THE JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE TEACHING

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THE JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

The English Language Teachers' Association of India

(A Peer-Reviewed Journal)

ATHENA - Academic Thinking Environment for Aspirants: A writing centre model – Identifying and uplifting slow learners in the English classroom – Culture and language learning through short stories – Vocubulary enrichment through jargon – 'Brochure' as a resource for language learning – Top-down processing of inputs in acquiring focussed listening skills by engineering students

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

Periodicity

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

Contributions

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

Length : About 1500 words for theoretical articles and for others about 450 words.

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

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

Articles should be sent only an an email attachment – **AS A WORD DOCUMENT** to

eltai_india@yahoo.co.in

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

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

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

Objectives of the Association

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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The Journal of English Language Teaching (India)

Volume LVII   Number 1   January–February, 2015

Editorial

Welcome to the first number of a new volume of our journal! Most of the articles in this issue are practical in nature and describe classroom procedures for developing communication skills in English. Besides the regular column on a useful speaking activity, we have included a brief report on a series of workshops on virtual learning conducted by ELTAI and supported by IATEFL, UK.

The first article by Porselvi discusses the importance of academic writing skills and reports an experiment using what the author calls "an unique writing centre model" called ATHENA – an academic thinking environment for aspirants. She reports on how two experiments carried out with first year postgraduate students based on the syllabus for academic writing designed by her and using the writing centre model helped the students to explore and experience the different stages of writing.

The second article in this issue by Nair and Mathew is rather theoretical and highlights the challenges and difficulties in identifying slow learners in the English classrooms and discusses ways of "uplifting" them. The major issue, according to them, is the lack of a mechanism to help these students, as they do not come under the category of learners with special needs and therefore do not receive appropriate intervention by their teachers. They thus feel neglected, leading to learning gaps and psychological problems such as a sense of insecurity and lack of self-confidence to learn.

The next article by Nagamani presents the classroom teaching procedure to make students explore the cultural content of a well-known short story. She maintains that the exploration of culture helps students to hone their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in meaningful and interesting ways. She concludes by stating that including the study of culture in language learning "brings a new dimension" in ESL teaching.

The following article on vocabulary enrichment by Kala Chandrasekaran brings to the fore the distinction between passive and active vocabulary and, in particular, the dormant passive vocabulary among rural and semi-urban students. She then proposes using jargon to turn the passive vocabulary into active. The teaching procedure outlined by the author in her article is claimed to help students develop strategies for building their vocabulary and increasing their fluency.

The fifth piece by Sushma Brahmadevara highlights the significant ways in which brochures can be exploited in the language classroom through a range of activities for promoting language skills, especially speaking and writing. She also outlines the teaching procedure involving group work activities and tasks.

The last article by Athista argues the need for formal training for improving listening skills of professional students through focused listening activities. She distinguishes between casual and focused listening, and between top-down and bottom-up processing in respect of listening. She then reports on an experiment she conducted in three stages with students of engineering using Malala's speech at the UN as the listening text. In the process, she also outlines what active listening involves.

P. N. Ramani
Editor

ATHENA - Academic Thinking Environment for Aspirants: A writing centre model

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ABSTRACT

This paper throws light on the importance of a writing centre in an academic institution. The researcher has carried out a pilot study on the need to hone the writing skills of students through the writing centre model. Two experiments were carried out in the first year post-graduate class. An innovative model was formulated to cater to the needs of the students. The learners understood the importance of reading, writing, reviewing and rewriting. They recognised the value of teamwork and peer observation. Above all, the aspiring learners identified an academic thinking environment inspired by ATHENA.

Introduction

This paper highlights the significance of academic writing and the impact of a unique writing centre model called *ATHENA* through experimentation, observation and inference carried out among the first year postgraduate (M.A English Literature) students. *Athena* is the Greek goddess of wisdom, inspiration, courage and skill. Quite interestingly, the name coincides with an acronym "**a**cademic **th**inking **en**vironment for **a**spirants" where young learners are encouraged to hone their academic thinking and presentation skills.

The Writing Centre Model

The writing centre model is based on an academic writing syllabus designed by the researcher. The objectives of the syllabus are:

- to help the students identify a toolkit approach to academic writing;

- to train the students gather, interpret, analyze and synthesize data or information;

- to introduce the essential characteristics, major trends and techniques in research through reading and writing;

- to facilitate a scientific approach to the research process, to write, rewrite, to document, edit, publish and present papers.

The five units of the syllabus are: information accession, documentation, composition, analysis of writing in academic journals and practice in research writing. Information Accession deals with the prewriting techniques such as note-making, note-taking, brainstorming and mind
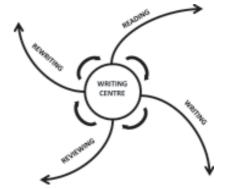
mapping. Definition, analysis, interpretation and argument are identified as different stages of representing data or the management of information. The academic integrity is emphasized through the second unit on documentation. In order to avoid plagiarism the learners are taught to cite resources using parenthetical documentation, bibliography and annotated bibliography.

The third unit on composition focuses on the writing process or synthesizing of information. It includes 'paragraphing' underscoring coherence and cohesion; writing the topic sentence; explanation and expansion; illustration; introduction and conclusion. The use of vocabulary, register and mechanics of writing are also discussed in this unit. Unit four deals with the analysis of writing in academic journals where students are expected to read articles in academic journals and magazines and identify different components of research writing and offer commentary/critique on a) text structure b) argument c) Language and d) Content. Unit five includes practice in research writing. The learners are expected to choose the primary source (a text preferably published/ a theory introduced within the past five years) and the relevant secondary sources. They are expected to prepare a literary journal. The process includes: writing for publication; peer observation and editing/proof – reading.

A writing centre is a place/space where the academicians, both students and faculty understand the importance of thinking skills and communication skills especially good writing. It provides space for reading, understanding and analytical thinking, creates a professional outlook to writing among students, facilitates peer-learning, enhances the teaching skills of the student instructors and motivates people to help one another on the professional level. Many universities across the world have writing centres.

The unique writing centre model called *ATHENA* helps the learners to explore their academic writing skills. The paradigm has four branches. They are reading, writing, reviewing and rewriting. Reading enhances writing. The more the scholar reads, the better s/he writes. Reading the primary and secondary sources help the learner to write scholarly articles. Writing is a skill which is honed only through practice. Once a scholar has written an article, s/he must give it for reviewing. Peer observation and scholarly interventions of the teacher will help the students to refine the article in terms of both content and structure. The next important stage in writing an article is rewriting. Writing several drafts will definitely improve the quality of the article.

Athena-Academic THinking ENvironment for Aspirants model envisioned by the researcher in this study

The researcher conducted two experiments based on the proposed paradigm.

Experiment I

In Experiment I, the academic writing students donned the role of the writing assistants for III BA English literature students. The learners were introduced to the various facets of academic writing in unit one, two and three. When the learners were confident of their theory it was time for praxis. The assignments of the III UG students were given to the I PG students for reviewing. The PG students reviewed the assignments using the techniques they learnt in the academic writing course. After the peer observation questionnaires were distributed to the III BA students and the I MA students. The questionnaire given to the I MA students had five questions. They were: what are the different components of academic writing did you check? What is your feedback on the assignment that you corrected? What did you learn from this writing centre model? Give your comments. Why do you think it is necessary to have a Writing Centre? Give your comments and any other suggestion. The answers provided by the students are summarized below:

The different components of academic writing the students identified were content, structure, coherence and cohesion of ideas; punctuation, grammar, spelling and syntax; documentation, paragraph development,

topic sentence; the guidelines in the 7th edition of the MLA Handbook; introduction, conclusion and the argument; and so on.

The students' feedback on the assignments revealed their understanding of academic writing skills: writing assistant felt that his ward had a lot of ideas but they were not focussed; there was no clear distinction between creative and critical writing; students tend to summarize the text rather than analyzing the text; many students felt that their wards made careless mistakes in grammar, vocabulary and spelling.

Athena differs from the other writing centre models in the following ways: the writing assistants are thoroughly trained through workshop modules in the academic writing classrooms. *Athena* model helped the academic writing students to learn the following aspects: it helped them to put to praxis, the skills they learnt in the academic writing class; they enjoyed the role of a writing mentor to their juniors; they learnt to analyse articles and give suggestions; they became conscious of the common errors; they discovered a scientific approach to academic writing.

The students believe that a writing centre is necessary for the following reasons: helping the students with the basic knowledge of writing; for keeping track of the contemporary research scenario; helping the students to learn proper syntax and analytical skills; help the budding teachers to apply their understanding of the subject; identified as an indispensible part of academic and creative writing; helps mutual

learning among the writing assistants and their wards; it gives confidence in communicating one's ideas and so on.

The writing centre is visualised as a place where recent trends in research are discussed. It provides an ambience for academic discussions among the teachers, the students and the experts. It promotes new ideas, theories and techniques. It is an academic space that encourages deliberations on new areas of study.

The Questionnaire given to the III BA students included the different components of academic writing to be reviewed: spelling, grammar, punctuation, writing the thesis statement, paragraph development, sentence construction, cohesion and coherence, bibliography and methodology. The other questions are: what did you learn from the writing centre model? Give your comments; why do you think it is necessary to have a writing centre? Give your comments and any other suggestions.

The III year students explained that the writing centre model helped them to correct the common mistakes in writing. It was an eye-opener in the area of research. They learnt to write assignments in a systematic manner. It helped them to hone the writing skills with regard to content, structure, grammar and vocabulary.

Experiment II

In Experiment II, the academic writing students (40 in number) were divided into five groups. The course teacher encouraged them to select topics/texts with contemporary relevance. The students were expected to write articles and bring out a journal. The learners had several discussions in groups and identified broad areas of study. They were: Post-colonialism, Eco-criticism, Children's literature, Diasporic literature, Australian literature and Subaltern literature. Each group consisted of eight members and an editor/ team leader.

The students rewrote their drafts several times to improve the quality of their articles. The rough drafts were reviewed by the course teacher and also by their peers. The five journals that were brought out by the students were titled: Roots- A Journal on post-colonialism and eco-criticism by post-graduate students, Quest- a Peer Group Journal on Diasporic literature, A Sojourn Down Under- a journal on Australian literature, Fantasia- a literary journal on children's literature and Aura- a journal on subaltern literature.

ATHENA, a writing centre model, facilitates workshop-type environment for the acquisition of academic writing skills. Some of the observations and findings of the experiments are:

1. At the outset, the students unlearn the cut-and-paste methods and give serious thought to written communication.

2. The learners get hands-on experience on exploring the various stages in the process of writing.

3. They learn to avoid plagiarism.

4. They show more interest in reading the primary sources and the secondary sources.

5. They learn techniques of editing.

ATHENA is a holistic approach to academic writing where the learners discover teamwork, leadership and win-win attitude towards life.

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Identifying and uplifting slow learners in the English classroom

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ABSTRACT
Slow learners are students with borderline intellectual functioning and their education causes a great challenge to teachers and academic administrators. As they do not clearly belong to the category requiring special education services, they are often neglected in schools and their learning problems are not seriously discussed or debated. There are no intervention or accommodation plans for slow learners in most schools. Hence, this group does not receive any specialized education services by the governments or academic institutions as they are considered normal students. In most situations, it becomes the sole responsibility of the teachers to handle such struggling students in their classrooms.

Introduction

The learning problems of slow learners are almost the same across the world. They belong to an identifiable group of children for whom only certain unique instructional methods are effective in the regular class. They may not benefit much from the usual teaching techniques employed in the class. The lessons, planned for the majority of students, often fail to meet the specific learning needs of the slow learners. As a result, they lose their academic motivation and are left to struggle to make progress in their studies.

Slow learners are students with below average cognitive abilities. They are not disabled, but they struggle to cope with the traditional academic demands of the regular classroom. They take longer time than their peers to understand a new concept and need extra support to do their schoolwork. Mercer (1996) defines slow learners as children who are doing poorly in school, yet not eligible for special education. According to Griffin (1978), slow learners are students who learn more slowly than their peers. At the same time, they do not have a disability requiring special education. Although slow learners may have special educational needs, they do not fit neatly into the special education system. They are not averse to learning, nor do they have any learning disabilities.

How to identify slow learners

It is a difficult task for teachers to identify slow learners. The learning difficulties of the visually, auditorily or otherwise physically challenged are clearly visible to the observer but the handicaps of the slow learners are not always so obvious. Proper identification of all students with learning problems and early interventions would greatly reduce the need for remedial programmes. Misidentification or improper labelling of students with learning problems can have negative consequences. Unlike students with more visible and identifiable characteristics, slow learners often have good physical and motor skills. As a result, they often go unnoticed until the result of a formal assessment or test is announced. A systematic or scientific way of identifying slow learners does not exist in most schools in India. There is no nationwide programme in our country to deal with the learning difficulties of this large minority group. It is up to the teachers to identify the slow learners in their classrooms and to do their best to meet the needs of these struggling students. So there should be a comprehensive plan in every school to create greater awareness of the need for this programmme among teachers and parents and to implement necessary support services. The following strategies can be used to identify slow learners.

Observation

Observation is a basic quality every teacher should possess. It is one of the oldest and the most effective methods of learning about children. As Genesse and Upshur (1996) state, "Observation is basic to assessing human skills and behaviour" (p.77). With constant classroom observation, a teacher can understand and evaluate each student's strengths and weaknesses. It also gives vital information about their interests, needs, experiences, abilities and learning styles. A close watch of children engaged in a classroom activity can reveal to us how creative, active and emotional they are. The signs of slow learning are apparent when students struggle with the learning tasks. At the same time, they may not have any other obvious attitudinal or motivational difficulties. Teachers can use the information gathered from observing their children to individualize the instruction for the slow learners in their class. By ongoing classroom observation, teachers can notice various signs of difficulties some students may face in cognitive skills, language development, temperament, and socio-emotional development.

Assessments

Classroom assessment is the process of observing, recording and documenting students' academic progress and behaviour. It gives vital information about each student's unique needs, interests, strengths and weaknesses. During the assessment process, teachers closely monitor the various actions of students on a daily basis in order to understand them better. This will help them gain insights into each student's learning styles and needs. The basic purpose of assessment is to collect

information about individual students to know more about each one. Students' individual problems can be identified through proper assessment. When a problem arises in the class, it should be noted down immediately and plans should be made to remedy it. For a proper identification of slow learners, the emotional aspects of the children under observation should also be assessed. The emotional disturbances can sometimes be a reflection of their learning problems. Some slow learners may have complex and challenging behaviours. Such behaviour is likely to prevent the teacher from maintaining discipline in the class.

Evaluation

Evaluation and assessment are sometimes used interchangeably. But their processes are different. Evaluation is the process of reviewing the information gathered through assessment. These activities include tasks such as formal teacher-made tests, curriculum-embedded tests, oral questions, and a wide variety of other cognitive and psychomotor performance activities. It also includes assessment of motivational and attitudinal variables and of learning skills. Teachers can rely on a wide range of formal and informal evaluative measures. Formal evaluative activities include class tests on language skills and various other oral and written exercises like note taking, assignments, projects and presentations. Informal activities include pair, group or whole class discussions, debates, teacher questionings, marking or commenting on various kinds of performance, checklists

and observation of learning activities and student responses to classrooms tasks.

Questionnaires and interviews

Questionnaires and interviews are two important research techniques that help teachers to tap into the knowledge, opinions, learning strategies and problems of their learners. When these techniques are applied, learners get a chance to express their needs and difficulties in learning. Teachers can use these techniques with their students, co-teachers and parents and record the information for subsequent reflection and analysis. They also help teachers to elicit factual data about individual students. Learner interview is an effective way of getting closer to the learners' individual needs and difficulties. A great advantage of learner interview is that teachers can also make other observations about the learner's attitude, nonverbal behaviour, home background, etc. Hence, it is more productive than a questionnaire.

Case study

Case study is one of the most effective methods of identifying slow learners. By this technique, the family background of a child, his/her early life, home environment, etc. can be understood. It also helps to find out the various learning and behavioral problems of a student. Case studies play an important role in second language classroom research. Teachers can utilize a wide range of methods for collecting and analyzing data, rather than being restricted to a single procedure. It can done by

observing and finding the everyday situation of slow learners in English classroom and the various challenges they face in learning. In short, a case study is not always limited to an individual language learner. It can be applied for the study of a group of students in a class, a whole class, a whole school or even an entire chain of schools in a district.

Strategies to support slow learners in the English classroom

It is a common belief that slow learners in the regular classroom are neither rare nor unique. Therefore, no single technique is sufficient to deal with them. They need special instructional pacing, frequent feedback, corrective instruction, and modified materials to keep pace with the rest of the class. There should be a great variety in instructional materials and presentation methods to circumvent their learning deficiency and to keep them actively engaged in the learning process. When the content of the lesson is more concrete, visual, familiar, and personally significant, they begin to show interest in it. Teachers should make use of every opportunity to encourage them and reinforce the idea that they are improving. It is also important to check for understanding at each point of learning, and give them ample opportunities to practise, and review the target language, both inside and outside the classroom.

Motivation

Cognition and motivation are the two most important factors that lead to success in learning. It is only when motivational and cognitive factors interact and jointly influence, effective learning takes place. Students need both the cognitive skill and the motivational will to do well in school (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). Of the two, motivation has a dominant role in student success. Student motivation is an enabler for academic success. Lack of academic motivation is a real problem for slow learners and a great challenge for teachers. Slow learners need strong motivation, both extrinsic and intrinsic, and proper guidance to build self-confidence. They often get frustrated and stop proceeding with the activities when the task is too difficult for them. If teachers can break down the task into smaller units, they can build confidence in slow learners and make the tasks achievable for them.

Varied instructional strategies

It is a challenge for teachers to accommodate the variability of students into their instructional strategies. As students differ in their interests, knowledge, skills and learning styles, teachers need to introduce a variety of instructional approaches and methods in their class. A single method of teaching cannot accommodate all students with different learning styles. So it is essential to ensure variety in instructional strategies to engage students with various intelligences and to achieve instructional goals. Every teacher should have a variety of methods to meet all of their instructional goals. To deal with the slow learners, teachers should develop various instructional strategies that specifically address their learning needs.

Accommodations and adaptations

Instructional accommodations and adaptations are effective measures in catering to the learning difficulties of slow learners. They are not just for the struggling students. When proper accommodations are made, all students equally benefit. Hallahan, et al. (2012) defines accommodations as "changes in instruction that don't significantly change the content or conceptual difficulty level of the curriculum" (p.38). Accommodations or adaptations neither dilute the essence of the lesson nor make any changes to the core curriculum. They do not fundamentally alter or lower standards in instructional level or content. But some changes are made in the lesson delivery method in order to give better opportunities for all students who differ in their learning styles.

Learners' interests and experiences

A successful educator is one who can transfer the learners' common experiences into meaningful learning situations. The lessons planned for slow learners should be engaging and facilitate the twenty-first century learning skills such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity. To quote Nair (2013), "Texts which leave space for the learners to engage themselves in, and lead them to higher order cognitive realms where they are "willfully forced" to employ critical thinking skills and argumentative skills alone can develop in them language competence" (p.69). Slow learners, in general, cannot understand things, which are outside the range of their immediate experience. Therefore, teachers should try to develop lessons that incorporate students' interests, needs and experiences. This will make the students feel that the lessons are designed for them with their specific interests and experiences in mind. They do better in the class where the content of the lesson is presented in a concrete and experiential manner. When teachers give simple and concrete examples from everyday life situations, they learn better.

Collaborative Learning

Language acquisition is essentially a social process. It is mainly by interacting with others that people develop fluency in a language. Collaborative learning is a joint attempt in which students work in a group, mutually searching for understanding, solutions, meanings, or trying to make a product. It is a situation in which two or more people learn or attempt to learn something together. It is a significant shift from the typical teacher-centred classrooms. It facilitates the creation of an intellectual synergy of many minds coming to bear on a problem. This kind of mutual engagement in a common endeavour can lead to mutual exploration, meaning-making, and instant feedback from peers. Most collaborative learning activities focus on students' exploration of the course material rather than the teacher's presentation of it. In a collaborative learning situation, a teacher functions as an expert designer of intellectual experiences for his/her students

and not as a mere transmitter of knowledge. The teacher is a facilitator who monitors the students who are engaged in discussions and active work with the course material.

Integrating Communication Technologies

The rapid evolution in educational technology is offering ample opportunities for students in personalized learning. Students are now able to access the rich multimedia content, the vast fund of online resources, social networking tools, digital games, etc. to make their learning more interesting and independent. The growth and development of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has influenced every field of education. It plays a major role in second language acquisition. By using the Internet and other communication technologies, students can be easily motivated and involved in many learning activities which are related to their daily life. The Internet offers unlimited access to vast amounts of authentic materials on any topic and gives enormous opportunities to interact with any one across the globe. Students can now search for information and clear their doubts without depending much on their teachers.

Feedback

Feedback is a great reinforcer for learning and achievement. It has a major influence on students' academic success. A positive feedback has the power to initiate further action and it improves both teaching and learning. It helps students understand the subject better and gives them clear guidance on how to proceed with their learning. But it is very important to ensure that the feedback given in class is always constructive. It contributes to learning only when the learner reflects on the lesson and works on the action points. The aim of giving feedback is not just to focus on students' language errors. Instead, it should be aimed at motivating them and showing clearly the ways in which they can improve. The focus should be on progress rather than deficiency. With proper feedback a student is given multiple opportunities for self reflection. It also gives them greater self-satisfaction and higher aspirations for future achievement. Suggestions for improvement should be highlighted as to how students can close the gap between their current level and the level they are trying to reach. Teachers should try to create a culture of success in class where students can make achievements by improving their current performance, rather than trying to compare themselves with their peers.

Affective teaching

Although the concept of affective teaching is not a new issue in education, it is not widely utilized by teachers in the regular classroom. Affective teaching is the democratic process of interacting with students in a caring, conscious, and committed way. In other words, it is a way of teaching on two levels – intellectual and emotional – using both the brain and the heart. Developing and exploiting affective strategies help to create a positive learning

atmosphere in class. It can be done by encouraging learners to identify achievable aims and work towards autonomous learning, through personalizing activities and collaborative tasks. Teachers should use some relaxation techniques to lower the anxiety level and to create interest in learning. Slow learners, who have low self-esteem and no motivation, need an affective stimulation to foster interest in studies. By activating the affective domain, teachers can awaken their curiosity and interest in learning.

Affective teaching requires an open and free communication with students to facilitate authentic interpersonal relationships. When teachers interact with students in an atmosphere of openness, the emotional base of students is honoured and accepted without any prejudice. The emotional impact of teachers' behaviour can influence learning because it helps to instill in students a love for the subject they study. When the teacher provides warmth, acceptance and empathy, the learners feel free to regard their emotions and personal meanings as legitimate content in learning.

Conclusion

Slow learners are not students who are destined to fail. With proper identification and effective support services, teachers can solve most of the problems they face in language acquisition. It is important that teachers should learn more about the specific learning and personal problems that can cause a child to become a slow leaner and make necessary accommodation strategies to address their individual problems.

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Culture and language learning through short stories

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ABSTRACT
Socio-linguists and anthropologists have for long recognized that language, its form and use echo cultural values of the society in which the language is spoken. According to Krasner, linguistic competence alone is not enough for learners of a language to be competent in that language. It is here that culture occupies an important place. For effective communication, the language used must be related with culturally appropriate behavior. Culture differs from society to society and these cultural variables should be brought to the notice of the students and explained clearly to make learning English a satisfying and complete process. Language teaching should also focus on teaching culture. Culture plays a vital role in language teaching because some words in the foreign language refer to specific meanings in a particular society, which may not be understood by the members of other cultures unless the cultural context is explained.

Key words: Culture, Cultural Variables, Communication

Introduction

Teaching language through culture is an interesting approach, to cultivate zeal and enthusiasm among the learners. To achieve this objective, a short story which has more cultural components of the U.S. culture is considered. The story is culturally interpreted and the exercises that follow the lesson are designed to make the learners understand the culture as described in the story. The main reason for selecting short stories is to ensure that the story is completed in less than three class periods, so that the learners do not lose their interest. The exercises are also designed with great care to improve the learners'

cognitive abilities while learning English as a second language. The widely read short story 'The Gift of the Magi' by O. Henry is selected for cultural interpretation.

The teacher uses questions that either talk about the main theme of the story or about the main character in the story as part of warm-up. Next, the students are made aware of the author, his writings and his major achievements. If there is any background information which has to be shared with the students, the teacher shares the information, to familiarize them with all the details of the author and the background to the story. The students are familiarized why the lesson is taught to them, and what

important things they need to understand. These are clearly explained in the objectives section.

Difficult words in the text are given under the section titled 'Glossary'. A case study is introduced after the lesson as part of the exercise. In this case study, the present short story has to be compared and contrasted with another short story written by a different author, who belongs to a different country and culture. This will enable the students not only to read another short story, but also to find out the cultural differences that crop up in the stories.

To analyze the learners' understanding abilities of the story, a few short answer questions are prepared. These questions revolve purely around the short story, major characters, plot and storytelling techniques used by the author. The learners' ability to understand the culture as described in the story is tested. Questions revolve around the cultural component as highlighted in the story. Though the questions are included to test the written skills of the learners, the teacher can utilize the same questions to improve their speaking abilities as well.

A separate speaking assignment is also created. This focuses on the main character and/or the main theme of the story. This speaking assignment is created with a major premise that language learning should be continuous and it should not be restricted to the classroom. Thus, the speaking activity involves not only the students, but also their family members and neighbours. Reading comprehension of the students is also tested. An interesting or an important paragraph that has adequate examples of culture, as reflected in the story, is preferred to other paragraphs and questions are framed accordingly. An assignment that closely contemplates the lesson is given. Finally, snippets of the culture highlighted in the story are also provided for students to understand the story better. This will also facilitate them to know more about a particular culture, be it target culture or their own culture.

Culture is considered as a fifth skill, a hidden component in any language class. This kind of cultural interpretation of the story gives the learners better practice in all the four language skills, and also the hidden component in any language class that is culture. A sample cultural interpretation of the story 'The Gift of the Magi' is given to reinforce and highlight the role of culture in English language learning.

Teaching Procedure

Warm-up

1. Recollect the best gift you have ever received. Think about it and speak to the class.

2. Imagine a situation when you want to give a gift to your beloved person (mother, father, husband, and friend) but you don't have money. What do you do?

3. How is Christmas celebrated in your country?

About the Author

William Sydney Porter (1862-1910), popular with his pseudonym O. Henry, is an American short-story writer. His works are known for ironic plots and unexpected twists at the end. His famous stories, such as 'The Gift of the Magi,' 'The Furnished Room,' and 'The Ransom of Red Chief,' are simple in plot but make effective use of contradictory coincidences to create ironic endings. He produced ten collections of stories like 'Cabbages and Kings' (1904); 'The Four Million' (1906); 'Heart of the West' (1907); 'The Trimmed Lamp' (1907); 'The Gentle Grafter' (1908); 'The Voice of the City' (1908); 'Options' (1909); 'Roads of Destiny' (1909); 'Whirligigs' (1910), and 'Strictly Business' (1910) in less than a decade. The collections 'Sixes and Sevens' (1911), 'Rolling Stones' (1912), and 'Waifs and Strays' (1917) were published posthumously. In the year 1919 the Society of Arts and Sciences founded O. Henry Memorial Awards for the best American short stories published each year. O. Henry published over 500 short stories in many widely read periodicals and became one of the most popular writers in America.

Objectives

- To make the learners understand gift-giving as an important custom in some cultures

- To emphasize the element of sacrifice in the story

- To make them understand that food is an important part of culture

Glossary:

imputation: an accusation, charge

parsimony: thriftiness, frugality

instigates: incites, urges on

predominating: prevalent; having more power

mendicancy: poverty (mendicant lives by asking people for food and money)

vestibule: an entryway

appertaining: relating to; or belonging to

longitudinal: in vertical measurements

depreciate: to devalue, cheapen

fob: a chain connected to a pocket watch

meretricious: showy, flashy, seeming attractive

laboriously: with much effort and time

assertion: a statement, claim

ecstatic: overjoyed, elated

coveted: desired, wanted

ardent: eager, passionate

janitor: A person employed as a caretaker of a building

Case Study

Compare and contrast 'The Gift of Magi' with

Arun Joshi's 'Only American in our village'.

Questions

1. How much does Jim earn per week? How does Della manage to save the $1.87 to buy the gift?

2. What is her new plan by which she would have enough money to buy Jim a grand gift?

3. How much does the hair dresser offer for her tresses? What does she want to buy for Jim?

4. What does Jim buy for Della on Christmas and how does he manage to buy the same?

5. Who are the Magi? What cultural implications do you understand through the Magi?

6. Why does the author call Jim and Della "two foolish children"? Why are they later said to have been the wisest of those who exchange gifts?

7. What is your opinion about Jim and Della's relationship?

Self-Study Assignment: Writing

1. Find out the words and situations from the text that highlight American culture.

2. Is giving gifts an important part of your culture? Apart from birthdays and special occasions, do you give gifts for any festival in your culture? On what festival days do you offer gifts? Explain.

Speaking

1. "Sacrificing your happiness for the happiness of the one you love is by far the truest type of love." (Anonymous) Justify with reference to the story.

2. Recollect a situation when you purchased a gift for your near or dear ones. What are the various aspects you looked at before selecting the gift? Share your thoughts with your classmates.

Reading Comprehension

Coney Island, the "playground of the world" since 1800s, has played different roles in the lives and imagination of the world. It played a significant role especially in the lives of New Yorkers. As a quiet town by the sea side, it flourished in the early 1800s. Entrepreneurs flooded to Coney Island to reap their fortunes. The area prospered with the glory of Luna Park, Dreamland and Steeplechase Park, but with the Great Depression the Island collapsed as a castle of cards. The entire island transformed into a "Nickel Empire", a cheap amusement park. The amusement parks that prospered struggled for existence and Coney Island became the victim of the worst economic conditions and time.

Coney Island is a small peninsula that hangs from the southern edge of Brooklyn. It is very convenient to reach the place from different parts of the city. The area spreads from West 8th to West 24th Street and from Surf Avenue to the Atlantic Ocean. Besides the amusement parks and rides, the area has a three-mile beachfront walk, the New

York Aquarium and Key Span Park (which is considered to be the home of the Brooklyn Cyclone's minor league baseball team). Asser Levy Park and an amphitheatre are also present in the Island.

Answer the following questions

1. Where is Coney Island?

2. What is Coney Island?

3. What are the other two names for Coney Island?

4. Write the names of the different parks situated in the Coney Island.

5. What transformed the Coney Island?

Assignment

1. Who is Santa Claus? What is his significance in Christmas?

2. Collect information on why and how Easter is celebrated in different countries.

3. What are the important symbols of Easter and what do they signify?

Snippets of American culture

USA Gifting Culture

The traditional US holiday season is also considered to be the gifting season. The season begins with Thanksgiving on the fourth Thursday of November every year. They thank the Lord for gracing them with abundant harvest. This holiday season begins with Thanksgiving and moves on to Christmas and ends with New Year Eve. But now this season of tradition and culture has extended to the St .Valentine's Day as well. Presenting gifts to family, friends and business associates during holiday season is a part of American culture.

Conclusion

Thus language and culture are interdependent and interrelated. One cannot exist without the other. Incorporating culture in language learning brings a new dimension in the teaching of English as a second language.

Notes

Queen of Sheba; King Solomon – In the Old Testament, the wealthy Queen of Sheba, who ruled an ancient kingdom in the region of modern-day Ethiopia, visited the equally wealthy King Solomon of Israel in order to test his wisdom. When the King answered her questions, she was so impressed with his wisdom that she showered him with gold and jewels. He, in turn, granted her everything she desired.

"The magi brought valuable gifts…" – The magi (the "Three Wise Men" in the Bible) paid homage to baby Jesus by bringing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

frankincense: a substance that is burnt to give a pleasant smell, especially during religious ceremonies

myrrh: a sticky substance with a sweet smell that comes from trees and is used to make perfume.

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Vocubulary enrichment through jargon

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ABSTRACT
Students find it difficult to use the right words at the right place while writing or speaking. There is a paucity of vocabulary among youngsters limited to repetition of words such as "like", "cool" and "neat". While teaching rural and semi-urban students, it was found that many words remained dormant in students as passive vocabulary. To overcome this hurdle, the method of jargon recollection, selection and application was practised. Though the results were mixed, some progress was made among learners in bringing the passive vocabulary into an active one.

Key words: collaborative work, pneumonic, variety of genre and jargon.

Introduction

In technical institutions most students originate from rural or semi-urban background. Communication among peers and with their teachers is in vernacular language with English words thrown here and there. Students find it challenging to construct sentences, use right tenses and string words together to make meaningful English sentences. It was found that the most predominant difficulty was that they did not have the right words. Students find conventional methods of learning vocabulary through definition, pronunciation, spelling and grammatical functions, boring and tiresome.

It is a well known fact that people with extensive vocabulary in English are considered good communicators (Denning, et al., 2007). English becomes an elegant language when appropriate words are used to express what they want to say. This will lead to clarity and brevity of expression. While discussing what causes the learners hesitate to use English in communication, it was found that they do not have the words ready at their command. I wanted to show them that they know the words but they are not using them actively in their daily communication. Hence I conducted the following activities of first recollecting the jargon connected to a particular field.

Teaching Procedure

Recollection

Students were divided into groups of eight. Through pneumonics (association of ideas), learners were asked to recall all the words connected to a game like cricket, a passion among them. They recalled *googly*, *pitch*,

spin, *pace bowling*, *wicket keeping*, *fielder*, *helicopter shot*, *mid-wicket*, *mid-on*, *off-side*, etc. When conducted as a group activity, many more words were recollected by the students. The words in white circles are passive vocabulary.

Then the students were given an assignment to speak or write about an "Unforgettable Cricket Match Witnessed" or "Cricketing Legend Kapil Dev or Sachin Tendulkar".

Selection

Each group selected words which could be associated with Sachin Tendulkar, namely *excellent batsman*, *slow bowler*, *mid-on fielder*, etc.

Application

The words were used in their oral or written composition thus bringing the passive vocabulary into active use. Similarly, learners were asked to sit together and jot down all the words associated with films and movies (another burning topic among

students). Passive words like *computer graphics*, *cinematography*, *choreography*, *stunt scenes*, *sound effects*, *song sequences*, *dubbing*, *directorial efforts*, etc., were bandied about.

Exercise 1: A video of a one-day cricket match between India and Australia was played mute. The students were asked to watch the match, take turns and give the commentary.

Exercise 2: A video clipping of a recipe was shown and students were instructed to write the ingredients and the procedure for making the dish.

Exercise 3: Students were shown a movie and asked to write a review.

Topics like "Usage of Computer Graphics in Cinematography", "K. Balachander's Perception of Relationships" and "Shahrukh Khan's Negative Roles" were given for discussion. Students went through the process of selection and application of words.

Similar exercises can be given using legal, technical, computer/digital, banking/ investment jargon. As the process of learning is collaborative, non-threatening and fun-filled, maximum learning takes place (Chih-Ming & Yi-Lun, 2010). This method also reduces anxiety among Indian learners (Sheorey, 2006). It was found that in some students there was an augmentation of vocabulary acquisition, whereas in others many passive words came into active vocabulary use. I would like to emphasize here that words from different genre and fields should be recalled, selected and applied by students if there is to be an enhancement of their English vocabulary.

Conclusion

Exercises such as those discussed above help students in establishing previously met vocabulary, and enriching them. They also help the learners in developing vocabulary strategies and developing fluency with known vocabulary. Some students internalized the words making them part of their active vocabulary.

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'Brochure' as a resource for language learning

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ABSTRACT

Differentiated Instruction has become the norm of the day. Teachers and learners today are looking beyond the traditional approaches of language teaching and learning. The methods adopted by language teachers should be continuously revised according to the requirements or needs of the learners. While the resources available to the language teacher to enhance language skills are in abundance, it has become difficult for them to select and create apt, focused and innovative materials for the required purpose. The teachers' knowledge, experience and expertise also help them to choose the relevant materials. In this context, an attempt has been made to look at the ways in which language skills can be promoted in students by the use of brochures. Brochures play a significant role in language development, as they contain catchy sentences, phrases and technical vocabulary. Students come to know about the subtle nuances involved in the creation of brochures and how information can be disseminated through them. This paper focuses on the various activities that can be designed through brochures. It also provides some criteria for designing the activities.

Introduction

There are various ways in which we can promote language learning in English classrooms, the learning components being listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary. Authentic materials such as newspaper articles, advertisements, video and audio clippings, documentaries, speeches, talks, short stories, quotations and proverbs are useful resources for promoting language. One such authentic material is brochure. Brochure is a leaflet containing two or three pages that give information about a particular subject.

It may be related to any field right from advertisement of schools, colleges, universities, products, medicines and cosmetics to courses such as engineering, architecture and interior designing. Brochures give scope for readers to understand the content better, easier and faster as the information is concise, precise and consolidated, all in one place with key words and phrases. This article outlines a few exercises that can be designed to make language learning happen in the classroom and also help learners to enhance their grammar, vocabulary, speaking and writing skills through group work.

Brochures and the language components

Various language elements can be found in brochures and they can be improved by learners. Some of them include sentence structures, vocabulary items such as subject-specific jargon; synonyms, antonyms, homophones, homographs, homonyms, idioms and phrases; catchy expressions; grammar components such as tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech; writing skills such as organizing and sequencing of thoughts, imagination and creativity; and designing new brochures related to the given themes. Thus brochures can be used to help learners with skill development and language proficiency.

Group size and the procedure

A class of 20 was organized into five groups with four members in each. Copies of a brochure on 'Diabetes' a pamphlet designed by Himalaya Company, were distributed. The students were first asked to go through the brochure, the side headings, colour combinations, changes in the font size, and the organization of the content in 10 to 15 minutes. The learners were free to discuss and add to what was given there. Later the following ten exercises were distributed one after the other so that they would feel enthused throughout the class.

Creative Strategies

1. Guessing the meanings of words

Some technical words, say about ten, could be picked up from the brochure and learners might be asked to match each word with the meanings given on the right hand side. This would enable them to guess the meanings through the context in the content of the brochure.

E.g.

a. *Cardiac*	impossible to deal with
b. *Miracle*	when your heart beats too quickly or irregularly
c. *Conception*	of the heart or heart disease
d. *Accumulation*	great worry caused by a difficult situation

2. Listing down of phrases

In this activity, learners would distinguish between words and phrases. The teacher would explain what a phrase is and give examples from the brochure for them to understand easily. As there are four students in a group, each one would search for the phrases and it will be an interesting activity for them.

E.g. *levels of stress*, *last breath of life*, etc.

3. Picking out adjectives

Picking out adjectives or the describing words help the learners to enhance their vocabulary and use them in other contexts creatively.

E.g. *miracle organ*

4. Points vs. Paragraphs

Asking the students to analyse the brochure

based on the various sections and side headings (whether they are in points or short paragraphs) helps them to understand the structure of brochures and how brochures can be designed using key points, sentences, words and phrases.

E.g. Students can write like this

Para 1 – short paragraph (4-5 lines)

Para 2 – bulleted points

5. A question on 'Wh' aspect in brochures

Posing a *'wh'* question to students would help them in understanding the content of the brochure. Learners come up with their own answers. Each paragraph is with a side heading, such as 'What is diabetes?' and 'Why does it occur?'. This analysis helps them to know how the side headings can be made interesting and catchy to draw the attention of the readers for the required information.

6. Panel Discussion

A group of four students assuming the role of subject experts such as a physician, patient, dietician and physical trainer can participate in a discussion on the health issues in the recent times and how they can be tackled. This promotes speaking skills in learners.

7. A question on key features of a brochure

Asking the students a question on the essential features of brochures helps them to think and put down all the points they think are relevant and have learnt from studying the brochure. This creates clarity in them as to how a brochure has to be designed. Learners come up with answers such as *concise, precise, using words sparingly* and *mostly in points and short paragraphs.*

8. Sentence Structures

Using the sentence structures given and making sentences on their own will help them to master the structures and use them confidently in their writing.

E.g.:   *The more you . . . the . . .*

   Not only does . . . but . . .

   If- construction

9. Paragraph Writing

Learners can be asked to write a short paragraph or a story of about 200 to 250 words using many of the words, phrases, adjectives they have come across in exercises 1, 2 and 3. The topic can be related to any other aspect and closely related to the theme of the brochure. This helps them to be creative, expressive and confident in using words in a different context.

10. Designing new brochures

A case study can be given. Students use all the techniques they learn through this activity and create a new brochure. This requires a lot of expertise and time as the content also has to be designed by them. But in a group, learners come up with different ideas within no time. This helps

them to get a panoramic picture of designing good brochures.

E.g. Imagine that you are going to set up your own catering business. Prepare another brochure using the pattern of the given brochure. The brochure should contain all the necessary and relevant information related to your project. You need not stick to the pattern given. Your brochure can be as creative as possible.

Conclusion

When the activity was conducted, there was good response for the vocabulary exercises. Designing a new brochure was the toughest part, but the learners confessed that they enjoyed doing that. The teachers have their own liberty of designing activities based on the necessary skill they want their learners to improve in. Through these exercises, skills such as vocabulary, speaking and writing have been tested and improved. As such, any one skill can be honed at one time as per the requirements of the class. Thus brochure can be an important source for language learning.

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Title of the article should be in Caps, bold, centered.
Abstract in about 150 words
Full paper should not be in more than 2000 words.
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Top-down processing of inputs in acquiring focussed listening skills by engineering students: A practical experience

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ABSTRACT
Listening is an important language skill and its full potential seems not to have been tapped in English language classrooms. It is normally neglected as it is taken for granted that learners automatically acquire this skill without any special training. Experience, however, shows that listening skill requires to be imparted with as much care as the other language skills. This paper aims at discussing how to ensure successful acquisition of listening skill by engineering students.

Adrian Doff (1988: 199) talks about two types of listening. They are:

1. ***Casual Listening:*** This is listening to someone without any particular purpose. It demands less concentration on the part of the listeners unless the topic interests them.

2. ***Focussed Listening:*** It is 'intensive listening' for information or for transacting business. In this type of listening, the hearer is attentive and s/he concentrates on what the speaker is saying.

Listening is a psychological process. It involves receiving the message, attending to it and constructing meaning. This process could be depicted diagrammatically as follows:

Input	**Processing**	**Output**
(Speaker's words)	$\rightarrow$ $\rightarrow$	(Listener's response)

There are three stages in listening: i) the input; ii) processing; and iii) the output. The speaker's words form the input. Then the listener processes the input. Finally, the listener shows the response. The processing takes place at two different levels: ***bottom-up processing*** and ***top-down processing***.

In ***bottom-up processing***, the listener depends solely on the incoming input for the meaning of the message. The input is received and analyzed at different levels of organization. The sound signals are organized into words; the words into phrases; phrases into clauses; and clauses into sentences. Here, the listeners use their lexical and grammatical competence in the language for getting the intended meaning of the message.

In **top-down processing**, listeners rely on their background knowledge for understanding the message. So, the input is not the only source of meaning. Through their knowledge of the words, listeners guess the intended message and approach the input to confirm if their guesses are correct.

While practising listening in a foreign language, videos are of great help. A video reduces the monotony a learner perceives with auditory learning. A close observation of the movement of the speaker's lips and jaw, at least initially, may add to the additional learning experience in the acquisition process. It is quite helpful, too, to be able to observe the extra auditory effort of a stressed syllable (in a stress language like English) which often coincides with larger facial gestures like the raising and the lowering of the eyebrows, as well as with the nodding or the shaking of the head (most speakers move their heads as they speak) and with gestures of the hands, shoulders, and so on. These gestures certainly serve as a cue to pay attention to the message.

For learners in the early stage, it is advisable to use the transcript of the spoken text to provide an obvious support. A student having greater experience with the written language than with the spoken language is to be exposed to this kind of the learning process. It is important that the written transcript should reproduce the spoken language exactly. Students listen to the audio and video speech and follow the transcript simultaneously. There must be no mismatches between what the students hear and what is represented in the transcript. So pauses and 'ums' and 'erms', laughs and coughs are to be indicated and incomplete utterances left as such without any corrections on the transcript.

In early stages of listening, the learners may be taught sounds in English. A careful planning followed by meticulous execution of listening practice will surely yield the desired effect. Active involvement of the teacher is needed. The listeners are forced into guessing an approximation to what the speaker is communicating. The listener expects and anticipates the form and the content of the message being delivered.

An experiment was conducted by the author with her engineering students in three stages. The video recording of the speech by Malala Yousafzai at the UN was made use of, considering its suitability in terms of vocabulary, sentence structure, and speech delivery for the learners (Accessed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= QRh_30C8l6Y).

Stage 1

Xerox copies of the transcript of the UN address of Malala Yousafzai printed as a cloze-type exercise were distributed to the learners (See **Annexure 1**). The goal of this listening comprehension was explained to the learners thus: To test their guessing ability and to assess their word power. The learners were instructed to supply the missing words so as to fill the blanks with words which they considered to be suitable in the context. Special attention could be given to learners who find the vocabulary

hard to understand. About 5-10 minutes can be given for the guess work. If needed, pair/ group work can be encouraged.

Stage 2

Learners were asked to fill the blanks with the words they guessed. They showed active participation. The freedom given to the learners in writing the words can certainly result in multiple guessing/ variety in guess work. Synonyms of the words may be guessed by the learners. They exhibit their language ability.

Stage 3

The teacher directed the learners to the actual speech recorded as audio-visual (AV) listening. The learners were asked to sharpen their ears by focussing their attention on both the audio and the video of the speech of Malala. While listening, the learners were also asked to do self-evaluation of their guess work.

With the aid of the transcript, the learners' attention was focussed. The guess work provided familiarity with the audio-visual academic exercise. This method facilitates the learners to enjoy and acquire the words and their pronunciation. The academic listening activity also serves as a self-evaluating practice for learners at their early stage. These kinds of listening activities help the development of 'listening speed'. Making intelligent guess work followed by the actual identification of the words in the utterances enhances the learning phase of listening.

Davis (1996, 1997) developed a framework to summarize three types of teaching listening in the classrooms:

1. evaluative – hearing students' answers to decide whether or not they are correct.

2. interpretative – trying to make sense of students' answers by asking for more information.

3. hermeneutic – negotiating meaning with students by interacting to discuss meaning; both teacher and students can revise their own knowledge through the interaction.

In Davis' framework, evaluative listening is the most straightforward type of listening, whereas hermeneutic listening demands the most sophisticated skills. Davis' framework illustrates that listening is active and it involves interaction with learners.

In essence, listening is not mere recognition of linguistic units and their meanings. It includes the ability to predict information based on linguistic context, the situation and the topic of the message conveyed in the speech. It is a psychological process. It can, therefore, be improved by regular practice. Listening is a very helpful skill. Good listening skills make listeners very productive in the language. The ability to listen carefully will enable a person to:

● understand assignments in a better way and find what is expected;

● build rapport with co-workers, bosses and clients;

- show support;

- work better in a team-based environment;

- resolve problems with customers, co-workers and bosses;

- answer questions; and

- find underlying meanings in what others say.

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JOURNAL OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN ENGLISH LITERATURE (ISSN.0975-8828)
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Annexure 1

Oration - Malala Yousafzai – (Speech Text)

Honourable UN Secretary General Mr Ban Ki-moon, respected president of the General Assembly Vuk Jeremic, honourable UN envoy for global education Mr Gordon Brown, _____ elders and my dear brothers and sisters: Assalamu alaikum.

Today is it an honour for me to be speaking again after a long time. Being here with such _____ people is a great moment in my life and it is an honour for me that today I _____a shawl of the late Benazir Bhutto. I don't know where to begin my speech. I don't know what people would be expecting me to say, but first of all thank you to God for whom we all are equal and thank you to every person who has prayed for my _____ and new life. I cannot believe how much love people have shown me. I have received thousands of good-wish cards and gifts from all over the world. Thank you to all of them. Thank you to the children whose _____ words encouraged me. Thank you to my elders whose prayers _____ me. I would like to thank my nurses, doctors and the staff of the hospitals in Pakistan and the UK and the UAE government who have helped me to get better and _____ my strength.

I fully support UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in his Global Education First Initiative and the work of UN Special _____ Gordon Brown and the respectful president of the UN General Assembly Vuk Jeremic. I thank them for the leadership they continue to give. They continue to inspire all of us to action. Dear brothers and sisters, do remember one thing: Malala Day is not _____. Today is the day of every woman, every boy and every girl who have raised their voice for their rights.

There are hundreds of human rights activists and social workers who are not only speaking for their rights, but who are _____ to achieve their goal of peace, _____ and _____. Thousands of people have been killed by the terrorists and millions have been injured. I am just one of them. So here I stand, one girl among many. I speak not for myself, but so those without a voice can be _____. Those who have fought for their rights. Their _____ to live in peace. Their right to be _____ with _____. Their right to equality of opportunity. Their right to be educated.

Dear friends, on _____, the Taliban shot me on the left side of my _____. They shot my friends, too. They thought that the _____ would silence us, but they _____. And out of that silence came thousands of voices. The terrorists thought they would change my aims and stop my _____. But nothing changed in my life except this: _____, _____ and _____died. Strength, power and courage was born. I am the same Malala. My _____ are the same. My hopes are the same. And my dreams are the same.

Dear sisters and brothers, I am not against anyone. Neither am I here to speak in terms of personal _____ against the Taliban or any other terrorist group. I am here to speak for the right of education for every child. I want education for the sons and daughters of the Taliban and all the terrorists and _____. I do not even hate the Talib who shot me.

Even if there was a gun in my hand and he was standing in front of me, I would not _____ him. This is the _____ I have learned from Mohamed, the prophet of mercy, Jesus Christ and Lord Buddha. This the _____ of change I have inherited from Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela and Mohammed Ali Jinnah.

This is the philosophy of _____ that I have learned from Gandhi, Bacha Khan and Mother Teresa. And this is the forgiveness that I have learned from my father and from my mother. This is what my soul is telling me: be _____ and _____everyone.

Dear sisters and brothers, we realise the importance of light when we see _____. We realise the importance of our voice when we are _____. In the same way, when we were in Swat, the north of Pakistan, we realised the importance of pens and books when we saw the guns. The wise saying, "The pen is mightier than the sword." It is true. The extremists are _____of books and pens. The power of _____ frightens them. They are afraid of women. The power of the voice of women frightens them. This is why they killed 14 _____ students in the recent attack in Quetta. And that is why they kill female teachers. That is why they are _____ schools every day because they were and they are afraid of change and equality that we will bring to our society. And I remember that there was a boy in our school who was asked by a _____: "Why are the Taliban against _____?"He answered very simply by pointing to his book, he said: "A Talib doesn't know what is written inside this book."

They think that God is a tiny, little conservative being who would point guns at people's heads just for going to school. These terrorists are misusing the name of Islam for their own personal _____. Pakistan is a _____, democratic country. Pashtuns want education for their daughters and sons. Islam is a religion of peace, humanity and brotherhood. It is the duty and responsibility to get education for each child, that is what it says. _____ is a necessity for _____. In many parts of the world, especially Pakistan and Afghanistan, terrorism, war and conflicts stop children from going to schools. We are really tired of these wars. Women and children are suffering in many ways in many parts of the world.

In India, _____ and _____ children are victims of _____ labour. Many schools have been destroyed in Nigeria. People in Afghanistan have been affected by extremism. Young girls have to do domestic child labour and are forced to get married at an early age. Poverty, ignorance, _____, _____ and the _____ of basic rights are the main problems, faced by both men and women.

Today, I am focusing on women's rights and girls' education because they are suffering the most. There was a time when women activists asked men to stand up for their rights. But this time we will do it by ourselves. I am not telling men to step away from speaking for women's rights, but I am focusing on women to be _____ and fight for themselves. So dear sisters and brothers, now it's time to speak up. So today, we call upon the world leaders to change their _____ policies in favour of peace and prosperity. We call upon the world leaders that all of these deals must protect women and children's rights. A deal that goes against the rights of women is unacceptable.

We call upon all governments to _____ free, _____education all over the world for every child. We call upon all the governments to fight against terrorism and violence. To protect children from _____ and harm. We call upon the developed nations to support the expansion of education opportunities for girls in the developing world. We call upon all communities to be tolerant, to reject prejudice based on caste, _____, _____, colour, religion or agenda to ensure freedom and equality for women so they can flourish. We cannot all succeed when half of us are held back. We call upon our sisters around the world to be brave, to embrace the strength within themselves and realise their full potential.

Dear brothers and sisters, we want schools and education for every child's bright future. We will continue our journey to our _____ of peace and education. No one can stop us. We will speak up for our rights and we will bring change to our voice. We believe in the power and the strength of our words. Our words can change the whole world because we are all together, united for the cause of _____. And if we want to achieve our goal, then let us empower ourselves with the weapon of knowledge and let us shield ourselves with unity and togetherness.

Dear brothers and sisters, we must not forget that millions of people are suffering from poverty and _____ and _____. We must not forget that millions of children are out of their schools. We must not forget that our sisters and brothers are waiting for a bright, peaceful future.

So let us wage a _____ struggle against illiteracy, poverty and _____, let us pick up our books and our pens, they are the most powerful weapons. One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world. _____ is the only solution. Education first. Thank you.

Cash Awards for English Teachers Using ICTs
ELTAI-IATEFL Awards for Teachers using ICT in Teaching English Language/Literature

In order to encourage teachers to use Internet tools in their teaching of English, it is proposed to give cash awards of Rs.2000 each to five teachers who have used as many of these tools as they could.

Conditions for the Awards

1. Only teachers who have attended any one of the Workshops on Virtual Learning conducted by ELTAI or its chapters are eligible to apply.

2. They should submit a report giving full details of their use of the tools such as the class or classes involved, period of their use, purpose, procedures followed, evidences, if any, and their own observations

Reports should be sent to **srajagopalan7@gmail.com cc ramanipn@gmail.com**
Last date for submission of reports is 1-3-2015.

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IATEFL-Funded Workshops on Virtual Learning Conducted by ELTAI

Interim Report

The English Language Teachers' Association of India (ELTAI), an Associate of IATEFL, is happy to share its experience of implementing a teacher training project on virtual learning funded by IATEFL. The grant was announced at last year's IATEFL conference at Harrogate and ELTAI felt very happy to use the opportunity to reach out to as many teachers of English as possible and provide them training in the use of internet tools for the teaching and learning of English.

The first training programme for trainers was conducted on 9th and 10th August, 2014 at Kilakkarai in the southern part of India close to the famous temple town of Rameswaram; incidentally, arrangements were made for the participants to visit Rameswaram after the first day's programme. The 'train the trainers' workshop was attended by about 20 representatives from different chapters of our association from all over India. It covered these areas: virtual classroom; Google Drive; Google and Yahoo groups; blogging; social networking sites such as FaceBook and Twitter; Wiki; mobile learning; and flipped classroom. The participants were provided sufficient computer time for a satisfactory hands-on experience in using these tools for enhancing their students' learning of English.

As part of our commitment to the project, each of the trainers agreed to conduct a similar training workshop for ESL teachers in their respective regions. We are happy to state that over fifteen such follow-up workshops have been conducted so far in various parts of India, and we have plans to conduct a few more in the months to come, thus utilizing the project grant and the opportunity to cover a large number of ELT practitioners and train them so that they will use technology confidently and comfortably in their own practices. Workshops were conducted in different parts of India, from Tuticorin and Tirupati in the south to Bilaspur in the north and Shillong in the north-east. Besides these, six workshops for cluster institutions of Kendriya Vidyalayas (funded by the central government) in Chennai region in different locations across the state were conducted; a similar initiative has been taken with another group of schools, privately managed, across the state. There is a growing interest in virtual learning and demand for such workshops from other educational institutions; we see this as an ongoing project even after utilizing IATEFL grant.

Through a feedback form specially designed for the purpose, the participants were asked to rate the usefulness of each of the training sessions (topic-wise) and the adequacy of

time allotted for each session (both on a 3-point scale). Nearly all of the participants of the fifteen-odd workshops conducted so far were satisfied on both these counts (i.e., useful and adequate respectively). Some, however, would have liked more time for some of the topics, a perception also shared by the resource persons and the project team. These could form the focus of future programmes. To another question about their level of satisfaction with the arrangements made for working with computers during the workshop for the hands-on experience, the response was positive. Overall, they rated the conduct of the workshop as successful.

The participants were also asked an open-ended question on the lessons learnt from the workshop experience as a teacher. Here are some excerpts from their responses chosen at random:

- *"I am empowered for virtual teaching by this workshop. I'm sure there will be great change in my teaching style . . ."*

- *". . . now I learned many tools to teach students. . ."*

- *"Incredible, thought provoking, enriching, constructivist learning. . . . will apply with my students."*

- *"To be a technology-based teacher in the classroom transaction to make the lessons more interesting and useful."*

- *". . . how to make teaching-learning process more student friendly and minimizing the learning gap."*

They were also asked what they would do differently as a result of what they had learnt from the workshop when they went back to their classrooms. Here is a sample:

- *". . . encourage other teachers also to make use of [technology]"*

- *"I will use technological tools to fill [in] the learning gaps . . ."*

- *". . . to form a network with fellow teachers."*

- *"wish to do many things which I learned from these two days."*

- *"facilitate exploration among students."*

The experience of conducting these workshops gave us an opportunity to come face-to-face with members of our association from different chapters across the country and interact with them, which has highlighted the usefulness of networking among professionals in the field.

Dr. S. Rajagopalan
Project Director

10th International & 46th National Annual ELTAI Conference

Learning and Teaching English in India: Setting Standards

09-11 July 2015

organized by

English Language Teachers' Association of India (ELTAI)

(An Associate of the International Association

of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language, IATEFL, UK)

at Raj Kumar Goel Institute of Technology for Women

Supported by RELO & British Council

www.rkgitw.edu.in/international_annual_conference.html

The Conference

For over four decades now, we have been discussing the achievement of standards in English in the midst of problems like large classes, teachers' lack of preparation and teaching effectiveness, lack of infrastructure, centrally prepared textbooks/course books, divergences and variations in the levels of English proficiency among urban and rural learners and so on. This conference aims to focus on various issues and concerns that need to be addressed immediately. The broad areas covered could include the following:

1. Setting learning outcome standards for English as a language of communication
2. Standards-driven approach to teaching and learning of English
3. Assessment of English standards at various levels
4. Quality provision in English education
5. Charting and tracking an academic revolution in respect of English education
6. Quantity versus quality in teaching English
7. Strategic directions for teaching and learning of English
8. Views of Stakeholders on the quality of teaching and learning of English
9. Trends in teaching and learning of English
10. Transnational experiences in setting standards
11. Benchmarking and ranking
12. Status and preparation of English teachers
13. The role of ICTs in achieving learning outcome standards
14. Teaching English language through literature

Highlights of the conference
1. Founder Padamshri S Natarajan Endowment Lecture

2. ELT@I Professional Leadership Award
3. Best Chapter Award
4. Best Paper Presenter Award
5. Round table discussion
6. Live presentations
7. Panel discussion

Paper Submission:

Each submission should include the following:

(a) An abstract of about 150 words. Manuscripts must be prepared according to the format specified in the recent edition of MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers/APA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.

(b) Submissions should be made electronically in MS Word 97-03 to

eltaiannualconference@gmail.com with copy to

sanjayarorajaipur@yahoo.com, gagshyam@gmail.com, ramanipn@gmail.com.

Important Deadlines

Submission of abstracts: 5th June 2015
Submission of Full length Paper: 15th June 2015

Souvenir and Proceedings with ISBN

A souvenir will be released during the inaugural which will contain the conference details, messages from dignitaries, abstracts of contributors. In addition to the Souvenir, Conference Proceedings of selected papers will be published with ISBN.

Registration

It is compulsory for all joint authors of each accepted paper to register for the conference in case they intend to be included in the Technical Programme and want their name in the Conference Proceedings.

Registration Fee

Participants are expected to register themselves and pay the registration fee in advance as per the following details, by sending a demand draft drawn in favour of "ELTAI, Chennai", by 15 June 2015 to:

The Secretary, D-54 Third Floor,

Anandham Apartments,

156, SIDCO Nagar Main Road,

Villivakkam

Chennai-600 049.

Early Bird	**On-the-spot Registration Fee:**
Rs 1100/ ELTAI Members Rs 1400/ Non-ELTAI Members Rs 700/ School Teachers (with a letter from Principal)	Rs 1400/ ELTAI Members Rs 1700/ Non-ELTAI Members USD 50 Overseas Participants

Sightseeing:

On the 3rd day of the Conference after the Valedictory Function a sightseeing trip to Agra is planned for those interested. Registration for sightseeing needs to be done in advance by sending a DD for Rs.1500/ in advance in favour of "ELTAI-NCR, Greater Noida Chapter" by 15 June 2015 to: Dr Harleen Kaur, Organizing Secretary, Department of Humanities, Raj Kumar Goel Institute of Technology for Women, Ghaziabad-201017.

On-the- spot Registration for Sightseeing: Rs 2500/-

NOTE:

(1) Two light Snacks will be provided along with water bottle during the journey.

(2) The amount (Rs 1500) only includes transport (to & fro) and entry fee.

Accommodation

To avail accommodation you need to send a DD in advance in favour of "ELTAI-NCR, Greater Noida Chapter" by 15 June 2015 to:

Mr. Lokesh Kumar, Department of Humanities, Raj Kumar Goel Institute of Technology for Women, Ghaziabad-201017.

Hostel (Non-AC): Rs600/ per day with Breakfast and Dinner on twin sharing basis per head

Hotel AC Room (Clarks INN & Fortune INN):

Rs. 1700 per day with Breakfast and Dinner on Triple sharing basis per head

On-the-Spot Registration for Accommodation: (Subject to availability):

Hostel (Non AC) Rs 700 per day per head on twin sharing basis per head

Hotel (Clarks INN & Fortune INN): Rs 2200 per day on Triple sharing basis per head

*** Registration forms submitted online or by post will not be considered without DD.**

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***The Journal of English Language Teaching (JELT)* – ISSN-0973-5208**
[A publication of the English Language Teachers' Association of India (ELTAI)]

Submissions

The JELT is an international, ***peer-reviewed journal*** published by the English Language Teachers' Association of India based at Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India, but with over 55 chapters in different parts of India. ***Please see the front inner cover for details of the establishment and objectives of the association.***

The JELT is published ***six times a year*** – February, April, June, August, October and December. The overall aim of the journal is to promote the professional development of its readers, namely English teachers teaching at all levels, researchers and teacher trainers around the world. The journal, therefore, accepts submissions on all aspects and issues relating to the teaching and learning of English in ESL settings.

Criteria for Evaluating Submissions

Each submission will be evaluated for its suitability for publication in terms of the following criteria.

The article should:

★ Reflect current theories and practices in English language teaching.
★ Be relevant and appeal to the wide 1readership of the journal.
★ Be well written and organized, with sufficient explanation and examples to enable readers to apply the ideas and insights in their own classes.
★ Discuss the topic in the context of other work related to the topic.
★ Be written in clear and concise language, making it easy to read.

Guidelines for Submissions

Each issue of the journal addresses a specific theme. Authors should send submissions related to the theme before the deadline indicated for the issue. *See the ELTAI website and the journal for the themes (if any) and deadlines for the subsequent issues.*

Authors should follow these guidelines while preparing their articles for submission:

1. The article should not have been published previously in any form (print or online).
2. The maximum length of the article should be 2000 words (excluding an abstract in 150 words).
3. All pages should be double-spaced with a clear margin of 1 inch on all sides.

4. The title should be brief and focused, not broad or vague.

5. The article should carry only the title, abstract and the main paper.

6. The title, author(s)' name(s) [the last name first], affiliation [i.e., the name of institution(s) the author(s) belong(s) to; city, country] and email address should be provided on a separate cover sheet for the article, along with author(s)' photo(s) [**.jpg**].

7. Only sources cited in the article should be listed as references at the end of the article.

8. The article should use the author-date format for citations and references (e.g., Anderson 1997; Anderson 1997, p.17). *See the Chicago Manual of Style (15th edn.) for more details and examples.*

9. A list of all the references cited in the text should be given at the end of the article.

   In each reference, only the author's last name and initials are to be provided.

   The year is placed after the author's name.

   Only the first word of the title and the sub-title (after a colon) are capitalized along with proper nouns.

   Titles of books and journals should be in *italics*.

   Quotation marks are not to be used in the title.

   For electronic sources such as websites, the date of accessing the source should be given in brackets after the URL.

10. ***The filename of the article (in MS Word format) sent as an email attachment should contain key words from the title and the author(s)' names.***

SPEAKING ACTIVITY
Soliloquy*/self-talk

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Objective	:	***Soliloquy is a well-known literary/dramatic technique.*** To enable learners to articulate their inner thoughts and feelings, especially those that were suppressed due to politeness, respect, fear and so on.
Participation	:	Individual Identifying the situations wherein learners had hidden thoughts, perceptions, observations, standpoints, reflections, feelings, emotions, and so on and expressing them to themselves as often as possible.
Duration	:	About 5 minutes

Procedure :
1. Teacher shows a few clippings of soliloquies from Shakespeare's plays and leads a discussion on the contexts in which the characters indulge in soliloquies and highlights their significance.

2. Learners are asked to identify some contexts wherein they have had unspoken thoughts/ hidden feelings and acted differently, may be because of the respect they have towards others. (**Example**: Several students confess that they were forced into the engineering stream by their parents although they had their hearts elsewhere. They are pursuing their education in engineering because they did not want to disobey their parents.)

3. In pairs, learners are asked to share their authentic feelings/opinions and what they feel about being able to express themselves and about those involved in that experience, necessitating the soliloquy.

4. Those who have had some intense experiences and are willing to share them with the entire class are asked to volunteer.

Learning outcomes :
- Learners realize the need to work around their unarticulated ideas and feelings to understand themselves better.

- Learners understand that thinking about those experiences and attempting to express them enables them to become more expressive.

Further Activities :
Learners should consciously focus on contrary feelings/thoughts whenever they experience such feelings/thoughts and attempt to articulate them to themselves.

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* In a soliloquy, a speaker expresses his/her inner thoughts aloud to himself/herself. Examples of soliloquy from Shakespeare's plays:
"To be, or not to be: that is the question . . ."   [*Hamlet*, Act III, Scene 1, Lines 58-90]
"If 'twere done when 'tis done".   [*Macbeth*, Act I, Scene 7, Lines 1-28]

ELTAI Office-Bearers

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

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