubts, gave feedback. After that teacher also gave feedback.

Simple Jigsaw: Used this strategy with the help of Flipped Classroom technique. A video was shown related to the lesson and they were given some points to discuss the next day. Everyone was asked to gather more information through library

books, newspapers or internet. The next day each group had to explain one part of the video which was assigned to them the previous day. With the help and guidance of their teacher they tried it. Those who explained acted as an expert group and those who listened acted as learning group.



Fig 9: Group Activities

Numbered Heads Together: By making groups with numbers, names of flowers, fruits... etc. students were given one topic to prepare to talk for 5 to 6. In groups they had to discuss and write the points and one member had to come forward to present it before the class. Groups were made randomly.

Fishbowl Debate: Debate on a particular topic. Classes were divided into three groups. One group had to discuss the topic and defend it, while the other group had to argue against it. The third group had to listen and note down the points and at the end of the debate they had to summarize the topic based on their observation.

All these strategies were group activities. Students participated actively in each and every activity. The games used were dumb shell art, Word Building etc..



Fig10: Fishbowl and Simple Jigsaw

REFLECTION

These strategies were used for

- Daily Classroom transaction
- Formative assessment.
- By giving newspaper articles for each group for reading component

Research Observation

- Students were interested in sharing their ideas with their peers.
- They were comfortable with their classmates
- They became good at group management
- They are gaining confidence gradually
- Reading, writing, presentation skills were improved
- Cooperation and coordination also could be seen among students.

Students feedback

After the implementation of 4-5 months, the students expressed that they were:

- More free to express, share their views with their friends and teachers
- Self learning gave them confidence
- With group learning they also learnt self discipline.
- With the help of teachers they were trying to overcome learning anxiety, presentation fear... etc

CONCLUSION

During this action research researcher came to know that action research is an effective professional development tool to introspect on our classroom practices and strategies which in turn helps us to refine our teaching skills to meet the needs of learners' 21st Century Skills. Researcher got positive response and result. It was found that with collaborative language learning 21st century skills among students can be improved. Though in the beginning, they faced problems like Grouping, time management, preparing activities but gradually these issues were resolved. The other conclusion drawn was, collaborative learning engages the learners in a meaningful context; is vital to make our classroom an effective place for learning. Collaborative learning, if successfully implemented, can fulfil the true purpose of education -- nurturing responsible citizens who collaborate with their fellow citizens to address social, economic and other such concerns.

REFERENCES

Smith, Richard and Paula Rebolledo. A Handbook for Exploratory Action Research. British Council: United Kingdom.

Prathikantam, Vinayadhar Raju. Action Research Strategies for Scaffolding Struggling ESL Readers. Prathikantam: Telangana.

Examples of Collaborative Learning or Group work Activities by Innovative Center for Teaching Innovation. Retrieved from <https://teaching.cornell.edu/resource/examples-collaborative-learning-or-group-work-activities>

Prabhu N.S.

(2019). Perceptions in Language Pedagogy.

Hyderabad: Orient BlackSwan Pvt. Ltd.

(pages: xiv + 342) ISBN9789352876396.

(Durairajan, G. (Ed.))

Abstract

It is Indian ethos to take events as they come and not keep a record of them for the posterity. This tradition has been carried into the academic world and hence we see fewer Indian authors publishing their thoughts than they really can. This appears to be a very broad generalization, nonetheless, it has some truth in it.

Recently, a group of scholars met online and discussed the possibility of evolving an indigenous theory of ELT, a theory that can be exclusive to India. The discussion veered around some leading lights who have made substantial contribution to the ELT literature in India. Top among these names was Prof. N S Prabhu whose works every Indian teacher of English is familiar with. His contribution has been substantial, but retrieving his articles was indeed a difficult task till some time ago. Thanks to Prof Geetha Durairajan, she has put in extra effort to collect all his articles, organise them in a proper perspective, write elaborate notes where needed and in successfully persuading the author to write one more paper exclusively for the volume. Geetha deserves to be congratulated for defying the Indian tradition and making a beginning. The book under review is her effort.

Prof Prabhu has been a beacon light in the Indian ELT scene at least for the last half a century. (The first article of his appeared in 1966 in the Hindu). He should also be credited for producing the first course book for teaching English in a meaningful way - English Through Reading. This book came out in 1975 when most schools were happy with simple anthologies that had a few comprehension questions and a couple of grammar exercises. I will not discuss the merits of this book, for it is beyond the scope of this review.

How did the book under review come into being? Let us get it from the author. In his introductory note he says, while he and Geetha were looking at... my various papers from past decades, mostly written for conferences. . . we both realised that a majority of them showed successive stages of continuing thought on two or three aspects of pedagogy, before coming together and coalescing in the two recently written chapters. That led to the idea of arranging the papers in a chronological order.'

The book has twenty-seven plus two papers discussing various aspects of ELT. All the papers discuss the prevalent theories in ELT and relate them with the contemporary classroom situations. Such analysis leads to proposing a set of recommendations (suggestions) for some possible change to improve the teaching/learning situation.

As mentioned earlier, the book has twenty-nine seminal papers and these are arranged chronologically. There could have been other ways of organizing them (thematically) but the choice of the author and the editor need to be respected. Both have also provided a rationale for such sequencing. A quick look at the contents tells one that majority of the papers (20 of them) are devoted to theoretical discussion while five of them focus on materials for use in the classroom and the rest look at learning strategies. (This division is provided more for reasons of statistics and it is not functional.)

Let us take a look at a few papers in the volume and see how there is a conceptual continuity among them.

The first paper that is included in the book was written way back in 1966 when Prof Prabhu had not been formally initiated into the field of ELT. Yet, he has expressed his concerns about the state of language teaching as it existed then. The concerns expressed come as strong intuitions he had which got further strengthened when he received rigorous training at the CIE (The Central Institute of English, today's EFL University). Some of the concerns he has raised relate to unsatisfactory teaching practices, improper materials, wrong priorities in teaching language, mismatch between the objectives and teaching, half-hearted attempts at producing materials, lack of dissemination of information etc. When one goes through this list, one gets a feeling not much has changed to date, at least in some pockets of India. But that is beside the point. What needs to be appreciated is the awareness he had about the need to improve the teaching-learning situation and the constant struggle he put in towards achieving this goal.

I will mention two major contributions that came out as a result of his struggle.

- a. English Through Reading (1975), a course book he produced with Prof W W S Bhaskar; (In many ways, this ushered in CLT before many people in India were even aware of it. And this has remained a model to date on how to construct language exercises.); and
- b. The well-known Bangalore Project which is also called the 'Communicational Project'.

The outcome of the Bangalore Project is seen in the production of a set of tasks and materials for language teaching. The underlying hypothesis of this project is 'Form is best learnt when the learner's attention is on meaning'# (Prabhu 1984). The

project which was tried out in some of the corporation schools in Bangalore and Madras yielded good results. Prof Prabhu designed nearly 200 tasks for the purpose and these are included in his book which was published later in 1987. Full text of the 1984 paper is included in the book.

During mid-eighties and early-nineties, talking about Communicative language teaching was a style statement among ELT practitioners. We were almost blind to many of its shortcomings, and often we would swear by its usefulness. Around this period, Prof Prabhu was teaching at the National University of Singapore and wrote a paper 'Communicative Teaching: "Communicative" in what sense?' This is one of the very well argued papers where the author delineates the meaning of the word 'communicative' from three different perspectives. Finally, he postulates five concepts which question the basic premise of CLT. One of these that appeals to me strongly is: "... how can we ensure that the language experience provided in the classroom leads to an ability for language use outside the classroom?" A simple question, but loaded with thought. This question can be extrapolated with many of our present day classroom practices as well.

There are two points that strike the reader strongly. The argument on English as a world language, but with severely defined domains is the first one. This comes as a fresh breath of air, when the promotion of English is progressing unchecked. Though English is recognized as a world language, it has no place as an imperialistic language, exercising authority over its users. It certainly rules the world of academics, science, technology and research, but it cannot claim its rights to promote social sophistication. It remains a second language in most of the non-English speaking countries. Another equally interesting point he discusses is the role of textbooks in language teaching. Textbooks are like readymade garments, they apparently fit everyone, but no one is happy the way they fit. We need to realise that the textbook is not the ultimate source of learning. The contents are supplemented by what the learner brings into play while interacting with the contents. Prabhu calls learner inputs as 'investment' a loaded and an appropriate word. (I will not elaborate on this). So learning depends on 'optimal approximation between the materials and learners' current states...' This questions the premise of prescribing one textbook across a wide range of learners. Further, the materials produced suffer because they necessarily need to be 'mediated' by a teacher in the classroom. This mediation varies widely, allowing for differences in learning. Under such circumstances, is it possible to suggest open materials which allow a teacher to make a choice of materials and strategies to use? Materials need to be sources of learning and not the goal of learning.

I will take a short leap and discuss the next paper 'There is no Best Method – Why?' When one reads the title, one is perhaps surprised for we have often heard

scholars eulogizing the CLT approach to language teaching. We are also reminded of Kumaravadivelu, when he says methods have always competed with each other claiming to do better than their predecessors. So he advocates, not to have any method, but to look beyond methods. Prof Prabhu in this article, talks about how the method (which is used as an inclusive term) as context bound. ‘. . . different methods are best for different people – or different teaching contexts.’ This stand helps us to realise two important factors:

- a. There is something good in every method; and
- b. Switching from method to method depending on the context provides greater freedom to the practitioner (teacher).

A combination of the two factors helps us accept eclecticism. But eclecticism is not a random mixing of methods but a judicious blending of the methods after understanding the truth (principles) hidden in each method. A method can be considered ‘best’ when it works (becomes plausible) from the learner point of view. A teacher who understands this can move from one method to the other wisely and be true to the profession. This argument takes us to the last paper (written exclusively for this volume) ‘Plausibility’.

The first half of this paper is in the form of reflection on how he developed an interest in language teaching and changed his perception on language learning strategies. Such an understanding (along with the experience of producing the course book *English Through Reading*) helped him formulate the hypothesis for the Bangalore project. In the course of interactions with various scholars, he received a letter from Allen Beretta quoting two American Scholars who made him realise the value of the term ‘plausibility’. ‘Plausibility is not a fixed concept, but a developing perception.’ This is an awareness raising strategy that helps us improve ourselves constantly. When we look at the various approaches through the lens of plausibility, the larger truth becomes evident. We realise that teaching need not always be evidenced by tangible learning outputs. Learning happens as ‘invisible comprehension’ before ‘evidence can appear in the form of production’. This evidence in learning need not always be tangible (as pattern practice) but an unperceived gain in competence. Learners’ ability to face a challenge is an evidence of learning (Prof Prabhu provides several illustrations of this). Plausibility is a developmental process and ties up with modern concept of CPD.

I have to conclude my review with an apology. I have taken the liberty of summarizing a few thought provoking articles by a doyen in a few sentences and at that not being sure whether the summaries have been correct. I request the author and the editor to pardon me if there have been errors of commission.

In the end, I like to say, the book is an invaluable treasure for any student pursuing research in ELT and teacher education. It provides a graphic picture of the development of the science from its infancy to the present day. What more can one ask for?

References

- Kumraravadelu. B. (2001). 'Towards a Postmethod Pedagogy', in TESOL Quarterly. Vol 35; No 4. (pp 537-560)
- Prabhu and Bhaskar. (1975) English Through Reading, Madras: MacMillan.
- Prabhu N S (1984) 'Procedural Syllabuses' in John A S Read (Ed.), Trends in Language Syllabus Design. Anthology Series 13. Singapore: Singapore University Press. (This paper is included in the book)
- Prabhu N S. (1987). Second Language Pedagogy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING: FOSTERING THE NEEDS OF THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNERS

Dr. Charul Jain

Associate Professor

Department of English

The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

Vadodara 390002

charul.jain-eng@msubaroda.ac.ins

Abstract

Collaborative learning where learners work in groups moving towards accomplishment of shared learner goals, each being responsible for his/her learning and simultaneously contributing to the learning of all the group members promises a way forward in learning language skills in the 21st Century. It owes its genesis in principle to the Communicative Language teaching (Hymes 1972, Halliday 1970, Swain 1985) and the Social Cognitivist theories of language learning put forward by Vygotsky (1978, 1981) contending that learning takes place in the zone of proximal development and scaffolding provided by peers and adults facilitates in the process. Krashen's (1981, 1982, 1985, 2003) comprehensible input hypothesis suggests the necessity of language learning through progressive steps of building on the previous knowledge. The paper looks at the salient features of collaborative learning and argues that to address the skills needed by the 21st century learner, collaborative learning is the most suited language learning model.

Keywords

Collaborative learning, Social cognitivist theories, Input hypothesis, 21st century learning skills

Introduction

When communicative language teaching was introduced, it opened pathways for bringing about a change in the teaching and learning of second language. It allowed for introduction of various methods and techniques for teaching language which focussed on enhancing communicative abilities of students in the target language. Shifting focus from grammar, translation and strict adherence to structures of language, the approach laid emphasis on the ability to communicate in the second language and making meaning through communication. (Hymes 1972, Halliday 1970, Swain 1985)



Regional Institute of English, South India

Innanabharathi Campus, Bangalore – 560 056

Guidelines for submission of articles to 'The English Classroom' journal

General Instructions

1. Articles submitted to 'English Classroom' should be original and unpublished.
2. The RIESI will not be responsible for any copyright material used in the article.
3. Articles around 2500 to 3000 words in length may be submitted to be considered for publication in the journal.
4. A separate Abstract of 100 to 150 words in length should be submitted along with the article.
5. A list of 5 to 10 Key words should accompany the article.
6. Author's name, affiliation, address and email id should be included in the article.

The Content of the article

1. Font: Times New Roman
2. Font size: 12, double space
3. Wherever necessary, use headings, subheadings, tables and diagrams to make the reading of your article easier.

Referencing conventions

1. Please follow APA format for referencing.
2. Alphabetical entries by authors' last names should be made in the reference list. Multiple works by the same author should be listed chronologically.
3. The format to be followed for referencing is given below:

Book by an author

Prabhu, N. S. (1987). Second Language Pedagogy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chapter in an edited book

Hamp-Lyons, L. (2006). 'Feedback in portfolio-based writing courses.' In K. Hyland and F. Hyland (Eds.) Feedback in Second Language Writing:

Contexts and Issues. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 140-161.

Article in a journal Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). TESOL Methods: Changing Tracks, Challenging Trends. TESOL Quarterly. 40(1): 59-81.

Internet source

Richards, J. C. (2005). Communicative Language Teaching Today. Retrieved from www.cambridge.com.mx/site/EXTRAS/jack-CD.pdf dated 23 November 2008.

4. References in the text: Author's last name, year and page number (if necessary). e.g. (Chakrakodi 2015: 54)

Note: Authors are requested to subscribe the journal.

EDITOR

The English Classroom

Bi-annual journal

Call for papers

Volume 24, Number 2, December 2021

The Regional Institute of English, South India, Bengaluru has been publishing 'The English Classroom', a bi-annual journal (ISSN 2250-2831) for more than 20 years now. We have published scholarly articles on a range of topics in English Language Education over the years.

Majority of the Subscribers to our journal include practising teachers, teacher educators and research scholars. The Journal has helped us in reaching out to them, disseminating knowledge in the field and impacting their classroom practices and professional learning.

In this regard, articles are invited on your area of interest in ELT to our next issue, Volume 24, No 2 to be published in December 2021.

Kindly send your article on or before September 30, 2021 by email to:
riesi.bangalore@gmail.com

The English Classroom

Bi-annual journal

Publisher :

Regional Institute of English, South India
Bengaluru- 560 056

About the Journal :

RIESI, Bengaluru, is one of the most important centres for English Languages Teaching and Teacher Training and the institute has acquired a reputation for academic excellence in the regional, national and international arena. Over the years.

The English Classroom reflects its expanding interest in the field of ELT and it is published in June and December of every year.

Aim:

The aim of this Journal is to provide a forum for teachers, teacher educators, educational administrators and research scholars in the field to share their classroom experience and research findings.

Peer Review policy :

'The English Classroom' is a peer reviewed journal. The articles submitted to the journal are subjected to blind review by experts in the field.

Subscription :

Single Issue : Rs. 100.00

1 Year : Rs. 200.00

2 Year : Rs. 400.00

Please make the Demand Draft payable to

The Director

Regional Institute of English, South India
Jnanabharathi Campus, Bengaluru-560056
Phone : 91-080-2321 3243/23218452

For NEFT Payment : Bank : Canara Bank

Branch : Sports Authority of India Bangalore.

A/c. No. 8411101001128

IFSC Code : CNRB0008411



Regional Institute of English, South India

Jnanabharathi Campus, Bangalore – 560 056

Purchase/Subscription Order Form

The Director

Regional Institute of English, South India
Jnanabharathi Campus
Bengaluru-560056

Sir/Madam,

I would like to subscribe to 'The English Classroom' journal for ½ years, starting with Volume _____ No. _____ Year _____

Name : _____

Address :
(in block letters)

District : _____ State : _____ Pincode : _____

Contact No. _____ Email Id: _____

I enclose the remittance for Rs. _____

NEFT/D.D.No. _____

Bank: _____

Place : _____

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully

Date :

Payment to be made by DD payable to :
The Director Regional Institute of English, South India

By NEFT to
Bank : Cannara Bank, SAI Branch
Account No. 8411101001128
IFSC Code : CNRB0008411