NELTA CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS 2018

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Editorial

NELTA has the tradition of organizing an international conference every year. Its 23rd International Conference was organized in 2018, whereby lots of wonderful ideas and issues were discussed among ELT practitioners and scholars from home and abroad. This compilation is the collection of the papers presented and discussed on the occasion.There is a collection of various topics in this compilation and they have addressed several relevant issues in the field of English language teaching in Nepal and abroad. Some of the important professional issues covered in this way include: language teaching with the use of technology, collaborative teaching-learning, multiple intelligences, local variety of English, vocabulary practice, development of fluency, curriculum, teacher training, teaching of speaking, reading and writing, reflective approach, student participation, use of L1 in the teaching of English, cultural issues in second language pedagogy, and so on.

Having this collection at hand, we hope, readers have got the opportunity for reading these and other relevant topics. They can develop the understanding on the pertinent ideas through this reading. Though many presenters who had contributed in the conference did not come up with the papers in the prescribed format (so they have not been included here), those who gave their deliberation to us in

appropriate way have been included in this compilation – which will be a useful source for the interested audience to have a glimpse of what sort of ideas and experiences had been shared among the participants during the conference. We would like to express our sincere thanks to the Central Committee of NELTA for arranging the necessary support to bring this compilation in this form.

Editorial Board

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Presidential Speech

Motikala Subba Dewan
President, NELTA

Thank you so much. I feel honoured to be standing among such a wonderful audience, and distinguished guests.

Chief Guest Honorable Chief Minister of Province 3, Dormani Poudel

Distinguished keynote speakers Dr Maggie Sokolik, Dr Richard Smith, Dr S. Mohanraj and Dr Paul Gunashekar.

Distinguished representatives from our key partners Dr Dennis Yang, RELO, US Embassy Kathmandu, Dr. Jovan Ilic, Country Director, British Council, Mr. Sunil KC, CEO, NMB Bank, Dr Ajay Kumar, DCM, Indian Embassy Kathmandu.

Government Officials, NELTA Advisors, Past Presidents, Mrs. Gita Rana, Principal and Staff of our host school, Galaxy Public School, NELTA Centre executives, branch chairs and committee members, representatives from publication houses and media; and last but not the least, all the national and international presenters and participants from home and abroad!

Namaste, and a warm welcome to the 23rd International Conference of NELTA and the auspicious silver jubilee celebration of NELTA. 25 years! What a journey of progress and solidarity! Standing at this podium as President, my

heart swells with pride, that I am part of this auspicious moment in the history of NELTA.

NELTA has come a long way. It was founded in 1992 in a small room of British Council under the leadership of Prof. Jai Raj Awasthi, as a voluntary, non-political, non-profit-making platform for the professionals of English education ranging from pre-primary to university level, private to public, ELT professionals, teacher trainers/educators, faculties from the Universities and the NGO professionals.

When we look back, NELTA has surely, and beautifully expanded! We are proud to say that NELTA currently has 50 branches and more than 5000 members including 3900 Life members across Nepal. Branches are our strength and inspiration. They have played a great role in bringing NELTA to this stage. With the support of all our members, and under the Presidency of Hemanta Raj Dahal, NELTA bought a building, which has been one of the greatest achievements of our organization; our own home!

What an august gathering we have here today!

I feel grateful to see the presence of all the supporting hands today at this auspicious moment. The founding members and past presidents of NELTA are among the distinguished guests today, without your vision and your efforts NELTA would not have reached this height, words are not enough to express my gratitude to you all.

We are grateful to our key partners for their continued support in organizing International conference of NELTA each year providing a platform for sharing ELT issues and research. Let me take time to thank our key partner the US Embassy Kathmandu for entrusting us with various projects, especially for entrusting us with the

implementation of the English Access Microscholarship Program since 2011 and sponsoring keynote speakers for the international conference each year. I would also like to thank our key partner British Council Nepal for its crucial role in the birth of NELTA and its continuous collaboration with us, notably the ETTE projects, and sponsoring of keynote speakers in international conference of NELTA each year. I would also like to thank the RELO US Embassy and British Council for sponsoring first time presenters and participants in the conference in the recent years enabling ELT practitioners from far flung areas to participate in this mega gathering and enrich them with knowledge and experience. I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of NMB bank, our valued key partner this year, it's the first time that a major bank has joined hands with us and we hope that we will continue to have this support from you. The Indian Embassy is another key partner, who have sponsored keynote speakers in NELTA conference. Last year we had Australian Embassy sponsoring a keynote speaker. It is collaborations like these that have encouraged NELTA to continue working to improve English Language Teaching and quality Education in Nepal and we look forward to more collaboration in future.

Conducting an International Conference of NELTA each year would have been impossible without the untiring support of our host schools, providing us not only with the space but the support of its staff and students as volunteers. So let me take this opportunity to thank our host schools from past Ananda Kuti Vidyapeeth High School, Budhanilkantha School, Little Angels' School, DAV Sushil Kedia Vishwa Bharati Higher Secondary School, Jawalakhel, Premier International School, St. Xavier's School, Jawalakhel and our present host school Galaxy

Public School, Gyaneshwor for all the special arrangements for the silver jubilee celebration of NELTA.

NELTA has been able to publish academic journals and other conference publications, thanks to our valued editors and sponsors. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Editorial board of NELTA, especially the Editor-in-chief of various NELTA publications till date. I would also like to express my gratitude to publication houses Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press for sponsoring various conference materials specially the Journal of NELTA. We cannot thank enough to Taylor and Francis Group for sponsoring the NELTA Proceedings each year. This year we have many local publication houses, educational institutions, agencies supporting us, and we appreciate all of your support.

Dear members and supporters of NELTA, thank you all for your continued support in enhancing the quality of English language teaching and learning in Nepal. With a hope of your continued support in future, I bid farewell for now. Let us all join in the silver jubilee celebration of NELTA.

Thank you and Namaste.

Content, Language and Technology: Perspectives and Prospects

S Mohanraj
EFL University
Hyderabad, India

The present conference is a massive one with four keynote addresses, 12 plenary presentations, 220 concurrent paper presentations, and a panel discussion. During these sessions, nearly forty-five sub-themes were addressed and I have attempted to classify these under six broad areas of ELT. I propose to dwell on each of these areas and share a few facts about the state of research in progress in India.

1. Let us begin with Historiography. Historiography has caught the attention of many scholars (Dr. Richard Smith is a well-known name in the field), and the more massive attempt of such research is to provide a perspective on the research in progress. ELT in India is 65 years old. I say this because the first English Institute was established in 1953 in Allahabad. The founders of this Institute were mainly materials developers who strived hard to spread the need for language teaching in a small measure. In the year 1958, another major Institute of national importance CIE (Central Institute of English) was established in Hyderabad. This Institute had the mandate to train teachers of English at the secondary and tertiary levels, and the Institute is actively engaged in carrying out this task to date. The Institute also has made pioneering efforts in developing the national curriculum and

produced textbooks for teaching English at different levels of learning.

The history of the Institute is also the history of ELT in India. The Institute was in many ways responsible for promoting the Structural Approach after it was integrated into the school curriculum. However, the scholars working here soon realized its weaknesses and switched over to fostering communicative language teaching almost contemporaneously with ELT practitioners in England in mid-seventies. Jane Revell being one of the pioneers in this field. This change brought about a change in the research perspective regarding teacher training, materials development, and classroom strategies.

Some of the critical projects that made a mark are the experiments carried out at Loyola College, Chennai (1975); SNDT University, Mumbai (1978); The Bangalore Project (1979-1981); West Bengal Textbook Board (COST) (1983); TELE - HMPIETR Gujarat (1985-1990); CBSE-CIEFL Project (1993-95); and the Modular Curriculum using CBCE 2000 onwards. CIEFL took the initiative to adopt the cafeteria model for students pursuing their master's degree in English Language Studies. The curriculum and evaluation practices have undergone several changes, and the courses are on offer to date. Various universities and academic institutes across the country have researches in each of these areas.

2. The second area I have identified relates to theoretical inputs. For a long time, ELT was not considered as a discipline and courses were not offered in ELT. For example, MA (ELT) programmes were not recognized, while MA Linguistics was considered a respectable degree. ELT formed a small part of a Grammar paper, or one question in Linguistics paper had some focus on language teaching. With works of scholars like WF Mackey, Halliday and McIntosh becoming available, it was possible to convince the academician for the need to establish separate departments to teach ELT papers. The contributions to theoretical perspectives from India has not been much. However, one needs to remember with gratitude the efforts put in by N S Prabhu in formulating the principles of Communicational

Approach to Language Teaching and his efforts in developing tasks for teaching English differently. Another significant contribution has come from Kumar Vadivelu's Beyond Methods.

Research scholars have looked at the contributions from these two scholars in a variety of situations and established their success and suggested some modifications to suit local contexts. It is worthwhile to remember what David Carver said when he was working with the West Bengal Textbook Board Project. He coined two acronyms COST and TENOR. Both are significant in the Indian context and reflect on accepting the theoretical propositions blindly. COST stands for Communication Oriented Structural Teaching. He discovered that teachers in Indian schools were comfortable with the use of the Structural Approach. To wean them away entirely from such practices, and forcing them to adopt new ways seemed unreasonable if not impossible. He, therefore, devised specific strategies of modifying materials and procedure whereby the teachers could gradually adapt themselves to using communicative tasks in the classroom. The exercises designed by him can be found in course books produced at that time called *Learning English.* Precisely similar activities have been developed by other scholars pursuing research in their attempt to make the prescribed textbooks to improve their teachability. The second acronym TENOR was coined by him when he discovered that research in the area of ESP mainly dealt with nitpicking rather than focus on content and language development. TENOR stands for Teaching English for No Obvious Reason. His stand was that we first need to develop general proficiency in English. Once, a learner has a good grasp of the language, using English for specific or special purpose becomes a matter of adaptation. This statement of his is axiomatic and hence can be accepted as a theory.

3. The third major area of research which is popular among Indian scholars has a focus on Second Language Acquisition. Interest in this area picked after1985 a little after Rod Ellis published his book with the same title. The situation seemed to be extremely conducive to the Indian case, and the multilingual context created an excellent laboratory like situation for conducting research. Earlier to this period, most research focussed

on contrastive analysis and non-contrastive approaches to language teaching. What one significant contribution of research in SLA has made is seen in giving the mother tongue its due respect. Teachers began to understand that all languages are learned alike, and they behave alike. Taking support from mother tongue while learning a new language does not damage either of the languages.

Of late, research in SLA has a focus on levels of task complexity leading to learning problems and using mother tongue support in completing the tasks. Further, attempts are also being made to study the interface, as it exists between cognition and psycholinguistics. The application of such research is seen in teaching vocabulary regarding word chunking and further leading to reading comprehension using eye-tracking movements. Translanguaging is another offshoot of SLA research where learners are allowed to express their ideas in mother tongue and subsequently translate the same into English with peer help. Translanguaging is particularly evident while teaching writing employing group work strategies and using Think Aloud protocol for data elicitation.

Contributions from scholars like Ajit Mohanty and Minoti Panda in this context are noteworthy. Both scholars have shown genuine concern in the multilingual structure of the Indian academic set up. Their focus has been on language conservation along with language development.

4. A recent phenomenon in research deals with Continuing Professional Development, which is an offshoot of teacher education strategies. As it took time to recognize ELT as a discipline, it took a long time to understand teaching as a profession. Reasons given for not considering teaching as a profession were far too dubious. However, of late, adequate recognition is given, and teaching is not only a respectable job but also a much sought-after career.

It is necessary to thank a person like Tony Wright for instilling this sense of professionalism in us. In his book *Roles of Teachers*

and Learners, he has elucidated the number of roles a teacher needs to play in the life of a learner and the society. Other things being equal, this lends a sense of responsibility and respectability to the teacher. The book tacitly advocates the traits that need to be developed among student teachers during teacher education. Such qualities in teachers make them real professionals. This concept has been explained and the need for CPD is established by scholars like Rod Bolitho and others. A group of teachers from India has also worked in this area, and some SIGs and TDGs are established across the country. NELTA here is a case in point. Research in the area is not scant either. The latest research in the area dealt with using ICT strategies to develop reflection among pre-service student teachers and the work has received proper appreciation.

5. Finally, I would like to talk about a few developments that have taken place in the field of ICT. ICT, today, is a buzzword and almost seen as a panacea for all ills in our society – including teaching. Efforts to introduce computers in language teaching began in the year 1985 when the systems worked on DoS environment with 32/64 MB rams. Computers were mostly untouchable by ordinary mortals, and one was required to undergo a special training programme to use a computer. NCERT, a premier institute established by the government of India to promote the school curriculum and offer quality teacher training was harnessed to train master trainers. The training of five-day duration provided the participants with adequate knowledge to use the computer for creating a file as well as save and print the document when needed. The pedagogy part was not developed. The entire programme was called CLASS – Computer Literacy and School Studies. However, this programme was withdrawn in favour of 'Operation Blackboard' for political reasons. The contesting party then thought blackboards could fetch more votes than computers.

DoS environment helped develop some language exercise using BASIC language for teaching grammar and vocabulary. Some initial activities in reading comprehension were also developed, but these were highly behaviouristic. They facilitated excellent

pattern practice. With the ushering in of the Windows environment, several manipulations could be brought about in the use of computers and for the first time, the ability of the machine to think algorithmically was exploited to check spelling and grammar rules. Authoring facility, which helped in building interactive exercises were introduced, and attempts were made to teach writing. However, this was limited to organizing sentences in a jumbled paragraph. Several aspects of discourse that are crucial to good writing could not be captured.

With further developments in computer programming and the invention of new languages, computers were given the ability to think. This is mostly realised in harnessing Artificial Intelligence and Natural Language Processing. Developing writing skills with inputs from discourse became a possibility. Another significant impact of this was using computers for translation of texts from one language into another.

Computers also facilitated storing dictionaries and other reference materials in soft forms. Soft copies of dictionaries became popular, and the added advantage was the inclusion of exercises which are all interactive. The latest edition of ALD with its *i-writer* is an excellent example of this. A large number of researchers are looking at ICT facilities in its various manifestations and their applications for teaching in schools. The use of software has extended beyond computers and filtered down to mobile phones. There are instances of research in the area of MALL though it is in its nascent stage.

It is necessary to mention the phenomenal contribution made by Paul Nation to ICT. He has developed software to test the vocabulary size of the test taker. He has also developed strategies by which a text can be analysed for its word count, sort it into types and tokens, and provide concordances for any word as it is used in the text. This provides for a greater understanding of the word, and a better strategy to develop one's vocabulary.

Research in ICT is relatively popular among the research scholars in India. Of late, several scholars have taken up work on using

ICT intervention for creating tests, evaluate them, analyse the scores and build databases for future use. Attempts are also made to use ICT for Dynamic Evaluation by offering online tests and allowing the test taker to stay in touch with the administrator throughout the test. Nonetheless, this is still in a nascent stage.

In the course of this presentation, I have made an attempt to trace research that is in progress, especially in the Indian universities in a few areas of ELT. Happily, this conference addresses each one of these areas, and I am confident there will be presentations on some of the aspects mentioned here.

COP: A Collaborative Feedback Technique

Ram Ashish Giri, PhD
Monash University, English Language Centre

Feedback to student performance is one of the most researched and published English language teaching (ELT) issues, yet, it remains a much-misunderstood issue in teaching English as a second/foreign language. Feedback in ELT refers to the response or information provided in the form of observation, concerns, and suggestions to improve students' language performances. The response often includes an evaluation of erroneous parts/items (what errors/mistakes there are, and why they are erroneous) and corrective measures (how these may be improved or corrected). Whether and to what extent teacher feedback makes a positive impact on improving students' performance is fiercely debated. The debate, however, is mostly inconclusive in that while some studies have reported positive outcomes of teacher feedback, many others have claimed that it is ineffective, a waste of time, and therefore, should be abandoned. One reason for the negative impact may be the fact that recipients of the feedback, i.e., students, remain detached from feedback processes. On the other hand, studies show that students learn more from feedback when they are engaged or made part of the feedback process. Based on this premises, the present action research project trialed

a collaborative approach to feedback in which students in small communities work together to provide feedback to each other.

Collaborative Approach to Feedback (COP) as an educational practice is widely practised to provide a collaborative and supportive learning environment in which the participants collaborate to learn from each other on matters relating to their learning. In this model, learning is regarded as an active and constructive process in which participants work together to create new knowledge (Dewey 1916), and support each other in small groups to achieve a shared goal (Slavin, 2011).

COP as a technique for providing feedback on academic writing has four tenets: peer learning, tribes, constructivism, and student engagement and blended learning. Firstly, peer learning is an interactive learning process for anyone by anyone for about almost everything (Slavin, 2011). As a reciprocal learning activity, it involves sharing of knowledge, and therefore, is mutually beneficial (Boud, 1988; Boud, Kogan,&Simpson, 2006). Similarly, tribes are small cooperative learning communities in which participants of a tribe work in a self-managed team to achieve a shared objective. Studies on tribes reveal higher achievement and retention in contrast to the traditional, competitive and individualistic learning (Gibbs & Ushijima, 2008).

Collaboration within 'tribes' helps improve self-organisation and in(ter)dependence in learning. It enables participants to develop group skills, critical skills (Abercrombie, 1969) and to be better motivated and committed to their learning (Yu, 1993). A widely-used learning model in English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL), collaborative tribes provide opportunities to develop social and interpersonal skills. One other premise of this theory is that knowledge is accessed and constructed through connections, interactions, and assembly of prior knowledge with the new ones. The members of COP community interact with each other as well as with the presented material, and by sharing what they already know about the problem, they develop new knowledge to resolve it. Two important things take place during the knowledge construction process. First, the members of COP

connect, which helps remove anxiety and stress of working in isolation. Second, the control of the teaching and learning process shifts from the teacher to increasingly more autonomous/ independent learner (Kep & Hill, 2008).

Finally, the approach embraces and emphasizes blended learning. Technology is combined with classroom learning at all levels. Flipped teaching and independent study are vigorously encouraged. The COP technique incorporates and facilitates blended learning by helping students to use their communication devices for learning. Students, for example, use their devices to connect and interact with each other during COP sessions, which may take place in class or at home.

The present qualitative study attempts to highlight some pertinent features and usefulness of COP as a collaborative feedback technique. It focuses on three areas: firstly, it explores what corrective feedback techniques prevalent in the current ESL/EFL writing practices; second, it examines how features of such techniques can be used to develop a collaborative feedback technique in which students themselves become the providers of feedback; and finally, it finds out student perceptions and motivations for using such a method.

Phases of the COP Process

The COP feedback process has the following four phases:

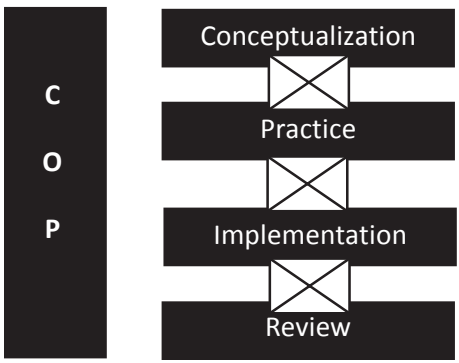


Figure 1: Phases of the COP Process

1. Conceptualization

In the COP process, students are a part of the process from the start. They detect incorrect linguistic forms, they diagnose them, and they suggest corrective measures. As they are new to the system, they need to be adequately prepared with correction codes and the terminologies to be used during COP sessions. Correction codes are codes or symbols used to diagnose and indicate types of errors committed (Giri & Awasthi, 1998). Learning how to diagnose errors takes place in the first week of a term.

2. Practice

This phase is basically practicing the COP technique using error correction codes. A name and a Google Folder is assigned to each COP community, which is shared by its members. Using the File Upload in the Google Drive page, the members of a COP community upload their first writings (or first drafts. Henceforth "initial submission") to their assigned folder. The initial submissions may be a simple outline/plan for writing at the feed-in phase, a fully developed draft at the feedback phase or reflective writing on the whole feedback experience at the feedforward phase. This folder is accessible to the members of the respective COP community only.

Practice on the COP process takes place in three steps. In the first step, the members of a COP community identify errors, diagnose them and suggest their corrections. In the second step, they only diagnose errors (indicate their types) in the margin but do not identify their locations or provide suggestions for corrections. In the third step, they only indicate which lines of the writing in question have errors, but they do not diagnose or identify their location and types.

Upon the completion of a session, a community member receives feedback from three or four fellow members. Individual students then work on their writings revise, improve and rewrite, which they submit to their teacher for their considerations (hereafter

termed as "final submission").This phase runs simultaneously with phase 1. The teacher provides the required assistance to facilitate the COP process.

3. Implementation

During the implementation phase, COP communities work together to provide feedback to each other with decreasing assistance from the teacher. The communities conduct three COP session per week, two sessions in class and one session at home. The purpose of the home session is to encourage students to work as a community without the teacher being physically present in the process. For each submission, there are three feedback sessions – feed-in, feedback, and feedforward.

The phase runs for seven weeks. Students, having received feedback from fellow community members revise and improve their writing. The improved versions of their writing are then submitted to the teacher for their general comments. The teacher compares their initial submissions with their improved versions, or the final submissions, to keep track of the changes and improvements.

4. Review

In the final week of the COP process, a review session is conducted. The review takes place in COP communities as well as in the class as a whole. The students are given a questionnaire, and a semi-structured interview is conducted with selected students to find out their experience as well as attitudes toward the process.

As pointed out in the beginning, there are discrepancies in the previous corrective feedback research, and its effect on students' attitude and their writing, therefore, is fiercely debated. While some studies seem to have focused on local, lexica1-syntax level errors, many others have taken a product approach in providing feedback in which students are treated as recipients of feedback. Some other studies have also suggested that ineffectiveness of

corrective feedback is mainly because it is generally vague, prescriptive and non-qualitative, and as a result, students develop unfavourable attitude towards it. Most studies do not appear to have taken a process approach to feedback. Notwithstanding, Radeeki and Swale (1988), Leki (1991), and Chandler (2001, 2003) reported that students had favourable attitude when they had the opportunity to correct their errors. Based on this premise, the present study adopted a process approach and integrated the recipients of feedback, the students, into the feedback process.

In the COP process, students themselves are creators of their feedback. As a part of the feedback process, students, in small communities, collaborate at every stage of the writing process and then work on each other's draft to generate corrective feedback. The COP process, however, raised positive as well as negative issues. This section elucidates some of these issues.

Engaging students in the feedback process and making it more meaningful for them has been an essential consideration of the study. The study finds that students are likely to take responsibility in detecting errors, seeking an explanation in trying to understand them and in improving their drafts if they become a part of the feedback generating process. What the study also finds is that when a student enjoys the process, the feedback becomes more meaningful, they have a favourable attitude towards feedback, and they are more motivated towards their work.

The study finds that the COP process is increasingly student-directed and student-centered. Although students are reliant on teachers as to how to proceed and what to do in the initial stage of the process, they become autonomous and independent in the later stages. The teacher' role is to create and facilitate the process rather than to control or monitor it, thus promoting independence in learning. Such autonomy is significant because independent learning is one skill that they will need throughout their academic life. While detecting and examining drafts of fellow community members, students take a critical and evaluative approach to it. They not only have to be critical of what they see but also have to

explain in what errors there are why they are errors and what can be done in order to correct them. This practice, in turn, promotes their critical thinking.

The COP process is embedded in technology. Students must have their own devices and *Google* software installed in them to actively engage with the materials and interact with each other. Therefore, the process incorporates blended learning. Getting used to using the shared *Google doc* and setting it up before every COP session may appear to be time-consuming. The initial sessions may seem to progress at a slow pace, and some students, who are fast learners, may get impatient as others catch up with the system. Some of them are likely to consider the approach a waste of time, especially, in the beginning. 'I understand what we are doing, but don't you think the lesson is slow going', said IN3.

Furthermore, some shy, introvert and 'weak' students may need a considerable amount of encouragement and scaffolding to get involved. Some students, for example, just do not like to offend their peers by criticizing their works while others may fear to offend them. This is in line with Chen (2013) and Lu and Bol (2007 who found that some students were not as critical as expected simply because they did not want to take the risk of potential disapproval from their peers.

Another critical issue raised by this study is that students were unable to detect some errors. These were some cases of article use, use of discourse markers, and somewhat known as global errors. As discussed in this article, global errors are content, discourse, and organization related errors and may interfere with the comprehensibility of a text (Ferris, 2002). This may be considered as an inherent weakness of the COP framework and should be treated differently in different contexts.

There are many implications for the teachers of academic writing. The article proposes the following framework to discuss these implications. As Figure 2 illustrates, there are four questions, which a teacher of writing needs to be aware of. They are: (a)

what feedback to provide; (b) why to provide feedback; (c) when to provide feedback; and finally, (d) how to provide feedback:

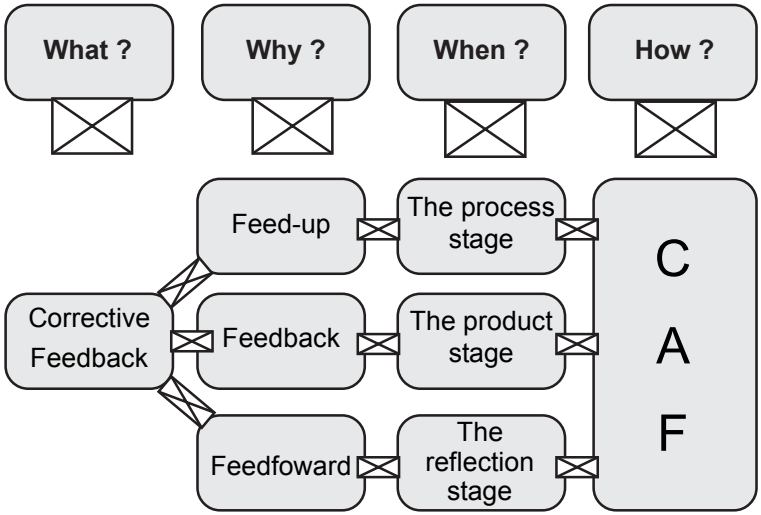


Figure 2: A framework for providing feedback

The first point in the theoretical framework in Figure 2 is what (type of) feedback should be provided. Leki (1991) and Chandler (2003) reported that students prefer comprehensive error-correction, rather than a focused or selective correction in which only errors of a particular type or category are marked and feedback provided on. Contrary to this, Tran (2013) and Bitchener (2012) suggest that focused feedback is more effective than unfocused feedback, especially at the beginning stage as learners can process the feedback more efficiently. The present study found that the COP generated more qualitative feedback when they were asked to focus on a particular type of errors (e.g., verb-related, tense related, mechanical and so on).

Similarly, Ferris (2002) recommends that treatable errors should be dealt with first, and untreatable errors could be treated later because selective treatable error-correction strategy helps students find errors with which they are prone. As discussed earlier, global errors require a higher degree of mastery over the

language systems, local errors, therefore, should be treated before the global errors. This is reasonable because students with a lower level of proficiency are more likely to work on such errors at the initial stage of the course.

The second point in the framework is why to provide feedback. There are two approaches to addressing this question, first of which is the product approach, which is a conventional approach in which feedback activity takes place when the draft is already produced and students are in the revising stage. They are given comments and strategies or correction to improve their drafts. It has already been pointed out in this article that the effectiveness of such an approach is contested. The second approach is the process approach in which the feedback activity starts as soon as the writing process begins. The COP advocates that the process approach to feedback has three steps. First, communities commence **feeding-up** activities as soon as students sit to set their goals and begin gathering and organizing ideas together to form an outline for their writing. It is in agreement with Hattie and Timperley (2011) who suggest, "A critical aspect of feedback is the information given to students about the attainment of learning goals related to the task" (p. 88). The feed-up activities, thus, may include a discussion of the task at hand, its goals and contexts along with the rubrics and descriptors used in the assessment process. Modeling or providing a model or sample of standard performance is effective at this stage. Second, **feedback** is provided on a task or a product. It may be aimed at the activities taken to complete a task to create a product, or, it can be an encouragement or praise to engage further on the task. Third, **feedforward** is an activity in which students are encouraged to take the learning forward or to the next level, i.e., in more challenging activities. Feedforward, thus, include "enhanced challenges, more strategies, and processes to work on the tasks, deeper understanding and more information about what is and what is not understood" (Hattie and Timperley, 2011, p. 90). The three processes of feed-up, feedback and feedforward roughly address the third point of the framework (i.e., when to provide feedback) and correspond to three separate stages; the **process stage**, the **production stage,** and the **reflection stage**. In other

words, feed-up takes place during the process of drafting, feedback is provided when the draft is produced and feedforward is reflecting on what learners do to avoid making similar errors in the following writing tasks.

The final point the article addresses is how to provide feedback. As it is evident now, feedback is best provided to students by students themselves in their small communities. The COP ensures that students have an opportunity to present their drafts and explain their ideas. It also makes feedback more meaningful. By allowing participants to interact with the feedback and to negotiate their meanings with the fellow community members, COP helps students construct their knowledge, which is useful for them. The COP as a process, thus, ismotivating and inspiring as students can see what other members of the community do. Finally, COP is engaging as everyone in class remains involved in the activity throughout the feedback sessions.

In conclusion, then, the value of student interaction and student collaboration in providing feedback cannot be exaggerated. The present study reaffirms that collaborative approaches to feedback have proven benefits. The research, for example, shows that when students work in small communities, they can detect and identify many errors and their corrective measures, which are more meaningful to them than when their teachers find and correct errors for them. Similarly, the approach strengthens student autonomy in learning, writing and revision practices. It also facilitates student engagement, which helps develop their language, especially, their sentence construction and vocabulary building. This finding is in line with Sato (2013) and Zhao (2014) who reported that such feedback techniques strengthen language acquisition. As the COP is interactive and encourages interaction among community members, it facilitates the development of speaking skills (Yu & Lee, 2014; Zhao, 2014). Considering the benefits discussed in this section, it may safely be said that community interaction is more effective than student-teacher interaction and it makes a substantial contribution to the overall language development of the participants.

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Teaching through "Google Classroom"

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Use of technology in the language classroom is commonly found around the world. Though using multimedia at tertiary level is also not new nowadays in Bangladesh, using the mobile phone is rarely found. Right now, the mobile phone has become very handy for using the internet; and lots of mobile phone-based applications are also available. Mobile phones have become the ultimate necessities for the young generation people in Bangladesh; and almost every tertiary level student own at least one mobile phone. Though, the purpose of using the mobile phone is not restricted to only making phone calls, this device provides lots of other facilities for the users. It enhances the communication facilities. Thus, using mobile phones for educational purpose would be very helpful. "Google classroom", an application developed by Google, provides different facilities to the teachers to transform the physical classrooms into a digital class. "Google classroom" can be used in desktop, laptop, and even smart phones.

Though smart phones and internet facilities are very handy nowadays, using mobile phone application in the classroom is still unpopular. Thus, to accelerate classroom activities, using

smart phones' applications would be useful. To understand the real situation, a research is needed on this issue. The aim of this paper is to present some practical pros and cons of using "Google classroom" in the literature classes of tertiary level.

The problem, however, is that using mobile phones app in the classroom of tertiary level in Bangladesh is a very new concept, so no research has been done yet on it. Thus, there is very limited data. So, this research should be done to understand the pros and cons of Google classroom in Bangladesh. The central concerns for exploration include the following:

1. Does "Google classroom" provide enough facilities to the teacher?

2. Is "Google classroom" user-friendly in the context of Bangladesh?

3. What are the challenges the students faced?

Here, only the review of literature is presented regarding the use of this technology.

Use of technology in English language teaching (ELT) started in the mid-1980s (Dudeney and Hockly, 2012). Though the concept of using technology in language teaching is not new to the first world countries, it is a new approach in the developing countries like Bangladesh. Thus, using technology in the language class is not affable for teachers in the country; it is still under process (Shohel and Power, 2010). However, many researchers find out the rapid fruitful outcomes of using technology in learning. Researchers also found that the effective outcomes depend on how the technology is used rather than what technology is used in the classroom. Thus, teacher education on using technology is also recommended.

Use of modern technology gives an opportunity to the teachers to accelerate the teaching and learning process; and the investment and expectations are also high but challenges for the teachers are abundant. Researchers like Gochitashvili (2013) show

how to use technology in useful ways to teach foreign languages. Teachers as well as students can use numerous resources from the internet as additional teaching and learning aids. When a teacher finds that the technology is useful for their classroom, they eagerly use it, and also motivate the students to use technology for learning. Besides teacher's encouragement, administrative policy with well-trained teachers is also needed for promoting technology-based learning.

The process of using technology in the classroom is not very simple like other educational innovations, it also occurs at various levels and it is affected by several issues. There can be, for instance, institutional constraints, educational issues, administrative concerns, cultural factors, political factors etc. Though the teacher is the main facilitator of the class, they are also restrained by these and other factors. After all, the attitude of the teachers towards technology is the main concern because it is the teacher who can decide what they will do or not do in the class. After teachers are well convinced, they can introduce technology in the class to accelerate teaching and learning.

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Application of Multiple Intelligences Theory in ELT

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Background

The application of the theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) in English language teaching (ELT) classes is always a matter of interest – for the teachers, teacher trainers and ELT practitioners – particularly in contexts where English is spoken as second and/or foreign language. This theory, specially, can be important in addressing ranges of intelligences that exist in learners. Assuming the fact that no learner is useless, this theory helps in learning and polishing the intelligence/s of each individual. (Armstrong, 2009, p. 6)

The MI Theory

The MI theory, introduced by Gardener in 1983, brought a paradigm shift in learning – assuming each learning is intelligent either linguistically, logically, musically, spatially, interpersonally, intrapersonally, bodily-kinesthetic or naturally. That is, there exist different intelligences (viz. linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, musical intelligence, visual-spatial intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, musical

intelligence, existential intelligence and naturalistic intelligence) in individual learner. Thus, MI manifests varied abilities of the learners. This theory allows learners to learn in a way that complies with their particular strengths (Gardner, 2006, pp. 8-17). Gardner (2006, p. 18) further exposes three intelligences that may exist in learners, which are "humor intelligence, looking intelligence and sexual intelligence".

MI theory suggests that teaching methodologies and techniques adopted by teachers with innate capacity of learners determine the success in learning. Each learner is special and capable to perform better in his/her area of interest. Identifying the special capacity of learners, the teachers need to address the capacities of the learners. The modality of teaching needs to be re-shaped based on learners' interest. Learning cannot be meaningful without addressing learners' interest.

Teachers need to adopt focused teaching approach. Only focused teaching is essential for identifying the learners' intelligence. Therefore, linguistically excellent learners are not necessarily intelligent logically or musically or so on. Thus, intelligence is determined by the learning rate and the nature of learner. (Armstrong, 2009, p. 20)

Implication of the MI Theory in ELT Classes

The MI theory is pluralized way of understanding the intellect. Recent developments in cognitive science, developmental psychology and neuroscience suggest that each person's intelligence is actually made up of autonomous facilities.

On implementing the MI theory in the classroom, teachers can be able to change their teaching and learning strategies and cater for the individual differences of learners. This theory emerged as an excitement in the educational community because it forms a marked contrast to the traditional view that treats an individual who possess only one general intelligence. But, the concept has been changed with the emergence of MI theory. No learner lacks intelligences. However, the degree of intelligences may vary. That

is, a learner with highly linguistic intelligence may not be equally intelligent in logical intelligence or spatial intelligent. However, one sort of intelligence automatically helps building another intelligence.

MI theory is taken as a framework for thinking, rethinking and playing with the ideas in relation to the intelligence. Richards and Rodgers (2010, p. 118) clearly state, "Applications of MI in language teaching have been recent". So, MI theory is the theory of learning new models of intelligences which are really applicable in teaching and learning. The learners with multiple intelligences can easily learn two or more languages very fast. The processing takes place as central to the whole life of the language learner and user. Richards and Rodgers (ibid.) further go on saying: "language is held to be integrated with music, bodily activity, interpersonal relationships, and so on". Therefore, language learning process takes place through integrative approach in a better way. Language learning is not only limited to use and adopt linguistic activities but it encompasses other aspects like music, interpersonal skill, logical reasoning, kinesthetic activities and so on.

To conclude, MI theory points out that learners learn best when they work in the information that is presented to them in a way suitable to their intelligence. The ability of learning depends upon the intelligence/s possessed by the learners. Therefore, it is clear that the MI theory has a wide application in education.

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Necessity for Implementing CEFR in Tertiary Level: A Case Study

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Introduction

Common European Framework of Reference **(**CEFR) has become an international standard assessment tool for describing language ability of learners since 2001. Though a number of researches have been accomplished to explore assessment system, no researches so far have focused on the importance of implementing international standard assessment system at Tertiary level in Bangladesh. This study was designed to focus on the significance of CEFR and the necessity of implementing an international assessment tool at tertiary level in Bangladesh.

Research background

Council of Europe (2001) has claimed that CEFR illustrates how to use a language, the skills and knowledge the language learners need to develop for effective communication within a set of cultural context. It also promotes language learning as a lifelong

task and measures the progress of learning and language ability by six different proficiency levels which are also known as 'Global Scale' (C2, C1, B2, B1, A2, A1). Zheng and others (2016) mentioned the definitions of these various levels in their research.

From previous research, it is proved that the CEFR scales are more feasible for raters which ensure the quality of rating in writing. Huhta and others (2014) in their study tried to validate the rating procedures in SLA research across two scales: an unmodified CEFR scale and a modified CEFR scale. By using these two scales, the CEFR scale and the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education, the researchers in their study rated performances of the learners' writing.

Objectives

The objective of the present study was to see the implementation of CEFR at tertiary level of education in Bangladesh especially in the context of private universities where the assessments should be transparent and the students can understand what they should do in their performance according to the descriptions and levels.

Research questions

The research questions of this study include the following:

1. What are the potential differences between the rubrics used in different universities and CEFR?
2. How do the teachers (users of CEFR and those who do not use it) assess their students' writing tasks?
3. Is it necessary to use international standard rubric to assess student's writing performance?

Hypothesis

The hypothesis of the study was that there would be differences between the assessment criteria of CEFR and Non CEFR users. The performance of the students would be better under CEFR than Non-CEFR; and the descriptive rubric could help the teachers to assess better and the students to write better.

Limitations

While carrying out this research we had to face problems. Though we had a plan of collecting good number of samples, things did not go accordingly. When we approached teachers of different universities, some of them did not readily participate in the research survey. Again, some were very much annoyed. However, at the end we had managed to collect twenty samples from different universities.

Methodology

To collect data, both qualitative and quantitative research methods were followed. The data were congregated through the questionnaire survey from 50 students and 20 teachers from different private universities of Chittagong in Bangladesh.

Result

As found from data analysis, the assessment criteria and scoring used by CEFR users were more systematized than the non-CEFRs users. Also, a well structured descriptive rubric helped not only teachers to assess better but also the students to write better and both considered that they should have international standard rubric.

Conclusion

To sum up, this paper illustrates a comparative analysis between the techniques of assessing students' writing tasks through the set rubrics of different universities. According to the analysis, The CEFR users are found in better situation than the Non-CEFR users regarding assessment criteria, levels and performance descriptions.

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Teaching English to the Hearing Impaired: Boon or Bane for Teachers?

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Background

Once during the time of SEE (School End Examination), my sister who was attending the exam requested my assistance in English subject. So, I tried to teach her some techniques of essay writing. But, soon, I felt uneasy to teach her because she is an HI (Hearing Impaired) student. We communicated through writing which was consuming longer time; however, she was learning the things more easily than my expectation as she was conditioned to communicate in written form. But for me it was time consuming and unnatural. I could not teach her more due to language difficulty. This incident made me think about the difficulties and hardships of those teachers who have been teaching such students.

Hearing impairment

Hearing impairment refers to the inability of hearing capacity which occurs due to accident or illness or inborn weakness. As Special Education Policy 2053 defines, 'a person who cannot speak and hear only, but physically fit, mentally intelligent and clever as other ordinary person' is known as a hearing-impaired

person. Fifteen percent of the population in the world has some hearing loss due to lack of medical help, poverty and difficulty of access to transportation (NCTSN, 2006). It seems single but includes the binary problem, i.e. the person suffering from impairment is deprived from hearing as well as speaking ability.

HI is categorized into various types according to its nature. Based on loudness or intensity of hearing loss, which is measured in decibels (dB) units, it is classified into mild, moderate, severe and profound level. Generally, only children whose hearing loss is greater than 90 dB are considered the deaf. However, hearing impairment refers to any degree of hearing loss, from mild to profound level.

English language for HI children

English is an international language, and presently it has gained more prestige than other languages. In this regard, HI children can also make this language as their future marker. It means such children are also provided vocational as well as academic education, assuming that vocational knowledge can help them to sustain their life in absence of academic knowledge. If English is added in their vocational knowledge they can internationalize their work and empower themselves further.

Learning English has become a very important and crucial fact for both hearing and HI children. For these both kinds of children of non-English speaking country, English skill development is also becoming a critical educational need. A good, functional knowledge of English is essential for accessing the wealth of English-language information disseminated via the World Wide Web and through other technological sources. However, HI learners generally experience tremendous difficulty in acquiring spoken languages in contrast to their natural and effortless acquisition of sign languages. Many HI learners accomplish only partial acquisition of the spoken language and experience numbers of difficulties in reading comprehension and written expression.

Purpose and method

The purpose of this study is to explore the English language teaching difficulties faced by the hearing teachers in HI classes. For this I followed the qualitative approach using interview where I purposively selected four English language teachers from two different schools for deaf located in Kavre and Kathmandu.

Result and Discussion

Besides the lots of advantages of ELT to HI, the most common hardship the teacher felt is the problem in sign language which has only limited signs to express multiple meanings. Such things often make the students confused about the meaning the teachers wanted to express. They mostly use Nepali sign language where very limited signs are developed. Moreover, there are multiple meanings expressed through the same sign which often confuses them. For example, 'friend' and 'pleased'; 'thank you' and 'love' are expressed by the same signs. To make them understand the things the teachers have to use some visuals with captions or pictorials. But it consumes teachers' time in preparation of such materials.

The shy nature of the students also hinders the learning ability due to which they become inactive in classroom activities. This indicates that classroom includes students having different nature and cognitive levels of understanding; however, teachers are using the same instructional method to all of them. They could not apply differentiated instruction due to extra work load to the teachers.

Those teachers also face some technical difficulties which could not let them teach in better way. They felt the lack of relevant modern devices in the classroom like multimedia projector, internet, and facility of photocopy machine which can help them to provide instant materials to the students and also save teacher's time so that they could provide sufficient assistance for better learning. However, they have been using pictures and other available materials though they are insufficient for language

teaching. They can also learn more actively through drama, pictures and videos.

Besides, teachers need proper training regarding special education. The concerned authority must organize training sessions for the teachers, at least once an academic year, in order to fortify or flourish their teaching quality. This is also one of the reasons which is dragging them towards difficulties. To overcome such situations the school must provide appropriate teacher training either through the media or with the help of subject experts.

Conclusion

Those four teachers shared similar teaching difficulties though they represent two different schools. However, the difficulties like sign language problem, lack of technical assistance and the application of differentiated instruction; there are some positive parts of being an English teacher for HI children. The teachers must know the sign language which is an additional ability to them. Similarly, these teachers should learn the teaching techniques both for special education and ordinary education. Moreover, they need to gain the technical knowledge to operate modern educational devices. Finally, they must have dynamism of acting, painting, drawing, role-playing and dramatizing along with teaching.

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Effective instructions for teachers

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Background introduction

Sometimes teachers terminate the tasks producing a completely unexpected conclusion in their group works. I have found that understanding instructions by the participants is crucial for task achievement. As a teacher educator, I decided to conduct an action research on making instructions effective during assigning tasks, and it was presented later. This was mentored and reviewed by the British Council Nepal.

Brief notes on action research

Action research is a tool of continuous professional development. It is practitioner-based, self-reflective, open-ended, developmental, and a kind of self-evaluation process. In fact, the actor tests alternative strategies and ensures better achievement in teaching-learning.

Action research processes

1) Selecting a ***focus:*** The actor decides what aspect or topic/ area is to investigate. Or, this is a stage of prioritizing the urgent problem. For example, this can be students' participation in classroom interaction, providing effective instructions, applying novel techniques to motivate students, peer correction of students' errors etc.

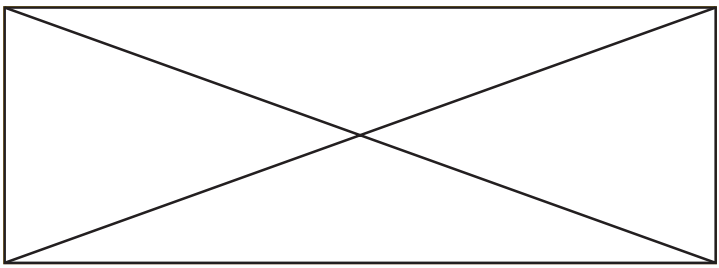
2) ***Research question:*** By this, we mean answerable question on any specific concern or issue. There are differences between a question given to students for homework and a research question. Compare: How can we reduce students' errors? How can I implement peer correction as an effective way of improving students' grammar? Remember, there are alternative solutions (as well as research question/ hypothesis) and the focused concern in the second question.

3) ***Plan/intervention:*** What will I do? What can I do? This stage involves more elaboration of alternative solutions to bring change in the behavior of the actor and consequently the achievement. For example, forming of mixed ability student groups and assigning them to comment on each others' mistakes can be a plan. When the plan is implemented, it becomes the action.

4) ***Observation/data collection:*** Action research is mainly a qualitative research which has enough quantitative evidences. Data are analyzed using various mathematical formula, interpreted and presented in figures and explained.

5) ***Reflection:*** Now, the researcher evaluates whether the expected result has been achieved. This stage also evaluates the overall processes of action research. The process recurs until the learning target is achieved. So, *re-planning* can take place if the target is not achieved after the intervention.

6) ***Dissemination:*** Generally action research report is disseminated among the staff.



Giving instruction: An action research report

The researcher realized that when the instructions during task setting were not clearly communicated, the learners tried to understand by generalizing in the way they were familiar with and ended up with unexpected responses. Therefore, making effective instructions and checking understanding were chosen as focus of this action research. The research was guided by three research questions: Pre-plan instructions, making instructions short and simple, and using instruction checking questions (ICQs).

The respondents were 18 Rupandehi-based teachers who were randomly selected; and 11 Surkhet-based head teachers were also selected – who were participants of Core Skills training under Connecting Classrooms project of British Council. They completed checklist during training sessions; and thus the available data were cumulated and analyzed comparing them.

The influences of three major intervention strategies were studied. One significant strategy was the practice of pre-planned short and simple instructions which were followed by pre-set ICQs, and whenever possible non-verbal means of communication were simultaneously applied to facilitate comprehension, as the third strategy.

The researcher found that the participants could understand instructions well and followed the tasks. It is also interesting to note that often one or another group came up with answer that was slightly different from what was expected. It is an eye-opener for the researcher that there were some deviations in the group productions. As a serious confusion was also observed when the task instruction and supplemented demonstration were incompatible. It was a great lesson for the instructor not to

allow any irrelevant comments before the completion of the assignment. The responses of the second group stated that almost all (81.81%) the tasks were completed well although some repetitions and individual supports to clarify instructions were expected. All respondents found the instructions to be short, simple and clear; and proper uses of ICQs ensure clarity of tasks. The peer reviewer wrote, "The activities were better planned so the participants were engaged well and achieved desired learning outcomes."

Lessons learnt

Effective instructions became catalytic to achieve desired objectives of the sessions. The participants were focused on the tasks and specific contents and activities set in the training curricula. It helped to save time and maintain pace and fluency of activities.

Dissemination

British Council Nepal has published the detailed report in the publication entitled *Journeys of Reflective Practice* (2018). It also sponsored the presentation of the action research in NELTA International Conference, thus it helped to spread the idea among a broader community of teachers.

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Processing Critical Reading in EFL Classes: Teaching through Tasks

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Critical approach to reading prioritizes the development of learners' capacity to examine the meaning of text for raising critical language awareness. Critical reading takes a text/ language use as questionable and problematic, social/ideological processes, and complexity of meaning (Cots, 2006). Critical reading approach, i.e. reading with an attitude (Pennycook, 2001) aims to develop the learners as the users of language, analysts of texts and talks, and the masters of the skills required to process the information and comprehend the text as the three basic competencies. The workshop bearing this title (in the conference) mainly aimed to engage the participants in processing critical reading tasks.

So as to achieve the objectives, I began my presentation by introducing critical reading approach and the activities for enhancing critical language awareness among learners. Critical reading approach has been developed to promote a set of performance skills to the learners. Those skills include predicting the theme, visualizing the things expressed, connecting the ideas, raising questions, clarifying the meaning, and evaluating the progress. In such activities, teachers can encourage the learners for trying to figure out what might happen out in a given situation. The students can picture out the people, places and events being

discussed. Similarly, they try to connect what they are reading to other texts and the real world and ask questions about the materials they are reading. The learners can be encouraged to identify the main points and summarize the text, judge the story/ text and the actions of the characters.

After introducing critical reading approach and its focus in a classroom, I involved the participants in pair work in which they were required to ask and answer in clockwise form. I distributed a piece of text to each group which included a story of two colleagues who were in a city for their study. The text included pre-and post-reading questions. I then asked the participants to do the following things:

- Answer a series of pre-reading questions,
- Read the text in order to find out the things being discussed,
- Interpret the text in terms of representations of social structure and ideological presuppositions that the author makes and the effects of the representations that may have on the audience, and then
- Ask them to take into account the aspects related to the production and consumption of the text such as authorship, purpose, intended audience, source and connections with other texts.
- Finally, ask them to identify how the linguistic structures used in the text contribute a global meaning representing a particular ideological position.

With the series of activities above, I introduced the participants with a task-based model for processing critical reading in ESL/ EFL classroom with reference to the task model given by Willis (1996). The participants got the three-fold activity session as a practical model for processing critical reading. Starting with pre-task, I handed them another text which was different from the earlier text and engaged them in pre-task session. I involved them

in group work and asked to read the text in group, interpret the text in terms of the meaning of each argument found in the text. Then, I further let them think about how the text contributes to a particular representation of the world and whether the representation comes into conflict with their own representations, how the textual representation is shaped by the ideological position of its production. More importantly, they were engaged to reflect on how the representation contributes to reinforcing or changing the ideological position of the reader.

Based on the task model of Willis (1996), then, I involved the participants in task cycle in which they were engaged in task-cycle as a part of discursive practice. I went on giving the questions to specify the communicative situation of text, introduce text types and ask to reflect on the questions like: Where can they find a text like this? What kind of readers is it addressed to? Is it written for students or non-students? What is the author trying to tell us? And what do you know about the life of people discussed in the text? Towards the end of the workshop I engaged them in language-focus activities as per the task model. It was basically assigned for textual practice in which the participants were asked to examine and discuss specific features of the text and identify textual and semantic features including linking words, contradictory ideas, and attitude towards the arguments made in the text.

At the end of the workshop, I concluded critical reading tasks focusing upon the social, discursive and textual practices. I made the participants clear on the goals of three levels practices. The goal of social practice is to find out the extent to which the text is shaped by social structures and discourse influences; the goal of discursive practice is to specify communicative situation taking an account of both material and cognitive aspects related to the conditions of textual production and interpretation and the goal of textual practice is to focus on formal and semantic features of text construction such as grammar and vocabulary which contribute to convey specific message. Cots (2006) suggested three specific roles of teachers in processing critical reading approach; and I clarified those roles to the participants and encouraged them

to establish trust, answerability and reflexivity in their classroom practices with some practicable guidelines. (Email: sharmagokul061@gmail.com)

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Playing with Mobile Phones and Learning with them

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Background

Information communication and technology is one of the widely discussed issues in the field of English language teaching and learning. In almost all teacher training programs today, trainers stress the point that use of technology promotes efficiency in teaching. In Nepalese context, MOE (2013, 2016) also advocates that the integration of ICT in education enhances the quality of education.

However, use of ICT devices like Smartphone is shunned in school setting. Parents' reaction corroborates the school administrative practices. They often blame that students use smart phone more for fun than for learning. So, they want to control the use of mobile phone either at home or school. For this, they have employed Discipline In-charge (DI) and gate keeper in school. They search their whole body at the school entrance. They sometimes investigate their class without prior information. If they find any, they penalize Rs. 1,000 cash and confiscate the device. They do not return it unless they complete the school level.

However, students evade the eyes of teachers in the class and use it secretly. Teachers can spot students playing with Smartphone under the desk with left hand and getting right hand

ready to write during the class time. Similarly, they are even found watching videos in group during break time. Some of them pretend to have headache and rest their head on the desk and then text their friends. Others go to toilet with Smartphone secretly and chat from there. So, in this study I explored the use of mobile phone for teaching learning English in computer dummy society.

In order to challenge the existing tradition, I conducted two mini-researches. First I used mobile application for teaching English and preparation for the exam; and the second one was teaching or learning writing skills through web-quest technique.

Experiment no 1

The Context

There were 45 students of Grade 11 whose medium of instruction up to grade 10 was Nepali. They could hardly write a correct English sentence on their own; as a result more than 70% students had failed in English before. They could only imitate what was written on the board. The assigned course would hardly be completed within the academic session. There was no extra practice for the exam; so fail rate continued.

Intervention

One Saturday, I took them to picnic where everybody brought their Smartphone. I installed Mero Spark, a mobile application on the mobile sets of top five talent students from my mobile phone. The students were divided into five groups – each one led by one of those five students. The leader was assigned the task to install the application on the mobile phones of their group members. Students shared resources and supported the weaker members of the group. They copied answers and read them at their comfortable time and speed. I taught them the lesson in the class and got them to practise at home. The group leaders provided feedback to their members.

Result

My work load decreased by more than 50%. From this reduction in burden, I was able to manage plenty of extra time for discussion. The students learned at their comfortable time, place and speed. More than 90% students passed English in mid-term exam and 92% in final exam. Next year, other two teachers followed my style of teaching. Then the school administration and students did not feel the learning of English as a burden. Instead, they preferred teaching English subject in English medium (while they demanded to deliver the lesson in Nepali previously). Both the students and school administration were satisfied from the experience. The school's head teacher confessed, "You falsified my belief. English course would not complete even if you (teachers) teach the same course for three years in Nepali medium section."

Experiments no 2

Context

There were 30 students in English medium class. They could write almost correct English sentences on their own. They did not have problems in reading comprehension as well. Most of them would score 60% plus in their English test. The school admin demanded 80% plus in English exam; but students were careless in their writing. They would write whatever they knew haphazardly. The students nicknamed me "stingy" because of my scoring in their answer sheet.

Intervention

I divided the students into groups of six. I assigned a topic to search in their mobile phone and requested to share it in their Facebook group. Only one member of each group would report in the class. The presenter could not be repeated next day to present. The class time was divided in this way: 5 minutes for setting the activity; 20 minutes for presentation; 10 minutes for comments and feedback; 5 minutes for voting by the students of

one group to the next. I cumulated the vote at the end of the lesson/ topic. The winner group was awarded with literature books. In last 5 minutes I summarized the lesson and set topic for mobile web quest next day.

Result

Students' writings were dramatically improved since they were exposed to a variety of English texts within a short time. The students could work independently to solve their problems. The School's target was to get 100% distinction achieved with A (80-89%). The parents were happy as their children used mobile for learning. I shared it in a staff meeting: Other teachers also followed the technique.

Conclusion

Mobile phone can be one of the best supplementary materials for ELT. I recommend that instead of prohibiting students to use mobile phone, teachers, parents and school authority need to help students' enhance their digital skills for its effective use.

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Teachers in Dilemma: English or Nenglish in Nepalese EFL Classroom?

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Introduction

With its global spread, English has undergone through the natural process of hybridization, nativization and diversification, causing the emergence of many varieties of English such as Hinglish, Nenglish and Singlish. In Nepal, English has been 'Nepalicized' and Nepali has been 'Englishized' (Karn, 2012). Literature shows that a kind of hybrid English known as Nenglish has emerged in Nepal, which has caused teacher dilemmas on which variety of English to adopt in Nepalese EFL classroom.

Objectives

My study aims to identify the features of Nenglish and highlight teacher dilemmas posed by the issues of intelligibility, identity, the nature of standard, practicability and acceptability in choosing English or Nenglish in the classroom.

Methodology

Besides secondary data, primary data were collected using questionnaire from ten college teachers and forty M.Ed. students

from Morang who were sampled purposively. Some data were also collected from my usual classroom teaching.

Findings and discussion

Nenglish has its own phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic and discourse features that make it different from English. Some of them include the following:

- Nenglish speakers pronounce some English words quite differently. They replace many English sounds by Nepali ones, e.g. labiodental fricatives /f/ and /v/ by bilabial plosives /ph/ and /bh/ respectively; /g/ by /gh/ as in 'ghost'. There is no difference between /□:/ and /□/, /i: / and / □/, /u: / and /□/, and among /□/, /□: / and / □/. Length and stress are ignored and only the glide-up (rising) intonation is properly applied.

- In Nenglish, English suffixes are attached to Nepali words, and vice-versa (*andajification*, *khubility*, *Ranarchy*, *sharamless, candidateji*, *Dadle*, *Vanwala).* Unusual suffixes are attached to words (*proudy*, *talency*, *heartly*, *weightage*).

- Code mixing (e.g. *mero* love story), reduplication (e.g. small small things), transliteration of English words, redundancy (we want to discuss *about*…/How long *time*….?), and literal translation of Nepalese proverbs (Husband-wife's quarrel is like hay-fire: it burns quick and extinguishes even quicker) are common in Nenglish. Words are unusually compounded (time-pass/ cousin-brother).

- Typical syntactic features in Nenglish include wrong word order (Tell me who is John?), use of invariant tags (You are busy, isn't it?), stative verbs in progressive aspect (I'm not understanding), no use of possessive s-genitive (brother house) and lack of third person subject-verb agreement (She cook rice). In addition, count nouns are not pluralized (One of the student) but mass nouns are pluralized (furnitures, staffs). Verb paradigms are taught as V1, V2, V3, V4, V5

and structure of each tense is taught as if mathematical formulas are being taught (Sub. + V1/V5 + object).

- In discourse, Nenglish speakers use a lot of Nepali terms *na, la, hai, kya, ni, ke, pani, ta, kyare*.; Nepalese kinship terms *bhauju, kaka*; Nepalese interjections *are yaar, oho, oi, hajoor, khai, ammai;* and honorifics are used after the name of a person (Harisir).

Summary of the teacher dilemmas posed by the issues of intelligibility, identity, the nature of standard, practicality and acceptability (the terms used by Ferguson, 2006) are as follows.

Intelligibility: Although some scholars opine that new varieties of English may be mutually unintelligible, almost all (98%) respondents in my study do not see the danger of mutual unintelligibility in the use of Nenglish. For them, Nenglish is more intelligible than English for intra-national communication. Only 48% respondents said that British/American English is intelligible.

Identity: In response to whether English or Nenglish maintains our identity, most respondents (92%) reported that Nenglish expresses their identities; and 76% of them opined to appropriate English to develop a sense of ownership.

Nature of standard: Regarding the issue of standard, 72% respondents said that British/American English is standard but 80% said that each variety of English (Nenglish) is standard on its own.

Practicality: Regarding the issue of practicality of English or Nenglish in Nepalese EFL classroom, more respondents (84%) reported that Nenglish is practicable, whereas 46% of them supported British/American English.

Acceptability: Positive attitude was found towards Nenglish. Most respondents (94%) accepted they speak Nenglish; 82% of them preferred Nenglish in speaking and writing; and 92%

accepted that Nenglish should be standardized. Similarly, 50% of them disagreed that English is learnt to understand British/ American culture.

Conclusion

Literatures show that a distinct variety of English exists in Nepal, which has caused problems in teaching, testing and error analysis. What we need to do is to inquire further into Nenglish (Giri, 2015) and its codification and standardization in time. Unless Nenglish is legitimized and accepted pedagogically as a norm, teacher dilemma will remain forever.

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Teaching English without a Textbook

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This presentation primarily has focused on the reason why English should be taught without using fixed textbook in the classroom. In addition, some of the issues of using textbook in the classroom are also discussed; and attempt has been made to give some reasons in favour of discarding a textbook. Furthermore, it is claimed that teachers and students would be motivated to explore different resources and references in teaching and learning English.

Using textbook: An overview of influencing factors

Gurukul education system was popular in Nepalese education in which teaching and learning was guided through ritual practices. As a result, Vedas, Gita, Ramayan and other religious books were the major books in the ancient time. Later, when formal education was started from the establishment of Durbar High School in 1910 BS in Thapathali Palace by Jung Bahadur Rana, using textbook was continued. In today's practice, textbook is considered as the fundamental reference material in the context of Nepal too – whereby more emphasis has been placed on the use of printed textbooks in Nepalese classrooms. Presently,

educational institutions have been giving more emphasis on the use of textbook rather than other reference materials. This shows that there is high dominance of textbook in the present teaching-learning practices in the context of Nepal.

Issues of Using Textbook in EFL Classroom

Textbook is taken as a 'master' book; as a result teachers are becoming passive agents of the academia (Awasthi, 2006). Using textbook is a traditional practice which may have negative influence in the entire teaching and learning system. If textbook is taken as the master book in teaching and learning, students will learn limited knowledge and information. Such practices recall the teacher-centered teaching and learning rather than student-centered teaching and learning. Formal education does not help in developing learners' ability and creativity; that is why it is a way of killing their creativity (Robinson, 2007). It is believed that formal education system binds students to follow certain textbook, gets them appear in examination to pass it. If students just follow the textbook, there is the possibility of learning insufficient knowledge and information. Such practice would not motivate and encourage students to involve themselves in their learning. Therefore, it is true that textbook cannot be the only resource which needed in EFL classroom.

Why to drop a textbook?

There are several reasons why textbooks need to be dropped from teaching-learning practice. It is true that we can arouse students' interest through the use of various teaching and learning materials in the classroom. It also supports for better learning because learners need to be active in learning process. I believe that interesting and effective learning environment can be created through the use of various materials in regular classroom – which would help to avoid certain textbook. Likewise, teachers can also be benefited by avoiding textbook. For instance, they need to consult various materials and bring interesting ideas, information

and knowledge for better teaching and learning. We can create suspense in the classroom by using new text or lesson which can be supportive for motivation and concentration among learners. Teachers can use authentic materials which have a positive effect on the learner's motivation (Richards, 2001). Hence, there may not be the need for fixed textbook in the classroom.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that textbooks are written for global market so they may not have authentic materials. In addition, it is true that sole dependence on the textbook spoils the creativity of teachers and students. It makes both teachers and learners passive agents in teaching and learning. Hence, teachers need to drop the textbooks in order to improve students' potentiality of learning, implement student-centered teaching, make effective classroom environment, enrich professional development and motivate students for better learning in EFL context.

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Student Motivation in EFL/ESL Classroom

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Introduction

Learning starts from the learners' interest and motivation towards the content or skill. The major goal of education is to encourage students to achieve the goal. Their interest and motivation in language learning can play a significant role in learning process. Motivation is the key factor in language learning. The aim of language teaching in language classroom is to make learners capable in their work and to develop their entire language skills. Dornyei, (1994, p.273) states, "Motivation is one of the main determinants of second/foreign language learning achievements". Learners get success in learning only if they perform well and come ahead with creativity. If learners are not motivated, the expectation of teachers remains fail.

As James (2012, p. 51) notes, motivation is recognized as a factor that plays critical role in second language learning. Similarly, Chen and others (2005, p. 610) state, "Language learning theory has generally accepted the axiom that language learners with higher level of motivation will be higher achievers". If the learners have high level of motivation, they learn far better than the

learners who have lower degree of motivation. In my experience of teaching at school and college, I found highly motivated students achieving higher level of competence in language. For enhancing their motivation, sometimes I used to present moral stories to my students which developed their insights and brought them to their real learning activities. I used to tell them my own narrative describing how I started teaching and became a teacher. In this way, self-journey and self-portfolio of the teacher can motivate students which may help them to develop their insights. It makes clear that language learning and learners' success depends on the motivation of the learners because it is related to the human mind.

Though there are a large number of researches carried out in this field, the concern regarding how we take this factor in language classroom is rarely discussed. What activities make learners motivated? To address this problem (concerning how we implement it in our real classroom) is the issue to discuss in this article. While going through the different sources of literature, I come to know that motivation of the learners can play vital role in language learning. To find the answers to this question I interviewed five secondary level English teachers of Nepal who have more than five years' teaching experience.

Results

The most common problem to all the participants was that motivating students in classroom was difficult for them. They said that it depends on the nature of learners as well as the entire school environment including administration, teaching-learning materials, facilities, infrastructure, and so on. One said, "This is the day of ICT or technology what must be used in the classroom with the involvement of students." I also experienced that using technology in classroom brings creativity, enthusiasm, motivation and excitement. It helps students to become more responsible and active.

Another most common and crucial matter, that I also experienced through my teaching, is collaborative work in language classroom where teacher can facilitate everything to the learners in their

need. They perform there as a model and share ideas together. Working together and sharing ideas can build better understanding to both teacher and students. Learning by sharing can create sound understanding about the subject matter.

Conclusion

Learning process can be productive and effective only if the learners are motivated. Students' motivation in classroom seems most important for learning achievement. It plays prominent role in learning process and language acquisition. Motivation comes with interest, desire and environment of a particular place or situation. It energizes students to learn and act accordingly.

I found that self-driven motivation was quite strong. Teacher needs to reinforce and encourage the learners to do better. Telling stories, role play, forming interactive group for discussion and meditation are some major activities for learner motivation. The other most important part is activities and engagement in the classroom for the students where they can see and observe their potentiality. Proper meeting and collaboration with the parents and other teachers may become more fruitful. Sometimes teacher or administration can make an educational excursion to the new place for learning purpose.

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Leveraging Students' Profiles for Conducive Environment in Classrooms and beyond

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Introduction

Teaching and learning get accelerated when a teacher creates a conducive environment for each student in the classroom and beyond. As each student is different and faces different challenges, the instructions and approaches need to be customized according to the students' learning preferences and personal interests. Therefore, students' profiles can help teachers build rapport with students, understand things from their perspectives, and address them accordingly. Students' profiles can help them in letting their teachers know their interests, strengths and weaknesses. It helps teachers build rapport with students, recognize and remove potential barriers to learning, create learning environments and opportunities to maximize engagement, select contents and materials suitable for students and support positive transitions to new environments.

Rationale for the study

Students at tertiary level in particular have more diversities in terms of their abilities, personal interests and preferences, and also in terms of their socio-cultural and socio-economic background than students of primary and secondary levels. Generally, students at primary and secondary level of a particular area are brought up and educated in almost the same socio-cultural setting. Even then, they are exposed to almost the same set of practices as they receive their primary and secondary education from their own and known environmental setting. But after completing twelve class education, students from diverse backgrounds get admitted into universities and are exposed to a new social and academic setting. Moreover, as human beings, each student has his/her own temperament, liking, disliking and individual talent. So, it has been crucial for teachers to learn each student's profile to address and teach them accordingly. The researchers thus feel the urge to investigate the importance of keeping and maintaining students' profile in order to create conducive learning environment in classes and beyond; and the study was conducted at Green University of Bangladesh.

Background of the study

Students' profiles are the documents or some specific records of students containing information about their past and present as well as academic and non-academic. According to UDL (2014) a student profile is a formal document or can simply be a series of conversations with students. Along with students' profile, the term *Leverage* needs to be clarified for the current paper because it denotes a specific meaning here. The term *Leverage* usually refers to *Influence, Power, Force, Control, Pull, to get as much advantage or profit as possible from something that you have*. The researchers here take the last meaning as they believe that it suits the title and the objectives of the paper well. Tomlinson (2001) worked on how to differentiate instructions in mixed-ability classrooms; and they strongly argued for student's data such as the knowledge background, group orientation, learning style, intelligence

preference, satisfactions, prominent point, weakness, preferred learning environment, academic progression which can help the teachers manage their teaching. Tomlinson (2001) works for improvising instructions depending on the ability of the students and setting of the classrooms whereas the present study is unique in its area as it explores the necessity of keeping and leveraging students' profile at tertiary level in the context of Bangladesh.

Results and discussion

The study was conducted in a very natural classroom and campus setting of Green University of Bangladesh. The researchers selected a particular section of 26 undergraduate students of which 14 were males and 12 females. The researchers also interviewed 4 teachers who conducted classes with same section (the experimental section) and one of the researchers was a course teacher. All students have eleven class education and diverse socio-cultural and socio-economic background; and their age range covers 18 to 22 years. The researchers collected data by observation and in-depth interview.

The researchers categorized the findings from both teachers' and students' perspectives. In terms of teachers' perspective that is based on teachers' in-depth interview, the researchers found that keeping and maintaining students' profile helps teachers understand students' interests, strengths, and weaknesses. It makes teachers address and instruct students accordingly. It also helps teachers to recognize and remove potential barriers towards learning. From teachers' interview, the authors also come to know that students' profiles create an environment and opportunities to maximize engagement. Based on the findings, the researchers argue that teachers can feel the pulses and understand the temperament of students as doctors do with their patients and mothers do with their children. The researchers, thus, recommend providing prescribed profile form prepared with the help of parents to students at the beginning of the semester or academic year. The authors also advocate for the practice of students' profile

from the primary level though they conducted the research among tertiary level students.

Conclusion

Adopting learner-oriented and improvising approaches or techniques by the teachers result in producing favourable environment – which contributes to fruitful learning. Thus, teachers must understand students' strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes, abilities and inabilities which can be better portrayed and understood in and from their profiles.

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Nepalese EFL Teachers' Pedagogical Capital and its Usage

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Introduction

Pedagogical capital is an asset in which an individual teacher owns different experiences and expertise during his/her tenure to educate his/her students. It is believed that a good teacher needs to have better techniques to make his/her delivery effective and meaningful. Yousif and Aasen (2015) state that pedagogical capitals are the assets activated and emerged in a social situation which is attached and integrated individually. It is believed that the teachers' pedagogical capital embeds various assets such as teachers' overall language teaching strategies and policies, students' encouragement and motivation, maintaining child-friendly environment, adapting new techniques and approaches as per the need and interest of learners.

Pedagogical capital, therefore, incorporates the innovative ways of teaching, potential contribution, invaluable practices, social production, and self-reflection (Yousif & Aasen, 2015) to contribute on the part of learners for their learning and development. Teachers' pedagogical capital may be different from one individual to another. Their experiences shape their own pedagogical expertise which is largely affected by the context they encounter and their lived and living experiences. Day (2010) urged that every teacher's commitment, enthusiasm, and

intellectuality are obvious for pedagogical enrichment that helps to disseminate content in an easier manner. Teacher's pedagogical capital also determines the learner's capabilities, learning outcomes and meaning-making process.

The study

I carried out a study to explore the use of Nepalese English language teachers' pedagogical capital by employing narrative inquiry as a research method. Observation and interview were the core tools used for data collection.

When I began exploring the use of pedagogical capital in the research participants in a real classroom situation, I felt more exciting and empowering as they frankly shared their use of pedagogical capital. In doing so, I attempted to incorporate their words, actions, voices and uphold the narrative principles. I summarized the collected field-texts from participants associating their use of pedagogical experiences to their life stories.

Teachers' pedagogical capital and its usage

Various experiences and stories of my research participants helped me widen the contextual understanding and use of their pedagogies in classrooms. In fact, their connotation helped me cover-up with the idea of Munro (2007). According to him, pedagogic knowledge incorporates what a tutor feels about schooling (teaching, learning, curriculum, and assessment), the organization, trend and the society where they educate as an instructor, their skill and understanding as the main possessor with their morals. The pedagogical knowledge base of teachers includes all required cognitive knowledge for creating effective teaching and learning environments.

The narratives of my research participants revealed that content knowledge, methodological skill, technological awareness, teaching experiences, classroom management skill, workplace, self-esteem and reflection were the prior pedagogical capitals of the teacher. Moreover, teacher narrative invoiced that they used

their capital in different ways. Their pleading narratives evoked that they used their capital; teaching with appropriate classroom management, teaching in a child friendly atmosphere, teaching with full access to technological asset, teaching with contextual mapping and teaching with cooperation, coordination, and collaboration.

Conclusion

My research participants conceptualized that the knowledge of English language enables them to deliver the lesson efficiently in the classroom. For them, pedagogical capital of English language teachers is to ensure the transfer of content knowledge effectively to the learners applying different means of methodological techniques such as pair work, project work, group work, power-point presentation, and so on. Furthermore, my participants also perceived that the use of different methods and strategies enable every individual teacher to be determined, rigorous and professional.

Most participants argued that the internet has been a good (re)source for teachers as well as for learners. Teachers' technological awareness and experiences encourage them to apply different practical activities effectively. Thus, it contributes to communicate teachers' pedagogical capital, which is very important. The filed-texts revealed that teachers regard their pedagogic knowledge as an emergent phenomenon within their classroom-cultural setting.

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PechaKucha Unplugged

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Introduction

Presentation skills are an essential component for developing language competency, in either L1 (first language) or L2 (second language). The dexterity learned from designing, organizing, and delivering a presentation is integral to achieving fluency. One newer and increasingly popular type of presentation style is PechaKucha. PechaKucha is a Japanese expression meaning chit-chat. This presentation style was started in Tokyo in 2003 by Astrid Klein and Mark Dytham, two architects unsatisfied with wordy presentations. They wanted to make presentations more succinct and informative. PechaKucha has since expanded globally (PechaKucha, 2018). PechaKucha format involves 20 segments of exactly 20 seconds making a total presentation time of six minutes and forty seconds. The segments are typically created and presented electronically. The images (usually slides) advance automatically, which force the speaker to practice delivering the content while following the strict time requirement.

This format lends itself well to aid the development of learners' English language skills in the foreign language classroom. It focuses students on the presentation itself rather than the creation of slides, which can be used to sidestep memorizing or practicing delivery. Practice is essential for PechaKucha. Without formatting

worries, PechaKucha structure allows students to focus on ideas and content. As Reynolds points out, 'Restrictions and limitations are not the enemy, they are a great ally' (p. 45). By breaking the content into 20 separate 20-second segments, memorization becomes easier, and the format becomes more conducive to having a partner, since it ensures that the presentation time is divided equally. Students also enjoy watching and giving PechaKucha presentations.

The assignment

We assigned our students to present PechaKucha style without using computers or software in order to focus on creativity and content. Too many presenters rely on technology and devote a majority of their time to making slides. Instead, we wanted students to create and practice the actual presentation, focus on delivery, and develop their timing to fit the format. Students selected their own topics, which proved to be one of the biggest challenges. After some trial and error and a lot of thinking, they came up with varied and interesting ideas. A sample of topics included: Mont Blanc desserts, raising my TOEFL score, how to get a boyfriend, what I will do over the next 20 years, introducing my classmates, gambling on horse races, improving study habits, and demonstrating English idioms.

They had the option of presenting individually or with a partner, with most choosing a partner. Naturally, they prepared and practiced together, ensuring that more language learning opportunities were taking place. They also had to devise a system to mark and change segments at 20 second intervals. This proved to be another challenge. At first most students chose to use a cell phone timer. This was convenient, although the constant beeping became annoying. Many students used a classmate in the audience to send a signal to the presenter. Techniques included snapping fingers, clapping, raising the hand(s), flicking off lights, frantically signaling, etc. Eventually, about 50% of students practiced the presentation and timing so thoroughly that no 20-second signal was necessary.

Conclusion: Why is PechaKucha effective?

By dividing the presentation into clear and manageable chunks, students can memorize their parts using one simple prompt or visual for each segment. 20 slides at 20 seconds each is much less mentally intimidating that thinking in terms of a 6-7 minute presentation. Having set parameters allows students to focus on content, rather than depend on technology. Students learn from other students and enjoy watching peer presentations. By having peer evaluation sheets, students can receive honest and valuable feedback to help improve in future presentations. It becomes obvious which partners practiced sufficiently, and for the ones that didn't, painfully so. Students recognized the utility of the PechaKucha presentation format and embraced the challenges. By being able to choose the topic, select a partner or present individually, and create prompts and techniques to measure time, the PechaKucha unplugged presentations proved to be an effective language learning tool and empowered our students. One added bonus for teachers is that class presentation time is precise and it leaves the guesswork out of estimating presentation time. We heartily recommend that any presentation course include a section on PechaKucha.

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Linguistic Landscapes in Multilingual Nepal

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Introduction

This study concerns the linguistic landscape – i.e. display of written language in public spaces. I attempted to explore the present linguistic landscapes of multilingual Nepal which deal with issues related to multilingualism, literacy, multimodality, language policy, linguistic diversity, minority languages, and language users. Based on my research, I focused on how linguistic landscape as a public arena. I have displayed the photographs of different signs that surround us every day, as we walk through urban environments. It further reflected the relative power and status of different language groups, and sociolinguistic situation of the country.

Linguistic landscapes

Linguistic landscape is 'the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings in a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration' (Landry and Bourhis, 1997). Linguistic landscape includes many new types of signs: electronic flat-panel displays, LED neon lights, foam boards,

electronic message centers, interactive touch screens, inflatable signage, and scrolling banners. The use of language in its written form in the public space is the main focus of linguistic landscape studies.

The first study in the field of linguistic landscape was 'Rosetta Stone', an ancient stone with writing in three different languages, found near Rosetta in Egypt in 1799, now kept in British Museum in London. It embodies many of the intricacies of language contact, language choice, and linguistic hierarchy that form the substance of linguistic landscape research.

Context of the study

Nepal is a multilingual, multicultural and multiracial country. The National Census 2011 records 123 languages and the top 10 are: Nepali, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Tharu, Tamang, Newari, Bajjika, Magar, Doteli, and Urdu. The langauges primarily belong to: Tibeto-Burman, Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic language families. The Language Commission Nepal (LCN) 2017 informs 10 language scripts as: *Devnagari*- Nepali, Maithili, Bhojpuri, *Ranjana*-Newari, *Sambota*- Tibetan and Sherpa, *Sirijunga*-Limbu, *Rong*-Lepcha, *Bangla*-Bangali, *Tamu*-Gurung, *Arabi*- Urdu, *Roman*-English, *Akkha*-Magar. The LCN announces that only 19 languages are in safe zone, while 35+ languages are in endangered condition. After the Federal system in the country, the local authorities and the Provincial Governments are legally responsible to have its own language policy and practices. In this context, I attempted to explore how the languages in Nepalese societies exist and establish domination of space in public spaces. Further, the study informs us about power and status of languages, and sociolinguistic situation of the country.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to analyze the status of the languages displayed on signs in linguistic landscapes.

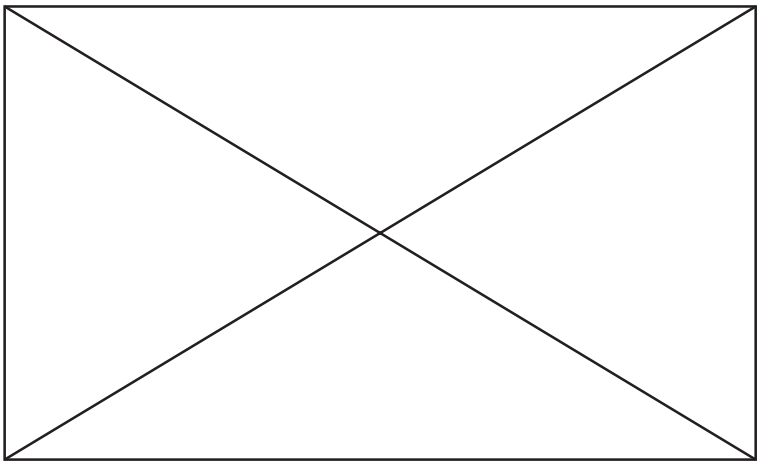
Methodology

This study employed the interpretative paradigm. For the study, 150 photographs were collected purposively from different linguistic landscapes of Kathmandu, Kirtipur, Tanahun, Pokhara, Lumbini, and Bara. Further, the signs were analyzed, compared and contrasted to find the intricacies of language contact, language choice and linguistic hierarchies.

Theoretical approaches

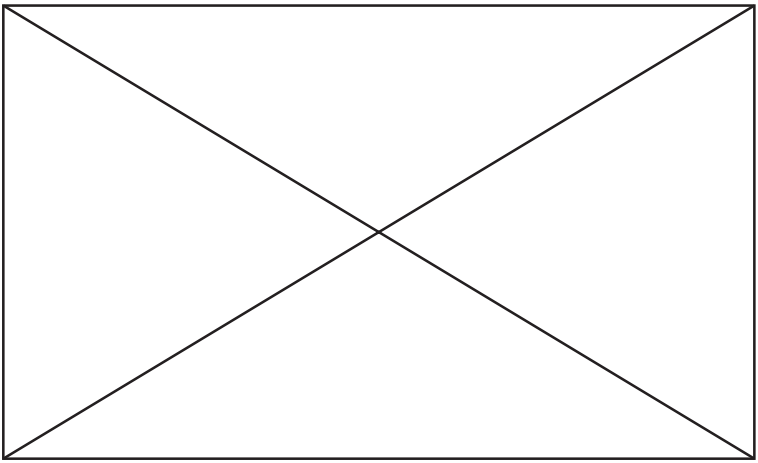
This study underpins on the theory of Spolsky and Cooper (1991) who proposed three conditions for the choice of language on signs: (i) *Sign writer's skill:* writing a sign in a language you know; (ii) *Presumed reader:* writing a sign in the language that can be read by the public; and (iii) *Symbolic value:* writing in your own language or the language you want to be identified with

Sign writer's skill



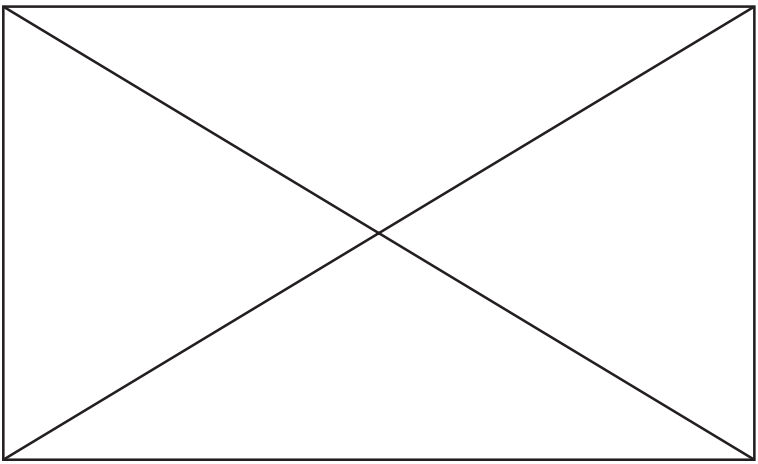
This is a glimpse of linguistic landscape in Damauli, Tanahun where the English terms are mostly used in Nepali orthographic form as per the knowledge and skill of the sign writer.

Presumed reader



This board shows the importance of multilingualism for promoting cultural heritage in Lumbini. The sign displays 10 different languages considering the multiple language users (the presumed readers) who visit the place.

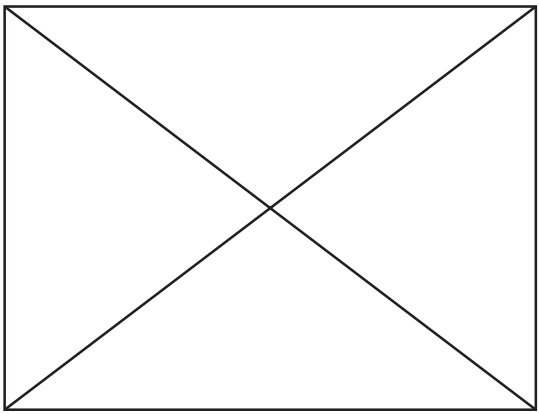
Symbolic value

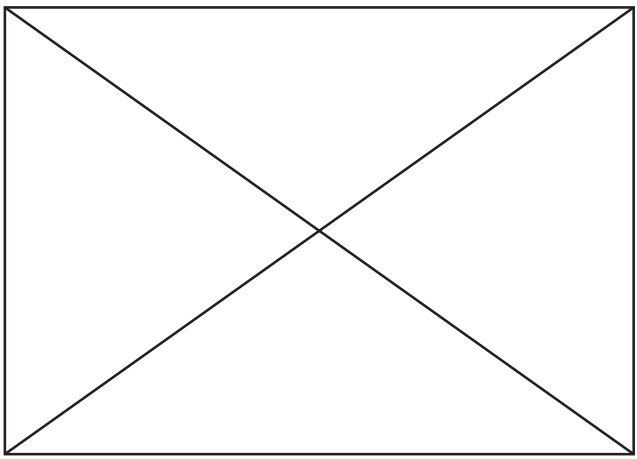


This is a signboard in New Baneshwor, Kathmandu where Chinese and English languages are symbolically valued. It reflects the writer's willingness to be identified with Chinese language rather than others.

Language battle and linguistic fluidity

The following pictures capture the scenario of language battle and multilingual creativity and linguistic fluidity in the linguistic landscapes in Kathmandu.





Linguistic landscape not only reflects the status of different languages in society, but also acts as a force shaping how languages are being perceived and used by the population.

Findings

The analysis and interpretation of the 150 photographs of different linguistic landscapes revealed the following facts:

- Bilingual and multilingual practices, code-switching, code-mixing, and translanguaging;
- Intercultural competence and multilingual awareness;
- Most signs having English terms in Nepali orthographic form;
- Hegemony of English in public spaces;
- English used as an official language and lingua-franca;
- Nearly, 60% linguistic landscapes occupied by English signs in urban areas;
- The vernacular languages and indigenous languages battling for existence;
- Use of multilingual, multifaceted and multidimensional signs to promote the services and businesses.

Conclusion

Linguistic landscape adds knowledge about societal multilingualism by focusing on language choices, hierarchies, conflict and contact-phenomena, regulations, and aspects of literacy. It relates to the multitude of perspectives and disciplines like: Advertising, education, economics, history, media, semiotics,

sociology, and urban geography. There is shift in paradigm and practices with the rapid spread of technology in linguistic landscapes.

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Four Ready-to-Go Vocabulary Practice Activities

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Introduction

Vocabulary is integral to any course, but can often be reduced to lists of de-contextualized words that students learn for tests and then forget. Regular and repeated exposure, and contextualized reception and production, are key to effective acquisition and retention of target vocabulary.

It is, therefore, useful for teachers to have a portfolio of engaging and memorable vocabulary practice activities that focus on word recognition, describing and defining, as well as understanding and using vocabulary in context. These activities should be simple, and materials-light, so that they are easy for teacher to explain and integrate into their own lesson plans.

The following four activities can be used to focus on topic-specific vocabulary as an extension of a text-based lesson or unit, or to practice pragmatic skills such as circumlocution, defining, and contextual referencing.

Methodology

These activities have been developed to be as versatile as possible. They can be used as a warm-up at the start of a new class, as a transition between lesson stages, or as a fun end-of-class review.

1. What's the word

*Format***:** Pairs/ small groups; 5-10 minutes

*Focus***:** Definitions, synonyms, describing, receptive skills, word recognition, circumlocution

Preparation: Flashcards of target vocabulary (on scrap paper is fine).

Process: Learners take turns to describe as many words as possible to their partner in one minute by using definitions, examples, synonyms, etc. They may 'pass' on three words. At the end of the minute, one point is counted for each word that was guessed correctly.

2. Backs to the board

Format: Whole-class. 10-20 minutes (depending on students' familiarity with the process)

Focus: Definitions, synonyms, describing, receptive skills, word recognition

Preparation: Place two chairs at the front of the classroom, facing away from the board. The class is divided into two teams, with students gathered close to face the board. The teacher should prepare a list of target vocabulary.

Process: A player from each team (the 'Listener') sits in one of the chairs facing away from the board. They must not

look at the board during their turn. The teacher writes a word on the board, and the 'Speakers' must describe that word to the Listener. The first Listener who correctly shouts the word wins a point for their team. Both Listeners are then replaced by new teammates.

3. Hide the word

Format: Pairs/ small groups

Focus: Receptive skills, word recognition, productive skills, understanding and using words in context, fluency, natural use of vocabulary in context

Preparation: Flashcards of target vocabulary (on scrap paper is fine). The teacher should also provide or elicit a variety of speaking topics (e.g., food, travel, shopping)

Process: Learners take turns to be the Speaker. They are given a topic (they can either choose their own, or their group can decide), and take a flashcard from the pile. They must speak about their topic for one minute, and try to incorporate their target word naturally into their speech so that (hopefully) nobody can guess what their word is. After the minute, Listeners try to guess what the target word is. The Speaker wins a point if nobody can guess, while the Listener(s) win(s) a point if they guess correctly.

4. The banana game

Format: Individuals/Pairs/Groups. It may take 30 minutes to set up initially, but as little as 5 minutes in later lessons.

Focus: Receptive skills, word recognition, productive skills, understanding and using words in context, lexico-grammar

Preparation: Explain that *banana* is a magic word that can be any other word (verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs).

Demonstrate the activity (see below). Students can guess them easily, because the surrounding sentence provides sufficient contextual information. Learners should have a list of target vocabulary to choose from.

Examples: 'Please close the *banana*, it's getting cool in here.' (Answer: 'window')

'I am *banana* because I didn't sleep last night.' (Answer: 'tired')

Process: Learners choose three words from the target vocabulary. They write one sentence for each word, that demonstrates they understand the meaning, substituting the target word with *banana.* The sentences must provide an appropriate context to demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of the word. (NB: Monitor at this stage closely, to make sure that learners are following appropriate lexico-grammatical structure, and providing enough detailed context to communicate the meaning of the word.) Learners read the sentences to each other, and try to guess what the *bananaed* words are. If learners have *bananaed* their sentences effectively, the target vocabulary should be easy for others to guess.

Conclusion

The above activities provide review of the vocabulary items that students need to remember as well as practice of vital receptive and productive skills. They are easy and accessible for both teachers and students; and they add a meaningful, funny, and engaging focus to vocabulary practice.

Holistic Education to Nurture a Whole Individual in Nepalese Context

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Introduction

Traditionally the transmission of culture from one generation to another was the sole source of education. It gradually dispersed into culture and education. It seems that culture got educational roles within familial and social spheres whereas institutional education got formal posture. Till the era of *Gurukul* education system in the east, formal education system retained holistic involving spiritual aspect in it. At present formal education is rather 'mechanistic'. Because of such educational practices, knowledge and ways of knowing has become increasingly fragmented and devoid of human values. Eventually, education is solely producing labour force and citizens for globalized world. It has shown that there is dire need of holistic education to nurture the development of the whole person.

Theories underlying holistic education

Following Nakagawa (2001) there are six major theories underpinning contemporary holistic education: perennial philosophy, indigenous world views, life philosophy, ecological world view, system theory, and feministic thought.

Perennial Philosophy asserts that all lives are connected in a universe; and they depend upon one another. It is mainly concerned with the one, divine reality substantial to the diversity of thoughts. *Indigenous world view* believes that all the societies in the world show reverence for nature and the spirit. It focuses on the organic interconnectedness of all beings in nature.

Life philosophy assumes that there exists underlying life force that organizes all the beings in the cosmos. Holistic education is necessary in our context as its life philosophy encourages us to transcend our personal egos and other physical realities, and inspires us to serve other and other creatures. *System theory* stresses on the comprehensive interdependence of all things of the cosmic world. It vitality needs to be addressed by our education since the importance of self, community, society, planet and cosmos is vital in our life. They are interconnected and work in chain. *Feminist theory* advocates in favour of gender equality in the different aspects of society.

Level of wholeness in holistic education

R. Miller (2000) states that there are five basic levels of wholeness in holistic education.

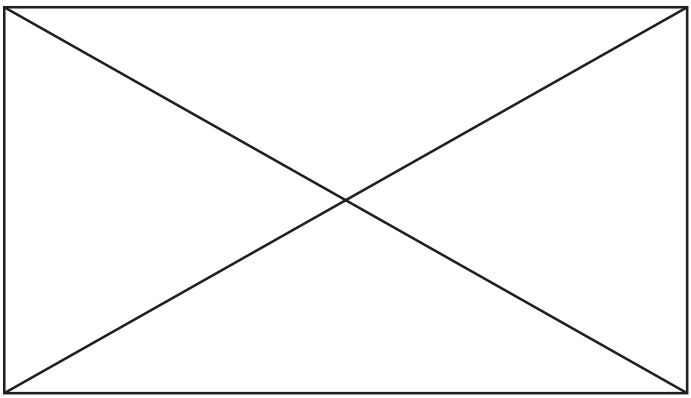


Figure 1: Levels of wholeness

The basic level of wholeness is *personal wholeness*. It asserts that that a person is an integrated being with six elements: physical, emotional, intellectual, social, aesthetic, and spiritual. Second and third levels of wholeness emphasize on the quality of human relationship within *community* and *society* respectively. These principles aim that an educated person needs to possess an ability to live or work harmoniously and foster a sense of care within community and society respectively. Fourth level of wholeness talks about *ecological interdependence*. This level of wholeness leads the people towards nature conservation. It is burning issue not only in Nepal but also all over the world.

The goal of holistic education

The main goal of holistic education is to aspire to the utmost development of the learner making them enlightened and contented with their identity. Therefore, holistic education aims at developing a learner making them realize their greatest potential.

Implication of holistic education in Nepalese context

In the context of Nepal, education is rather for a job and better prospect. But the main purpose of education is to nourish the inherent possibilities of all-round human development. In holistic education, a learner is perceived as a unique and inherently creative being with individual needs and abilities.

In Nepalese context, parents decide what their children would be and teachers decide what and how the learners learn. But as per the principle of holistic education, students should have opportunities for genuine choices at every stage of learning process and so is the case with their parents. This concept of autonomy also stretches towards participatory democracy.

In Nepalese society, traditional notion of joint family, moral values, and social orders are at threat. People are gradually being more self-centred, morally corrupt, and inhuman. Holistic

education identifies such social crises and advocates democratic values and empowers all the citizens to participate in the life of the community.

Politically, Nepal is in post-civil war period or transitional period. Because of civil war, Nepal is also facing ethnic, linguistic and regional disputes. In this regard, holistic education can be a functional tool to flourish tolerance in society and promote peace and harmony within people and society.

Environmental knowledge is another key factor involved in holistic education. In the context of Nepal, for example early melting of snow, flood and landslide, disappearance of birds and animals, and plants etc. are common. It can be inferred that there is the need for holistic education since it nurtures a relationship between humans and natural world.

Conclusion

Education systems around the globe have been facing unprecedented challenges and opportunities. Scientific innovation and expanding global economy has turned human life into an abyss of ignorance and despair. Therefore, holistic education can be a tool to develop the learner and empower them developing spiritually. Although further research is essential, it can be inferred that holistic education is crucial to retain the human values and prepare well-developed spiritual individual.

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Learning in a Mobile Driven Environment

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Introduction

There are many opportunities in our daily lives to gain knowledge and learn new skills. Nowadays with the use of mobile devices learning occurs not only in the classroom. This is the 21st century whereby it is evident that the majority people have access to some sort of mobile device, irrespective of time and location. This, in turn, means that smart phones, tablets and other mobile devices have become ever-present with the students we have in the classroom. Having been brought up in the technology era, these digital natives are therefore skilled at using the technologies in many different ways. In the Middle East, 72% of those who own a smart phone are under the age of 30; and it is predicted that the Gulf region will become the second largest mobile phone population in the world with the UAE at the second highest with 73% (Go-Gulf, 2014). Similarly, in 2016 the Kathmandu Post reported that more than half of the adults in Nepal own smartphones and this figure is expected to reach 80% by 2020.

Mobile phones in the classroom

Many studies have found that the majority of learners these days perceive mobile technologies as an effective tool in

communication as well as for self-directed and self-paced learning (Gikas and Grant, 2013). As a matter of first-hand experience, it is confirmed that mobile learning is something that students see as beneficial. Despite this, mobile devices still present challenges to instructors in higher education institutions (Looi and others, 2010). Many instructors see the use of mobile devices in the classroom as a threat or disruption to the traditional way of teaching and learning. Some educators see them as distraction or feel they are for entertainment purposes and social media. However, some may not realize the potential due to the incredible speed at which this technology has facilitated learning. Thus, the biggest challenge facing teachers nowadays is how to maximize the use of mobile technology to assist learning in particular. Not, as some would often argue, to completely ban their use altogether.

As teachers, whether we like it or not, we have found that the first place our learners go when looking for information are sites such as Google and YouTube. When coming across new vocabulary or dense reading text, some lower level learners favour Google translate to get an understanding of what they are reading. Instead of insisting they do not do this, we as teachers have embraced this phenomenon. We believe this has allowed students to learn various educational applications in a supportive environment and get answers, clarification and information quickly and securely. Our main use of mobile technologies, however, has been for self-directed and self-paced learning outside the classroom. Coming from an environment where we find it extremely challenging to get our students to study after they leave the institution, we decided to try using *Explain Everything* to provide learning materials with added support.

Moodle's Lesson Module is a resource which allows the creator to structure adaptive learning opportunities to enable learners to move through a module at their own pace. The instructional techniques scaffold learners towards greater independence. *Explain Everything* is an interactive white-board app for mobile devices that allows users to create and record videos and presentations, which provides the opportunity to revisit points introduced in class as well as give feedback on submitted work.

As we have found, using these applications assists students in improving their skills as they have the opportunity to visit and revisit the learning outcomes at an individualized pace whenever and wherever they like.

Conclusion

The benefit of incorporating mobile technology is that educators are provided with the ideal opportunity to vary content delivery inside and outside the traditional classroom setting using a medium that our learners are very adept at using.

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Pre-service Training for Tertiary Level Teachers: Issues and Challenges

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Introduction

For the prospective teachers, it is crucial to have sufficient pre-service trainings. The repertoire of teacher education illustrates how teacher education includes different theoretical and practical aspects of teaching and thereby preparing the prospective teachers. Pre-service teacher trainings are meant for those who are yet to undertake the teaching profession. It includes the policies, procedures and provisions designed to equip prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and skills they require for performing their tasks effectively in classroom, school and wider community (Kagoda et al., 2013).

Rationale for pre-service training

Teachers do not practice their teaching without any sort of formal guidance. Therefore, it is necessary for them to develop educational skills that are compatible with education policies; and teachers need to be enabled to deliver these policies (Kárpáti 2009). It can be assumed that teachers having more preparation

for teaching become confident and successful than those who have had little or no training at all.

Approaches to pre-service training

Different approaches can be taken to train the prospective teachers. Some of the approaches are briefly discussed below.

Field experiences: In order for the novice teachers to get the glimpse of actual teaching practice, they can gather filed experience. It requires pre-service teachers to observe and practice teaching in actual classrooms.

Practicum**:** This refers to the experiences that teacher trainees have in the classroom before they take on the full range of responsibilities required for student teaching. These experiences help the student teachers align their theoretical knowledge with real practice.

Intensive internship**:** Like many other professional development endeavors, internship can be another option for the pre-service training of prospective teachers. Tertiary level teachers can be trained prior to their actual practice by getting them into intense internship under the rigorous guidance of experienced teachers. It can be done by adding 2 to 3 years of graduate-level study in addition to an undergraduate degree.

Mentoring: Mentoring is a combination of coaching, counseling and assessment. It helps the aspiring teachers to gain expertise in classroom management, lesson planning, and actual classroom teaching practice from a mentor.

Issues and challenges

No matter whatever the approach followed to train prospective teachers, time is always a crucial factor. Inadequacy of time makes it hard to learn enough about both subject matter and pedagogy.

Lack of communication among stakeholders is another barrier that poses challenge to training pre-service teachers. Without effective collaboration among the different stakeholders, it is quite impossible task to carry out successful training for the prospective teachers. Approaches are usually designed to be carried out at the end continuum of programmes. Therefore, in terms of emphasis, these approaches turn out to be of less significance. Likewise, assessment cannot be done through firsthand practice. As assessment is an integral part of teaching, no training can be termed as successful without assessment making a part of it.

As mentors work as the guide in every aspect, they are certainly meant to be very affective in many ways for the prospective teachers. A mentor might affect the belief of a prospective teacher. Furthermore, financing the training programme is also crucial for successful completion of pre-service teacher training.

Suggestions

With a view to addressing the issues and challenges that might stand in the way of successful pre-service training for tertiary level teachers, there are some suggestions based on what have been discussed so far. In fact, every challenge shows a way out. No matter whatever the approach undertaken, some issues need to be addressed properly.

In the very first place, proper funding must be ensured. Collaboration among stakeholders should be meaningful and effective. Training events can be integrated throughout the programme rather than putting them at the end of the course continuum. Various dimensions of pedagogy need to be addressed while designing the training programmes. A well-designed and all inclusive training can equip the potential teachers better for their successful teaching career at tertiary level.

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Techniques for Developing Speaking Fluency of Students

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Introduction

I teach English at secondary level in a government-funded school in the lowland of eastern Nepal. Though students were taught in English, they were not fluent enough in using the language in their expression. They used to speak English mixing Nepali words. I have also noticed that many of them hesitated to speak using the English language. They even could not continue their conversation in a fluent way. When they had to speak in English on some topic given to them or when they needed to give answer to some question, they took long pauses and could not share their ideas freely. When we talk about fluency, we need to know that it includes the ability to make utterances without awkward pauses for relatively long time; and they also need to have the ability to talk in coherent, reasoned and semantically dense sentences (Fillmore, 1979). In this connection, I carried out an action research to improve their fluency in English.

Objectives of the study

The objective of the study was to see improvement in the speaking fluency of students by using various techniques of fluency practice in English.

Data collection procedures

At first, I kept note of my students' progress in their speaking; and their errors were also noted in similar way as noted while they were speaking. I asked one of my colleagues to observe my class during my teaching. He prepared an observation checklist and I started working on it. I used observation checklist for collecting data inside the classroom. I interviewed students about their feelings, interests and perspective towards different techniques implemented in the classrooms. They wrote answer in the written interview guidelines. I also used audio-recordings for their performance in some interventions like group work, pair work, verbal responses, formal presentation, sharing experiences and making summary of the lesson. I observed classes and noted down the reality of how they spoke English to their teachers and friends.

Action plan

I implemented several techniques to improve learners' fluency in speaking skill in one of the classes at secondary level. In this procedure, the following techniques and procedures were implemented in the class.

1. Sharing the events of previous day
2. Pair work
3. Verbal boxing
4. Group discussion
5. Formal oral presentation
6. Sharing of lesson summary
7. Picture description
8. Story telling

All the techniques just mentioned were implemented in English speaking environment in the classroom. As the first intervention, sharing of previous day's events was done in classroom. In this activity, the students could share both good and bad experiences. It was implemented in the lesson for the period of one week in the beginning. Then the activities of pair works and formal oral presentation were launched. These two interventions were applied together in the classroom for a week. I used the process of verbal boxing, lesson summary and picture description together for many weeks. For the period of a week, I made the classroom full of pairs and groups of learners, where they were instructed to work together and make presentations on different topics. Likewise, storytelling techniques were used for a week – whereby different students shared the story which they had heard in the past.

Conclusion

I implemented eight different techniques as part of classroom teaching-learning; and they were really beneficial to improve the speaking fluency of students. These techniques helped to make them communicate in English. By involving in the activities, the students developed the ability of communication quite a lot. Even the low achievers and back benchers also started to speak using English directly.

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Undergraduate English Curriculum in Bangladesh: An Evaluation from Theoretical Perspectives

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Introduction

There has been a significant change in English curriculum in many countries of South Asia in a fast-moving world. In Bangladesh, studying English usually meant the study of literature in the past. But students of English are now opting for various professions; and this has given rise to re-thinking English curriculum in Bangladesh. Apart from civil service and teaching, English graduates are eager to join diverse work force like Business Executive, HR executive, marketing manager, NGO (non-governmental organization), translator, banker, editor, modeling, acting, IT, communication officer, development officer and so on. Naturally, the questions come up: Is undergraduate English curriculum serving the needs of learners and employers? Is it appropriate for producing skilled, ethical and knowledgeable graduates? In developed countries curriculum evaluation is a frequent phenomenon and they continuously review their curriculum.

The present English curriculum needs to be evaluated frequently as curriculum is a dynamic field. For producing competent graduates skill-based, job-focused, morality driven curriculum is a must. As curriculum is the overall planning of education; it should be learner-focused and needs to be evaluated and updated regularly.

What is curriculum?

Curriculum is an educational programme which states:

(a) The educational purpose of the programme,

(b) The content, teaching procedures and learning experiences which will be necessary to achieve this purpose,

(c) Some means for assessing whether or not the educational ends have been achieved (Richards and Platt, 1987, p. 70).

Objectives of the study

- To examine the existing English curriculum of selected universities in the light of curriculum theories/models.

- To evaluate to what extent the present curriculum matches the professional demand and learners' needs.

Methodology

This is a qualitative study based on document analysis and in-depth interview. Curriculum theories have been analyzed. Undergraduate English curricula of two public universities and two private universities have been chosen purposively. In-depth interview of one leading ELT expert and professor of a public university was conducted.

Key concepts of curriculum theories

- Curricula are purposeful activities which are learner-centered. The purpose of curriculum is learner's development and growth.

- Curriculum should consider students' interests and needs. It deals with issues of modern life, enables students to think critically. Curriculum should deal with local, national and international issues.

- Ideal curriculum is a flexible process in which the child is an active participant and the educator guides and directs the child through carefully selected and organized socially relevant experiences.

- Curriculum should incorporate philosophy, psychology and sociology. Subject matter is developed around social function and learners' interests.

Findings from document analysis

English curriculum does not concentrate much on skill development. English graduates are kept confined to civil service and teaching profession. It encourages rote memorization and 'suggestion culture'. English curriculum of public universities is mostly literature dominated; and there is lack of courses related to skill, job and morality. Existing curriculum does not totally fulfill the objectives of National Education Policy 2010 and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). No English department has fully developed curriculum. They use syllabus and curriculum interchangeably. More knowledge-based courses and less activity-oriented courses (which can inspire cognitive development) are found. There are no courses for ethical development of learners and no guideline is found there on the selection of course content and evaluation criteria.

Findings from in-depth interview of an ELT expert

English departments in Bangladeshi universities do not have fully developed undergraduate curriculum. Even teachers have no urge to develop a curriculum for English discipline. There is no goal of current English education in Bangladesh. While selecting the courses students' interests and employers' requirements have not been taken into consideration. It does not follow the curriculum development theories; and steps of curriculum development have not been followed. This is not comparable with the curriculum of any developed nation. Teachers' involvement in curriculum designing should be ensured.

Conclusion and recommendations

What are being taught at Bangladeshi universities at undergraduate level need to be re-designed according to curriculum theories and needs of the learners and employers. Therefore, a better curriculum means a better generation.

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Learners' Attitude towards the Use of ICT in EFL classes at Secondary Level in Bangladesh

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Background

English language teaching and learning has a long history in Bangladesh. It takes an institutional shape through Macaulay's Minute of 1835 that proposed it as an official language (Agnihotri and Khanna, 1995) in the Indian Subcontinent where the colonial British rules adopted the British education system in order to use education as a political tool aimed to prolong their domination (Altbach, 2008). English started losing its position in practice at different levels due to a patriotic sense of nationalism among the Bengali population. Yet English language is often seen to be dominant over Bengali in the activities of the educated people in the urban areas of Bangladesh (Manirizzaman, 1998), although Bangladesh became almost a monolingual country.

The recent growth of Information Communication Technology (ICT) worldwide challenges the traditional methods of English language teaching and learning. Bangladesh is also using ICT tools in EFL learning. Media and e-communications have been added in the curriculum. The issues related to the Internet, e-mail, important social media (Facebook, Google+, Twitter, and LinkedIn), technology, e-learning etc. have been brought for the

learners to make them introduced with ICT tools and information technology.

Grammar Translation Method (GTM) has been dominating English Language Teaching in Bangladesh for a long time. In 2000s, communicative language teaching (CLT) was introduced at primary, secondary and tertiary levels; and this method of teaching can still be observed in many contexts. Some think that students do not feel interested in learning grammatical items.

Objectives of the study

The study aimed to measure the extent of ICT use in learning English as foreign language in Bangladesh. The role of ICT tools and techniques in learning the English language at secondary level of education was also examined in the study. The benefits and barriers in the use of ICT tools in learning are brought under consideration. The study explored learners' access to ICT tools and their skill in using those tools, learners' perceptions of ICT integration and ICT facilities.

Methodology

Data were collected from five hundred EFL learners of secondary level in Bangladesh through the use of questionnaire. The survey questionnaire consisted of forty one close-ended questions. Stratified random sampling was used in the study. Twenty four secondary schools in eight administrative divisions were the research sites for data collection. Interviews were conducted with twenty four learners on thirteen basic semi-structured questions.

Result and findings

Learners at secondary level education in Bangladesh are using smart phones, computers, laptops and radio to promote learning vocabulary and grammar, reduce spelling mistakes, and improve pronunciation. Learners are learning English using YouTube, Facebook, Skype, Viber, WhatsApp, Imo, and Messenger. In the

same way multi-media, CD-ROM and different websites also help them learn EFL outside the classroom. Most learners think that ICT tools are useful to acquire language skills

Many EFL learners practice English with ICT tools. The study reveals that about 94% EFL learners can send and receive SMS in English. The result also indicates that about 70% EFL learners are skilled in operating ICT tools for EFL learning. EFL learners in a great number use mobile and online dictionaries for increasing the vocabulary repertoire. A small number of students think that English teachers use CD-ROM programme to teach EFL listening and speaking.

Conclusion

Students showed positive attitude towards the use of ICT tools for learning English. Learning could be made pleasant through using technology and the study showed that the government needs to focus attention to provide learners with more facilities such as computers, laptops, computer lab, multimedia and so on for successful EFL learning.

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Effective Instructions in ESL Classroom

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Instruction-giving is a challenging task and has a direct impact on the quality of learning in a classroom (Sowel, 2017). Giving clear instructions can be challenging, no matter who the audience is or what the task is. While there are many factors that can facilitate or hinder learning, the act of giving clear instructions is clearly one of the most crucial factors. There are various forms of expression dealing with instruction in the classroom process, which include (for instance) – *stand up, put your hands up, hold on your book/pen/pencil, show me your book/pen/pencil, put it down on the desk, get into groups, make a circle with your desks, sit down, clap your hands, tap your feet*.

These 'warm up' exercises are designed with a clear purpose that makes the learners differentiate between clear and unclear instructions. Teachers need to think on the following taglines before the students are given instructions:

- What is the important information that I am trying to convey?
- What must students know in order to complete the task successfully?
- Which information do they need first and which comes afterwards?

- What materials are required for students to complete the tasks?

- Are they going to work individually, in pairs or in groups?

- How am I going to assess their learning?

The following seven steps are to be considered for giving instructions clearly. (http://everythingteachingtesol.blogspot.com)

i. Break things down. If the activity has several parts, give the instructions part by part. Once students complete one segment, stop the class and get them going on the second part. This helps students focus on each section piece by piece.

ii. Explain the activity. Telling students what they are doing and why helps students connect with the task. We do not need to go into great detail; an overview is fine. Providing students with the purpose behind the activity invites them into the activity.

iii. Create a step by step outline. Having the instructions clearly and succinctly written on the board not only keeps the teacher focused when explaining the activity, but also gives students an anchor when they are doing the activity. At any point, they can refer to the steps and redirect themselves.

iv. Let students see what the activity looks like. Modeling for the class first shows students what it will look like. Showing and telling is an effective way to reach all types of students.

v. Experiment with a student. Modeling the activity with a student is the next step in scaffolding. Doing a piece of the activity with a student increases confidence and understanding as regards how to complete the task.

vi. Assess their understanding. Having the students tell and show you what they are supposed to do is the best way to assess the class. When two students model the activity without the support of the instructor, the entire class gets a chance to clarify their understanding.

vii. Repair misunderstandings. If the students seem confused, stop the class, repair the confusion, and restart the activity. Students will get more out of the activity that you have prepared. You will work less by not having to go from group to group retelling the instructions.

In the session, instructions were given to the participants in groups by involving them in activities as follows:

GROUP 1:

Considering your grade level, design your instructions for an activity on 'RECOUNTING ANECDOTES'. In this speaking activity, students exchange authentic personal anecdotes with their fellows.

GROUP 2:

Considering your grade level, design your instructions for an activity on 'A SHOPPING ROLE PLAY'. This activity gives students the opportunity to use interactional language in a/any role-play situation/s.

GROUP 3:

Considering your grade level, design your instructions for an activity on 'A CREATIVE WRITING TASK'. This activity leads students into first drawing character/s and then writing a short story using the past tenses and descriptive vocabulary, but in a creative way.

GROUP 4:

Considering your grade level, design your instructions for an activity on 'JIGSAW READING TASK'. This activity splits one story into two parts and lets the students practice in pairs by retelling/recounting the same story.

GROUP 5:

Considering your grade level, design your instructions for an activity on 'THE REVISION BOX'. In this vocabulary-related activity, students are required to use lots of words. The activity must mainly comprise of words (verbs, adjectives, adverbs etc.) all said by the learners.

GROUP 6:

Considering your grade level, design your instructions for an activity on 'CHOOSING A HOUSE'. In this activity, students practice vocabulary and collocations related to house and home.

In the last part of the presentation, two groups were put together – Group A was with Group B, Group C with Group D, etc. In each group-pair, one group gives instructions for its activity while the other group follows the instructions and carries out the activity. After the activity, the participants reflected on their experiences and shared their experiences with each other.

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Do I Talk Too Much in Class?

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Why measure teacher talk?

This presentation began with a discussion of why it is important to measure teacher talk in class. Class time is extremely limited in most cases, and aside from immersion situations it is unlikely students have many chances to practice their English outside the class. If a given class meets twice a week, for 60 minutes each time, then there is a maximum of just two hours of practice a week. Of course, the reality is no class can be held where all the students speak 100% of the time, especially given more outgoing and confident students will undoubtedly dominate the conversation when they can. Teachers need to consider how many minutes they devote to explanation, expansion and classroom management.

Teachers are generally quite confident, and may believe that what they say is important for student understanding and engagement. Humor and stories can provide students with a comfortable learning atmosphere and relieve tension; however, for every minute spoken by a teacher, another minute of potential practice is lost.

What type of teacher talk is necessary?

Most teachers will begin the day with greetings and some small talk in order to relax the students. Then they will proceed to give instructions, manage the classroom, give assistance, fill in as a partner, and give feedback. Each role is important; but it is easy to fall into the habit of repeating oneself and taking up valuable production time.

How can you measure teacher talk?

Recording one's own teacher talk is easier than ever. Since the focus of this exercise is to examine what and how much is being said by the teacher, it should not be an issue if the student production is intelligible.

Once recorded, the instructor should listen carefully with a finger on the pause button, and record how long each utterance is and the purpose of it. While it is not necessary to transcribe every utterance, doing so will allow for a more precise analysis of the language the teacher is using in the classroom and may make it easier to determine where time can be reallocated. For example, if a teacher is often repeating instructions, perhaps they are speaking too fast, too softly or using vocabulary the students do not comprehend. Instructors should not be too worried about periods of silence, as it is often during this time period students are considering their answers, according to Bolitho (2018). Too often it is the teacher unnecessarily filling the silence with teacher talk that may actually distract students.

What is an ideal amount of teacher talk?

While there are dozens of websites and articles on how teachers need to speak less in the class, there is little consensus as to what is an appropriate amount of teacher talk. Cullen (1998) wrote that the trend of less-is-more is shifted as some teacher talk was recognized as useful comprehensible input. A lot will depend on the level of the students and the tasks involved. Routine activities

can probably be executed with minimal instruction, but more complicated tasks may take a lot of time. It is possible that such tasks are valuable, but spending 5-10 minutes explaining and re-explaining a task may not be an effective use of the students' limited time. A rough target could be 25%-35% teacher talk, and over 50% is most likely to be too much, depriving students of valuable practice time.

How can we increase student production?

Much of what students do in class can be classified as 'passive learning', such as reading, listening or watching video. Such activities can have elements of 'active learning' as well, if structured in such a way they can encourage direct engagement with the activity and require a response. Reading aloud and having a partner or group members listen for gist or specifics is one way to get more students involved in a task. Of course, an audio file is valuable as well, as it gives learners exposure to the accents that they may not hear on a regular basis.

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Developing Writing through Personal Experiences

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Developing writing skill in ESL/EFL context is a challenge. A majority of the learners feel difficulty in selecting a topic, generating ideas, finding resources, organizing them, using appropriate structures, using proper vocabulary, using correct punctuation, using proper citation, etc. Ultimately, learners lack motivation.

To overcome these problems and motivate learners in writing, we can practice various techniques, such as free writing, guided writing, cubing, using wh-questions, clustering, outlining , sharing personal experiences, and so on.

Among them, one of the important techniques is developing writing through personal experiences. We clearly remember our biographies; we vividly remember the story of our struggle, devotion, success, and failure in life. Everybody has an adventurous past, and they like their own stories the best. So, expressing personal experiences is one of the best techniques to develop writing skill.

Writing from our personal experience involves conveying an insight or expressing a personal viewpoint that grows out of that experience. Before writing the experiences some questions may

arise in mind, e.g.: Are my thoughts worth sharing? Can I make these thoughts clear to the readers? Are they written in a systematic order? Considering these questions, one can communicate the ideas to the readers.

Methodology

For this purpose, I presented three inspirational stories of different writers sharing personal experiences from the book '***Guidelines'.***

The first story: Waiting in Line at the Drugstore

Summary: When the writer was a teenager, he worked in a photo studio. His duty every morning was to go to the drugstore and fetch coffee, cakes, doughnuts, jelly rolls, milk, and cigarettes whatever the folks at the Owl studio wanted. For this he had to wait in the line of customers at the drugstore. While waiting near the counter, one morning the writer realized that he was leaning on a book case. The sign said, 'Lending Library'. He was attracted by the book ''Out of the Night'', the best seller by Jan Valtin. He picked up the book and read a few lines. Meanwhile, his order was ready. He folded a corner of the page and tried to hide the book so no one would take it before he could get it the next day. From that day, he went to the drugstore, gave order and engaged in reading one or the other book from the lending library. Within a few months, he read most of the books from that lending library. He realized that his waiting time got shorter and shorter each morning. In this way, his love of knowledge was developed, and he became a good reader as well as writer.

The second story: A Book Writing Venture:

Summary: The writer was a non-native speaker of English. He began to learn English and had language problem but wanted to be the writer of English. He worked in a restaurant but was fired from the job when the owner knew that he read books during the duty. Later, he worked in a library. His duty was to wax leather-bound books. He often daydreamed that some day he would have

his book published and bound in that shining aromatic leather. The librarian supported him. He joined writers' workshop of the University of Iowa and started to write fiction. He started to send his writings to various publishers in New York but they were rejected and sent back many times. On one snowy evening, the writer was listening to music in his room and watching the snowfall outside from the window. Immediately, the image of a beautiful lady with her wedding shoes came in his mind and he thought the story of 'The Wedding Shoes''. He completed the story and sent to the publisher. Fortunately, the book was published and he became happy when he saw his book with hard cover in the corner of the same library where the lady supported him to read the lines from poetry book.

The third story: The Ingrate

Mr. Leckler was a man of high principle, as he admitted at times to Mrs. Leckler. They had a servant named Joshua Leckler. He was a negro but very intelligent and hardworking. Mr. Leckler wanted to teach Joshua how to read and write. He taught him and consequently Joshua supported him in his business. One day Joshua went to another city for some business but did not come back until late evening. Next day Mr. Leckler realized that Joshua signed his master's name, freed himself from slavery and went to Canada. He wrote the story of his struggle and became the writer.

After listening / reading the stories, the students should consider some crucial questions, which include: What was the writer's problem? How did he struggle? What was his achievement? The following steps can be followed to teach learners write their own stories:

1. Read the story quickly,

2. Underline the problem, struggle and achievement,

3. Think similar story of your own, and write it down,

4. Edit the story.

5. Come to the final version.

6. S hare the story with other friends.

After completing these activities, students can be asked to write their own personal stories. Why should we start from our own stories? It is because:

- We like them.

- They are very clear to us.

- Sharing our own stories increases our courage to do adventurous activities.

- They inspire others to do similar works.

- They are the source of knowledge and increase the horizon of knowledge.

- They promote humanity, cultural sharing and develop socialization through language.

Mapping out Different Reading Zones for English Learners

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Introduction

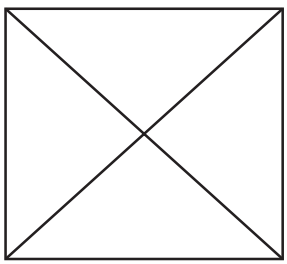
Reading is of paramount importance particularly in ESL/EFL contexts. The role of reading in the development of English as a foreign language cannot be overrated because it is "a skill which is highly valued by students and teachers alike" (Richards and Renandya, 2002, p. 273). It is through this skill that "the majority of students in Asian countries learn English in schools" (Rai, 2015, p. 39). In this context, the paper foregrounds values of reading, problematizes reading pedagogy in the Nepalese context and proposes three reading zones, each accompanied by different activities. The paper draws essentially on my own professional reflection, interaction with trainers and cursory survey of reading courses prescribed to the Master's level under Faculty of Education, Tribhuvan University.

Problematizing reading pedagogy and proposing three reading zones

Teaching reading in the EFL context like Nepal is fraught with several constraints such as poor reading culture, weak teaching methodology, lack of integration of the internet into ELT, and limiting views of teachers on reading.The classroom is the most

dominant reading zone and we are yet to realize that an extensive amount of reading can take place beyond the classroom setting. This can be referred to as poor reading culture. As to methodology, reading activities are literally confined to textbooks under direct control of the teacher; and reading mostly goes by teacher's explanation rather than exploration by students themselves. Teachers are mostly inclined to the read-and-answer approach. Consequently, upon answering comprehension questions, the reading task is assumed to be over. Teachers' limiting view is another constraint of reading pedagogy. Generally, teaching to read means assisting students to answer the given questions. Apart from answering questions, however, there are several dimensions of teaching reading. Some of them can be practicing vocabulary and grammar, provoking students' imagination, and orienting them to create a parallel text. Lack of integration of the internet and reading activities also hinders fruitful reading experiences. The internet is still a luxury rather than a necessity for Nepalese students and teachers both. As a result, a huge number of English texts lie unexplored for the benefit of students.

To overcome these constraints, I propose three different zones of reading, namely the core, the peripheral and the expanding. In the core zone, students read prescribed texts under direct control of the teacher. It is teacher-controlled intensive reading. Core reading paves the way for peripheral reading where students read additional materials to explore more about the topic. It is teacher-guided extensive reading that takes classroom reading one step further, making it freer, more explorative and more creative. Finally, students are led to the expanding zone where they read beyond the classroom for information, language, pleasure and vision. It is teacher-guided and self-motivated extensive reading which gradually inculcates in them lifelong reading habit. These zones can be schematically presented as:



Theoretical framework for overcoming the constraints

Actualizing three zones of reading

Drawing on the theoretical framework, the paper presents the approach to and activities for engaging students in these reading zones. The proposed approach is student centered, discovery oriented, collaborative and integrated. For the core zone of reading, the suggested activities are teacher-initiated discussion, lead-in questions, reading and text-coding and answering comprehension-checking questions. These are the activities directly controlled by the teacher after which students can be led to teacher-guided activities that require them to explore the broader dimensions of the same text. The activities can be comparing the different versions of the same text available on the Internet or in the library, collecting information on the same topic from different sources and presenting in their version. Moreover, students can be further led to the broader zone of reading by engaging them in the reader's club, talking about the books in their possession, reading the books of their own choice, writing blurbs for their favorite books, and so on. It is assumed that engaging students in these different, yet interrelated reading zones is instrumental in blending intensive and extensive modes of reading.

Some recommendations can be given for teachers, including:

a) Realize that classroom reading has limited reaching, unless connected with broader reading;

b) Avoid Read-and-Answer technique only;

c) Avoid preaching – You Must Read A lot. Instead, engage students in actual reading with specific tasks.

d) Respect and capitalize on students' reading experiences; and

e) Bring students' reading experiences in public by means of different activities such as forming a reading club and talking about the books they have read recently.

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The Sociolinguistic Challenges in Accommodating Expatriates in Thailand

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We understand culture as being the sum of socially transmitted behavior, representations, arts, beliefs, associations, and all other products of human effort and thought. Likewise, we identify society as the totality of said humans in the establishment of a community of interdependent individuals. Furthermore, we recognize language as a form of communication, either spoken or written, through which a system of structured and conventional voice sounds, gestures, or written symbols are used to express thoughts and feelings. Finally, we understand sociolinguistics to be the study of language and linguistic behavior as influenced by social and cultural factors.

This descriptive study was intended to identify sociolinguistic challenges in accommodating foreign individuals who are temporarily or permanently residing in Thailand. The research is restricted within the sociolinguistics and language disciplines therein. The study further intended to provide an overview of the relationship between English, culture, and society such as: English and society, English use, and English and thought about sociolinguistic challenges in Thailand.

The participants were asked to identify any type of linguistic challenge that Thailand is facing in accommodating expatriates.

They indicated that the antiquated education system is mostly at fault by over-emphasizing rote learning and teacher-student cultural and societal norms that impede English conversation practice, accompanied by relatively low levels of exposure to foreigners in everyday life, all contribute to the problem of accommodating expatriates.

The participants were then asked to identify any language resources they felt were needed to prepare Thailand for accommodating expatriates. They indicated that, as in many developing countries, Thailand not being an exception, extensive educational curriculum reforms must take place and raising the capability of the workforce is essential to operate in a modern globalized world. They continued that, in a globalized world, the pedagogic practices, curriculums and business models of education systems must respond to a new economic and political reality of the sociolinguistic challenges in accommodating expatriates.

Finally, the participants were then asked to indicate any relationships between language proficiency and the ability of Thailand in accommodating expatriates. They noted that improving the English proficiency of Thai teachers and students should form a vital part of the education strategy. They continued that emphasis should be placed on English study in Thailand, both in the government school system and through the use of legitimate private English training centers. Lastly, they stated that the level of English among Thai adults working in the industries that cater to expatriates is below a reasonably acceptable level.

The qualitative data was collected through the use of interviews and documentary research then analyzed, and interpreted. The data found a correlation between societal behaviors and English usage about challenges in accommodating the expatriates in Thailand.

In answer to the findings several solutions were discussed such as providing formal teacher training in teaching English as a

second or foreign language as a prerequisite for employing Thai teachers to teach ESL or EFL in Thailand, and requiring Intermediate English proficiency "B1" level as a prerequisite for employing Thai teachers to teach ESL or EFL in Thailand. In addition, providing ongoing professional development training to cultivate a better understanding of ESL or EFL, and to enhance the level of confidence in using English of currently employed Thai teachers and Thai administrators would be an asset.

To overcome challenges in the education system of Thailand, Ministry of Education should disregard obsolescent societal notions and request assistance, and put into practice sound education reform from the advice of consultants working in education support systems of high-achieving countries.

Mobile Phone: A Tool for Communicative Learning of English

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Introduction

In India, English is used as one of the official languages (with Hindi in Hindi speaking regions or regional language in non-Hindi speaking regions) in offices and educational institutions. In many Indian schools and colleges, English is used as the medium of instruction. Majority of printed and handwritten documents are found in English. English language is also used in other official works when one seeks to leave school/ college, or to write an application for any official/ personal purpose, or take exam(s), or participate in interviews. Furthermore, in all regions in India, seminars, conferences or workshops and any other similar programmes are conducted and documented in English. Hence, it can be said that English is one of the important (deep rooted) language other than Hindi or other regional language that Indians speak.

English as the medium of instruction in schools and colleges

Sikkim has opted for English as an official language and the medium of instruction in educational institutions. In schools, English is being taught in all schools from primary level itself;

and this is continued till senior secondary level. Henceforth, there is no one who cannot understand English but problem arises in communicating in English. This may be because in schools and colleges in Sikkim only teaching takes place in English but other conversations like conversation between teacher and teacher, teacher and students and students and students happens in Nepali (the lingua franca of the state). It has also been observed in schools that teachers explain the content to students through bilingual method. Such practices in educational institutions do not do any good to students who strive to learn spoken English.

English is a language and it needs everyday practice; and this practice becomes fruitful only when 'speaking in English' is taken seriously and used frequently.

Rationale of the study

Sikkim is one of the smallest states in India with the total area of 7,096 km^2. The population of Sikkim is 610,577 (census, 2011). Languages spoken in Sikkim are Sikkimese (Bhutia), Gurung, Limbu, Mangar, Majhi, Majhwar, Newar, Rai, Sherpa, Sunuwar, Tamang, Thulung, Tibetan and Yakha. Although the lingua franca is Nepali which is spoken and understood by everyone, English remains the official language.

In Sikkim where English is said to be the medium of teaching and learning process, it is not practiced in all schools; and where people speak different (community) languages it becomes essential to look for other alternatives to learn spoken English. Thus, this paper focuses on assistance that a mobile phone can give in learning communicative English, and attempts to list out some aids of mobile phones that can help one to learn to speak in English.

Importance of communicative skill in English language

Mere knowledge of English will not suffice; a person must know how to do purchasing (bargaining), how to ask for directions,

how to plea a request, how to convince others, how to express feelings/ emotions. A person must be aware of the skills of approaching people of different age groups, the use of language in formal or informal situation. Communicative skills encompass the knowledge of sentence making, grammar, pronunciation and also how to speak to whom, where and when.

English has become a prominent language, as it is being used by maximum number of people around the world. Even if you decide to visit places (a foreign country or even in different states in India) or decide to take admission in a university, or decide to apply for job, or just visit websites on the internet, almost everywhere English is used. It is a business language that no one can avoid. Even to avail entertainment and knowledge, one requires knowing English because many of the 'good' films, music and books are published in English. Knowing English can also help us to get access in video games and other games and sports (a source of entertainment). Therefore, it can be assumed that English broadens our boundaries of knowledge and entertainment.

Mobile phone and its benefits

When an individual fails in learning English in schools or becomes incompetent in spoken English, he/she can learn this by using a mobile phone. Learning with the help of this gadget is purely self-learning where the individuals actively participate or get indulged into learning activity. Learning is not possible if the person remains passive. Physical and mental involvement is essential.

To become a master in communicative language, one needs to be able to use language appropriately. Appropriateness in language later brings accuracy in language. Learning appropriate use of language is not so difficult in this era of technology and internet. We can make use of our mobile phones for this purpose. This is also one of the closest devices for us. Mobile phones have made human life easy, it helps us to remember important dates and

also to calculate. It helps us in making plans, being creative, and also to be in touch with our loved ones through several online apps and social networks.

When it comes for learning English from mobile phones, it can be an important tool in the hands of every individual. There are number of apps that are available on 'Play Store' that can help us to learn English. For instance, dictionary, thesaurus, grammar, English speaking apps, and YouTube materials are important. There are also different websites that can help us to learn English.

Dealing with Large Classes

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This paper discusses the common challenges of large classes and how the problems can be resolved. This offers techniques to the teachers of school level to handle large classes easily. This is the research carried out in Kanchanpur district including 75 teachers of school level and +2 level. The researcher has tried to generalize the problems of large classes and provide suggestion to handle these problems collected from the research. The study has been conducted by collecting the views of teachers on what are the common challenges of dealing in large classes and how they are handling the problems. This report was presented in 23rd international conference of NELTA. During the presentation period the following activities were done.

The presenter set the focus of presentation and asked some questions related to challenges of handling large classes and collected the opinion of audience. Presenter also collected their opinion regarding the number of students in an ideal class and the trend of Nepalese classes. Later on the presenter shared his research report. On the basis of their responses the following analysis was carried out.

Problems of dealing with large classes are:

1. Problem in encouraging students to 'speak English'

2. Discipline
3. Classroom management
4. Giving feedback
5. Resources
6. Speaking little
7. Marking homework

The presenter asked their views on the above mentioned problems or how they deal with these issues. Majority of the participants shared their views on these problems. Then the following techniques were drawn from the responses of participants.

1) *First problem*: Encourage students to 'speak English'

- Note that students can revert to their own language due to disengagement, de-motivation and lack of interest on the topic or task.
- Choose your topic carefully with your learners' interests in mind.
- Make provision for varying tasks according to their level.

2) *Second problem*: Discipline

- Create a disciplinary contract with your students.
- Give them responsibility for coming up with a fair consequence for each of their actions.
- Post it on the wall and refer to it when a behavioral issue arises.

3) *Third problem*: Classroom management

- Rearrange your furniture into a layout that suits your room.
- Instead of attempting to carry out a whole class exercise, try it with smaller groups.

4) *Fourth problem*: Giving feedback

- Don't put that pressure on yourself. Assign some of your stronger students as 'teaching assistants' to help you (this increases confidence levels).
- Get students familiar with the task of 'Peer to Peer Feedback' and 'Self-Reflection'.
- Write some key points on the board.

5) *Fifth problem*: Resources

- Use your learners' backgrounds and experiences as content for your lessons.
- Make use of authentic materials such as newspapers, magazines, photos, items of clothing and toys.

6) *Sixth problem*: Less speaking

- Don't call on quieter students to speak up in front of seventy classmates.
- Get to know your students and become aware of those who feel comfort to speak in smaller break-out groups.
- Call on them when they are in a group of 5 or 6 and monitor their progress closely.

7) Seventh problem: Marking homework

- Use various techniques of marking homework including: Peer check, answer key method, random nomination, volunteer work, etc.

The presenter concluded presentation and left 5 minutes time for audience queries. Some of them asked questions regarding the solutions of problems. Their concerns were related to how practicable the solutions would be in various classroom contexts. Some of them also suggested for reform in the presentation.

Reflective Approach to Teaching: A Modern Paradigm of Professional Development

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The concept of 'reflective teaching' has become a very popular issue in the field of teacher education. Several researches and policies have focused on the role of reflection process in developing teachers' professional learning and progress. The major aim of this paper is to explore the nature of reflective teaching with its various strategies, benefits, difficulties and implications for teacher training programs.

What is reflection?

In general, the term 'reflection' means a careful thought or consideration about something. It is a conscious response to past experiences and involves a thorough analysis of those experiences for further planning and actions.

Reflective teaching

Reflective teaching can be broadly defined as a systematic process of self-observation, self- analysis and self-evaluation. Schon (1983)

discussed two related terms – *reflection-on-action* and *reflection-in-action* in the context of teachers' professional development through reflective teaching. *Reflection-on-action* suggests 'a systematic and deliberate thinking over one's actions' and *reflection-in-action* is about 'reflecting on the situations and experiences during carrying out actions' (Schon, 1983).

Strategies of reflective teaching

Teachers can find different strategies effective for critical reflection. Some of them are as mentioned below.

Written Accounts: Journal writing, self-reporting and diary keeping should be used to keep written records of personal views and experiences in teaching situation.

i. **Journal Writing:** It is a more recognized and popular tool for developing critical reflection in teaching. Teachers can keep records in a journal of the significant learning experiences that have taken place.

ii. **Self-reporting:** Self-reports allow teachers to make a regular assessment of what they are doing in the classroom. They can see to what extent their assumptions about their own teaching are reflected in their actual teaching experiences.

iii. **Diary Keeping:** A teacher can write important aspects in a diary after he/she finishes a class. It raises awareness of classroom processes and provides encouragement and technical support.

Peer Observation: It provides opportunities for teachers to view each other's teaching in order to expose them to different teaching styles. Peer observation helps teachers to develop a better working collegial relationship.

Recording Lessons: Audio and video recordings capture the moments of teaching processes to be recalled later and thus help to analyze information from a close observation. These can be useful in considering different aspects of teacher talk and overall teaching behavior.

Student Feedback: Teachers can reflect much if they ask for the students' feedback regarding the class they teach. Their opinions and perceptions can add a different perspective which might be effective for teachers to know their strengths and lacking.

Benefits of reflective teaching

By adopting reflective approach, teachers can gain a deeper understanding of their own teaching beliefs, values and identities. Teacher trainers can coach novice teachers to adopt reflective practice which can help them improve their teaching practices to a great extent and thus make them confident and competent. Reflective teaching develops *portfolio assessment* in pre-service teacher education. It helps teachers to identify their personal and professional strengths and areas for improvement. It develops the quality of teaching through continuous improvements. Teachers who explore their own teaching through critical reflection develop changes in attitudes and awareness which they believe can benefit their professional growth as teachers (Richards, 1990).

Challenges in reflective teaching

One of the main problems regarding reflective teaching can be an over-emphasis on the technical aspects of research such as data collection through observation, using a variety of data analysis techniques, taking decisions based on the findings, etc. There can be a lack of harmony between teachers' personal theories and prescribed or imposed theories about teaching and learning. Moreover, some teachers may also find reflective approach threatening as they might not accept their fellow colleagues to evaluate them. Reflective teaching practice requires

a large amount of time, energy and patience on the part of teachers. Journal writing, making self-reports or recording lessons and evaluating those are time consuming tasks and sometimes they can seem to be frustrating to the teachers.

Implications

Reflective teaching is closely connected with *action research* through which the teacher as a researcher encourages students to put theories into practice in the classroom. Mentoring the beginning teachers serves as a form of reflective practice which helps to build a strong professional outlook. According to Calderhead (1989), reflective teaching enables teachers to develop their technical competence, and also helps them to become able to improve their professional practices.

Conclusion

Teachers can gradually develop their self-esteem, knowledge and skills by means of self-reflection. In order to develop professionalism and pedagogical changes, there is no alternative to reflective approach. So, as teachers, the more reflective we can be, the more effective we shall be.

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Ways for Equal Participation in Group Work

Prakash Thapa

Introduction

In any classroom, students are expected to demonstrate at least some skills of collaborative work. This skill is vital in paving the way for better learning and acquiring new knowledge. However, usually we tend to get students who do not actively participate in a group work activity. They either merely remain idle in an activity or pretend to be active while the teacher is around. The idleness of students during group work remained a challenge for me, which was disabling them from achieving learning goals. Further, an idle student does not get any benefit from group work, let alone sustained learning. The above-mentioned situation instigated me to ponder on the possible way out for equal participation in group work activities, which led me to implement some strategies, which may have a positive contribution in rendering the desired result.

The problem

In any classroom session, group work can be an effective way to engage students in active learning, which encourages communication, problem-solving and decision making. Group work has provided me with an opportunity to find out how well

students are collaborating in completing tasks and more importantly, in grasping the content. However, in many cases, one or two students in a group remain inactive and nod to the decisions made by active members of the group despite proper planning and execution. Consequently, they are not being able to have sustained learning from group work. Instead, it probably has made them feel like the group work is a waste of time. As a teacher, I find their indifference in group activities, as they fail to meet the lesson objectives despite my effort.

Purpose of the action research

This situation led me to think about the ways that would make the group work of my sessions more learner-centered, motivating and collaborative. Hence, the purpose of my action research was ensuring the participation of all the group members in my sessions. The main question was: "How to make all the students equally take part in group work?"

Intervention

After reviewing the available literature on my research area, I found an idea of the following techniques which I hope would make all the students equally take part in any group work activities. Romney (1996) stressed that assigning a role to every group member before starting a group work is an alternative for learner-centered classrooms. The roles were not assigned randomly to each student of the group but were based on subject matter. In self-selected groups, students choose their partner. According to Chapman and others, (2006), teachers can improve group dynamics and learning experiences by allowing students to self-select the members of their group (as cited in Rienties, Alcott and Jindal-Snape, 2014). I used these techniques in Grade 10 at least three times for two weeks. I gave an ample amount of time to students to make them feel comfortable in working with these newer ideas on group work.

Method of the study

In order to obtain data for this research, I used interviews and observations followed by analysis of data generated from the responses of students and teachers during interview as well as observation notes. The site of the study was Annapurna School, Jyatha, Kantipath, Kathmandu. The sample of study constituted 32 participants (15 boys and 17 girls). The class consisted of below to above average performing students. I also sent letters to the parents/guardians requesting them to help me by allowing students to participate in my research work.

Overview of the study

Students thoroughly enjoyed the new group work. They even wanted more group work than individual tasks in my second and third cycles of intervention. They were enthusiastic to choose the partner and were eager to know their role in group work. However, at times, while using self-selection strategy, there was a tendency to choose the same collaborates repeatedly, which I discouraged by making them randomly select their group member. All the students responded to the pre and post-intervention surveys. However, the level of response was not the same. Some chose to elaborate while other remained discreet.

In interview, some students revealed that they remained idle during group work because they did not know what to do and not participating in the group did not make difference in score as it was not given on individual basis. The comments made by students and my colleagues (who participated in research as observers of students' participation in group work before and after the intervention) were tallied. The analysis of survey yielded positive results. It indicated that new strategies of group work kept all the members fully engaged and motivated.

Conclusion

After observation, interview and analysis of the data collected, I came to the conclusion that role assignment and member selection could be beneficial to have an equal participation of all the members in a group work activity at least in my context.

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What You See, What You Think, What You Imagine

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The goal of the presentation was to aware the participants in using their own 'doors of perception' (i.e. powers of observation, personal perspectives) and creative imagination to explore the possibilities for language learning from simple vocabulary building and structure practice to creative writing and story-telling.

The only material needed is a simple but somehow provocative photo or picture (or copies enough for 6-8 people to share). I have found it best to use photos that are not overly detailed or that are with a particularly specific message to convey. Although I am sure photos as such can be used effectively for many language teaching purposes, they seem to limit imagination, but I encourage teachers to explore the possibilities in their teaching environments.

To begin with, before any photograph is shown, participants are told that they will be expected to answer three separate questions, in turn, 1) What do you see?, 2) What do you think?, and 3) What do you imagine? They are further instructed to keep their answers confined to the specific question, in particular, question number 1, which is asking for objective and detailed observation, not opinion or use of imagination which will naturally come later in their answers to questions 2 and 3. Part of the teacher's role here

is to keep the participants' responses within those guidelines. This in itself has often proven to be a good example, and potentially worthwhile discussion topic particularly for higher-level language learners.

By asking participants to observe in as much detail as possible, a large number of words can be generated for language study. Of course, the teacher can direct for closer observation and supply new vocabulary. For example, if students only say they see a tree, they can be directed to look closer at, say, the parts of the tree and if students do not know the name of a particular part, the teacher can supply the vocabulary such as trunk, bark, branch, twig, leaf, bud, etc. A next possible challenge, for lower level students, could be to use the new words in simple sentences, such as I can see a brown tree with many branches and new green leaves, or a different structure using There are many green leaves on the brown tree I see.

For question number 2, using a photograph showing only the arms of a person wearing a jacket, wrapped around a tree with his/her forefingers and thumbs touching, vocabulary, structures, and discussion using the participants' own thoughts, feelings, and opinions followed, the teacher can exploit any or all of these for language learning. For example, a sentence can be uttered like 'I think the hands are a woman's hands because the skin looks soft and smooth, and the fingers are long and slim.' They can say 'It must be winter because she is wearing a heavy, perhaps down jacket'; or since there was no actual heart in the photo, students would have to use structures like 'She is making a heart shape with her hands.' Other opinions such as 'I think she is an environmentalist (Chipko TreeHugger), because she has her arms around a tree, trying to protect it and showing her love for trees with the shape of a heart' etc.

If the final question could not bring out imaginative stories based on the photo, the teacher can ask questions to get the creative process going, such as 'how old is the woman?' 'is/was she married?' or 'what is the connection to her husband and the tree?' Here I find it useful to have groups, rather than individuals, although that would be possible too. The groups work together

to use their imaginations to come up with more questions, link the answers and create a story for sharing either orally or in writing; for example, in gist only, 'Anisha met Kunal on a camping trip when she was 24 years old. They fell in love and got married, and every year they returned to the same picnic spot near the same tree. However, five years ago, Kunal was killed in a traffic accident, but Anisha returns to the same tree to remember John'.

The rest is up to you. Please give it a try and let me know what you think.

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Problems Faced by English Language Teachers while Organizing Group Work in EFL Classes

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Background

In a group work, a group of students works together for specific purposes in a class. It is one of the dynamic modes of classroom interaction process. Generally, we, as language teachers, use five major dynamic techniques: teacher presentation, pair work, individual presentation, whole class discussion, and group work as per classroom situation.

Prabhu (1991 as cited in Adhikari, 2013) defines group work as putting learners in small groups and asking them or encouraging them to attempt a task jointly. Teachers use some transformative techniques to boost the classroom situation so that learning environment becomes effective. It becomes useful in the sense that, from the perspective of classroom dynamics, a class should have the light and fun environment, engaging and encouraging collaboration, reduced anxiety, and rapport building in the group or peers.

The procedure of group work

The process of group work refers to the steps to accomplish group activities. For this, Harmer (1986, as cited in Adhikari, 2013) suggests three steps to complete group works. They are before, during and after steps. At the before stage, the teacher plans and groups students creatively. Then at during stage, the teacher mentors group activities and finally at the after stage, the teacher asks students to share whatever they have done in their groups.

Gender issue

As the group work demands, social environment should be created among group members. However, there are some issues which hinder to have such a situation in the language class. For example, there are some situations where some participants do not want to participate in group work and pair work. They even do not want to speak in front of friends and colleagues. For this, Hyde and Deal (2003, as cited in Adhikari, 2013) argue that gender matters in a different way. For instance, some women participants are shy, so they do not want to speak and share their views.

Personality issue

In a classroom, some students are extroverts while others are introverts. As we talk about group works and pair works, it is easy to handle the extroverts; but it is very difficult to make introvert students get involved in the group activity because they feel shy and find it difficult to speak in front of other students and the teacher. Gass and Selinkar (2008) state that the stereotype of an introvert is someone who is much happier with books rather than with other people. In contrast, the stereotype of an extrovert is the opposite: someone who is more comfortable with people than with books.

Problem faced by teachers while organizing group work

Students come from different social backgrounds, communities, casts and linguistic backgrounds. For example, in Terai community, girls do not want to sit and interact with boys. Therefore, this is one of the challenges for the teacher to deal with. Similarly, some boys do not show interest in a group or any social activities in the classrooms.

Some extrovert learners are more benefited from a group work than introvert students. Sitting arrangement is also an important aspect of a group work. When teachers conduct a group work, they need some resources like moveable seats. The classes in our context usuallyhave fixed benches and desks. Therefore, teachers have a problem in managing seating arrangements as group demands.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a group work is a good technique for teaching. However, it is not useful in every context. In Terai region, most classes are large, have fixed benches and desks, and do not have resources. In this situation, teachers are not able to use group work well even if they try. Teachers feel that students are culturally stereotyped in a way that some girl students do not want to sit with boys.

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Going Unplugged to Teach Speaking

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Introduction

Students seldom get a chance to practice speaking in traditional teacher-centered ESL classes in India. This problem is even more pronounced in large classes where the focus of the instruction is strictly limited to learning through a pre-selected coursebook and practicing grammar lessons repetitively. This classroom-based exploratory action research study took place in a high school in Bihar (India). In this paper, we explain how 'Dogme moments' were created in class and how it helped in creating quality learner talk-time.

Context

This study was conducted in a school which was not technically well-equipped. Classrooms had only blackboard and chalk. Altogether 83 students participated in this study – 48 from grade eight and 35 from grade nine. They were aged between 13-15 years. Their English language proficiency level varied from A1 to A2. English was their second language. Classroom was the only space where they got a chance to practice speaking in English. It could be safely said that this is a shared context across

many developing countries such as India, Pakistan or Nepal, and many teachers would relate to teaching in a similar situation.

Objectives

The purpose was to develop students' speaking skill and promote learner autonomy. It also aimed to bring about informed changes in classroom teaching practices by making lessons more learner-centered. We were seeking contextualized solutions by using exploratory action research.

Methodology

Exploratory action research results when exploratory research is followed up by action research (Smith and Robolledo, 2017). There are two stages of this research methodology. First, the teaching-learning situation is explored to develop an informed understanding of the current situation and then an action plan is developed to find a contextualized solution to bring about desired changes. This is further explained as follows:

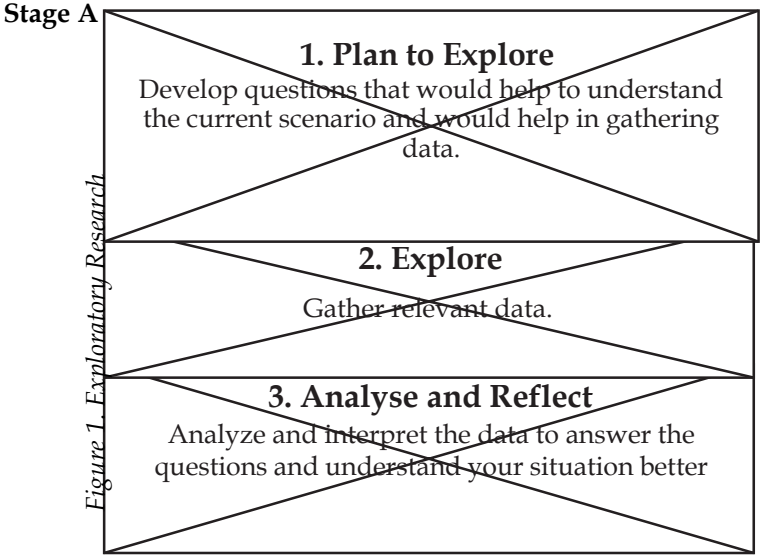


Figure 1. Exploratory Research

Stage B

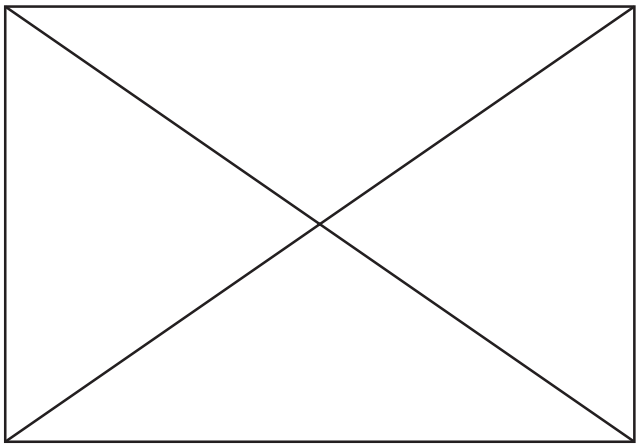


Figure2. Action Research Cycle

Action research is a self-reflective inquiry, which consists of four stages: planning a change, implementing the activities that bring about that change, observing what happens and evaluating the change, and reflecting on the next step (Burns, 2010). This process could be repeated until the desired outcome is achieved. Each cycle could lead to a more nuanced understanding of the teaching-learning scenario.

Our pedagogical approach

In our context, it was mandatory to teach using the textbook. We successfully implemented the unplugged approach along with using a textbook to achieve our objectives. Teaching unplugged has three key elements. It is materials-light, conversation-driven, and focuses on the learner and emergent language (Meddings and Thornbury, 2011). In our class, the language learning affordances were optimized by connecting topics in the textbook with real-life issues relevant to learners' context. The learner input was acknowledged as valid content in language classroom. The contributions of learners were welcomed and not judged solely in terms of their accuracy.

Results

By analyzing data, we were able to observe specific changes, which indicated that desired outcomes were achieved. For example, students became more confident while speaking English (Fig.3). The classroom became a safe language learning space (Fig.4).

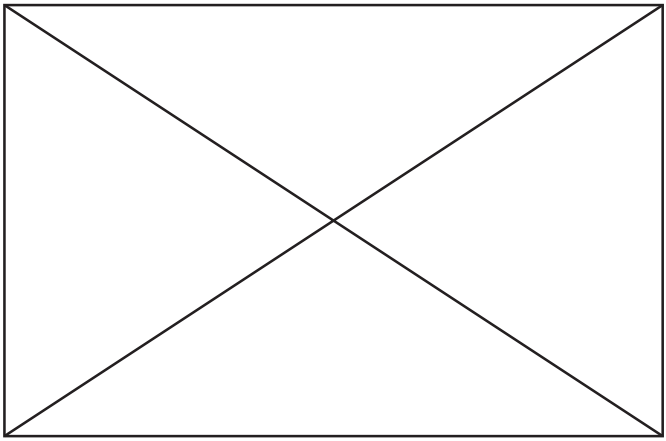


Figure 3: How confident do you feel about speaking in English?

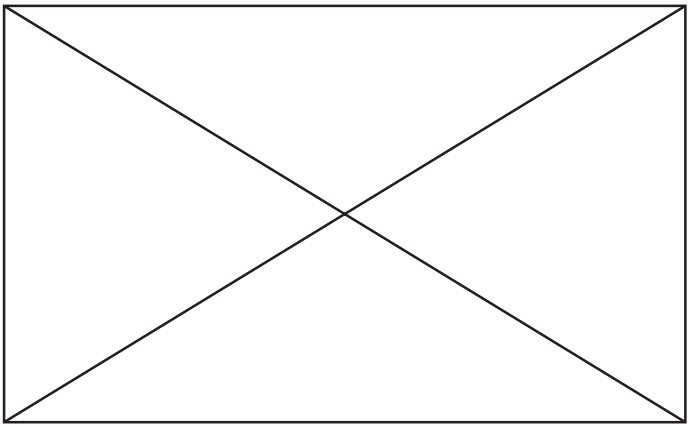


Figure 4: We have a positive classroom culture which helps in speaking in English

Majority of students (84%) reported that they wrote sentences themselves rather than copying from elsewhere, indicating that they became capable of independent language use (Fig. 5). More than half of the students (61%) reported that they did self-correction (Fig. 6) and a significant number of them (71%) practiced speaking English outside of the class (Fig. 7).

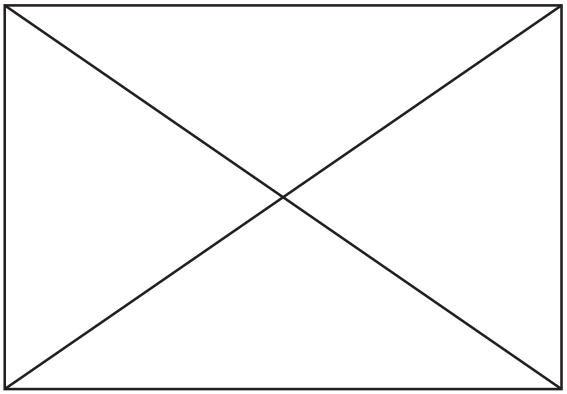


Figure 5: I share my ideas in my own words

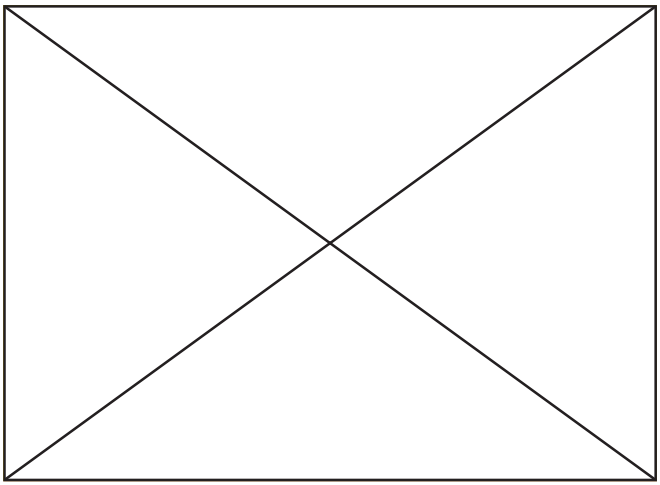


Figure 6: I correct my mistakes on my own

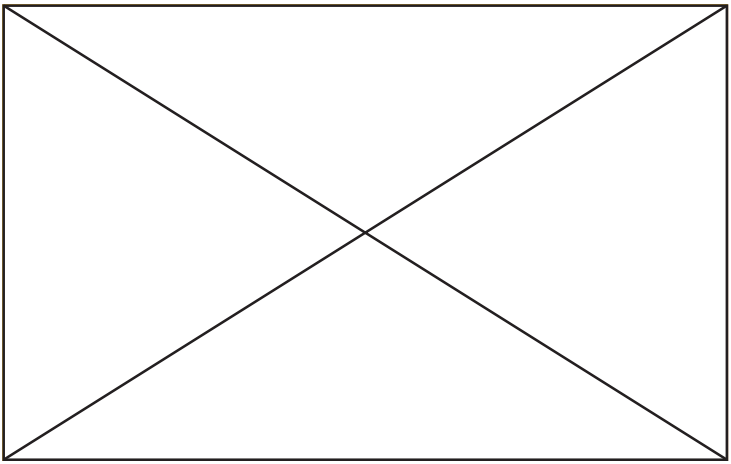


Figure 7: I practice speaking English even outside the class.

Conclusion

Teaching unplugged transforms classrooms into acquisition-rich learning spaces and increases learner talk-time. It is possible to use textbook content critically to start discussions and raise language awareness. We can also conclude that teachers' beliefs and attitudes must also change to bring about significant changes in teaching-learning scenarios.

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EFL Teachers' Perception of Locally and Culturally Available Instructional Materials

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Introduction

Instructional materials refer to the materials which are used in teaching-learning activities to facilitate the students in a particular content or subject matter to develop language proficiency. It is believed that instructional materials are the core phenomena of language teaching, which comprise the contents of instruction and help to develop students' proficiency in language skills. Tomlinson (2011) asserts that materials can be everything if they support both the teachers and students to empower their teaching-learning.

As an English language teacher, I have my experience of using instructional materials in English language classroom. In the course of teaching, I realized that the course books are not sufficient. Therefore, I started searching different but authentic materials to support my teaching at Bachelor's level. Then, I started using various instructional materials after searching from various sources relating to the local context while teaching

different subjects. Such practice created interest among students; and they felt better in their English language classroom.

I visualized my teaching with students' proficiency regarding instructional materials. Then I questioned myself how far I use the instructional materials to the full possible extent. Additional question was: Do experienced teachers use instructional materials together with the prescribed books in their Bachelor's level classroom? Then, I conducted research regarding the use of instructional materials in EFL classroom. More specifically, the study aimed at exploring the use of locally and culturally available instructional materials in the Bachelor's level classroom.

Locally available materials

The materials available in the particular context or local areas and can be used in classes are locally available instructional materials. Here, I am closer to Thomas (2014), who mentions that local materials could be newspapers, magazines, notices, advertisements, official letters, restaurant menus, brochures, pamphlets, photos, realia, and other materials which are available in campus library and the materials prepared by teachers in local setting with locally available materials and resources.

Cultural materials

Cultural materials can be perceived variously. Frank (2013) writes: "Cultural materials could include popular movies, music, literature, online sites, and everyday items like stamps, currency, toys, musical instruments, menus, travel brochures, magazines, and newspapers from English-speaking countries-or from a specific country, depending on students' needs and course goals" (p. 6). According to Frank (2013), cultural materials play a vital role in promoting cultural awareness among students. Therefore, meaningful and useful learning lies at the center when the instructors associate their ideas with the contextualized content to promote students' cultural understanding.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore the perception of EFL teachers on the locally and culturally available instructional materials in the classroom. The research question was: How do EFL Teachers perceive the use of locally and culturally available instructional materials in Bachelor's level EFL classes?

Methodology

I employed an ethnographic approach to collect in-depth data for the study. I used interview and class observation as research tools. Four EFL teachers teaching at Bachelor's level in four community campuses of Tanahun were selected purposively.

Teachers' perception of 'local' and 'cultural'

The use of instructional materials depends on the willingness of teachers, the nature of subject matter, their expertise, students' culture, and the local context. Teachers have variations in their perceptions regarding the use of instructional materials. They perceive that teachers have to use the materials available in local setting.

Conclusion

EFL teachers' perception of instructional materials varied. None of the participants used locally and culturally available instructional materials in the same way. The use of locally and culturally available materials requires intellectual involvement, contextual understanding and various strategies in language classes. Teaching becomes lively only when we use appropriate instructional materials in greater amount for increased pedagogical exposures. Teaching-learning materials create stress-less learning environment and a systematic way for enriching better content knowledge. Alternatively, locally crafted materials help to break the monotony of the classroom and gear more

insightful learning particularly by creating friendly classroom atmosphere and relating to the contextual situation for learners. Cultural materials are dynamic. Therefore, they are easier to relate to learners' socially framed cognition.

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Speaking Activities: Beyond the Textbook

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This presentation is based on my Master's dissertation. Use of various speaking activities helps learners improve their speaking (Mandal, 2016). Fourteen different activities in this regard are presented here.

Viewing techniques

The teacher lets the students watch the video. Meanwhile, the teacher needs to pause the video when the episode becomes interesting; and the students should be suggested to guess the upcoming events. At last, video can be played to find out whether the guessing matches.

Fast forward

The teacher forwards the video fast at high speed taking only a few seconds. Then students are asked to guess the characters and their dialogues (Harmer, 2001). It helps the learners speak without taking much burden.

Role-play

Relevant video needs to be selected by the teacher to play the expected event. Students copy the dialogue and action for

performing the same as shown in the video. At last, they perform the scene.

Freeze frame

The teacher plays a video and pauses the scene when it becomes interesting. Then, the teacher asks the students what they think will happen next or what the character/s will say next.

Silent viewing (for language)

Any video, putting the sound mute, can be shown to the students. After projection of the video, students guess the dialogue.

Pictureless listening (language)

Along with speaking, this activity is also known for developing imagination and creativity in learners. According to Harmer (2001), the teacher covers the screen, turns the monitor away from the students, or turns the brightness control right down. The students listen to the dialogue and guess: where it is taking place, who the speakers are, their age, etc.

Pictureless listening (Sound effect)

This activity focuses on sound effects: breaking the glasses, firing the gun, playing with instruments, etc. First, the teacher plays a video without dialogue or with less dialogue. Then, the teacher puts the monitor away. Students listen to the sound effects without the scene. Finally, the students explain the sound effects.

Build students' analysis

Students are given a chance to prepare and present any video, poster, picture, article, poem, etc. in the class. For the preparation, they can be informed some days earlier. Students can present their work and give their own explanations. They also explain

why that particular material is important for them. It is an opportunity for students' self-development (Efrizal, 2012).

The four corner debate

The teacher gives a topic to the learners and asks them whether they "strongly agree", "agree", "disagree" or "strongly disagree". A learner chooses any of them and expresses his/her view.

Role-play debates

Learners are assigned to play a role which represents any well-known person. They play their part and express their view about an issue. Role-play debates provide the way to promote more than two viewpoints on a topic.

Think-pair-share debates

Think-pair-share is a combined form of solo work and group work. First, it requires students to think and make notes individually about a given issue, then they need to compare their notes in a pair. Secondly, a pair combined with another pair creates lists to support both sides of the issue. The newly formed groups discuss the issue and choose their best arguments. Finally, the groups present their reasons to the class.

Problem-solving debates

Groups of the students are given a problem. They are also given some materials to help them solve the problem. The groups work to find out the solution. Finally, the teams claim their solution as the best.

Presenting perception

The students are informed some days earlier about the presentation. Then on the day of presentation, emphasizing on

personal thoughts, ideas and assumptions, the students present their perception on the given topic.

Chapter presentation

Students present a chapter from their course book and explain the ideas. Mostly such presentation is used for academic purposes. So, it is also called an academic presentation.

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Should Teachers Use L1 in EFL Classroom?

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Introduction

English language teachers customarily rule out the use of mother tongue for teaching English. A global assumption that prevailed over years is that English should be taught and learned through English not through mother tongue as it impedes the learning of the target language. Phillipson (1992) identified the global assumption that English is best taught monolingually, distinctively by a native English teacher; and standard of English will decline if other languages are used for any significant amount of instructional time.

This assumption of target language teaching, derived from various teaching methods such as Direct Method and Audio-lingual Method, was later modified in other newer methods, for example, Natural Approach, Communicative Language Teaching, and Task-Based Language Learning, which showed substantial resilience on the use of L1. As they have students from various educational backgrounds, most teachers find it difficult to decide whether or not to use L1 in the class. The debate over the utilization of L1 in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class has led to a myriad of research in contexts where English exists as an important foreign language. Majority of the research, for

example, Auerbach (1993), has advocated for judicious employment of mother tongue for effective EFL learning. On the contrary, studies such as Sharma (2006) advocate that learners need to get a total English language exposure where they can get the essential input. Many studies suggest that L1 use might develop a negative impact on the learners, which may impede language acquisition. The present study seeks to explore the teachers' and students' views on whether they should use L1 (Bangla in this context) in their EFL classroom at the tertiary level in Bangladesh.

Research questions

The present study aimed at investigating the following research questions:

i) What are teachers' and students' perceptions about using L1 in an EFL class?

ii) What are the strengths and weaknesses of using L1 in an EFL class?

Methodology

The study adopted a mixed-methods research design for collecting data from teachers and students from a government led public university in Bangladesh. Ten teachers and 40 students were selected through purposive sampling with the aim to get maximum information for the study. Self- report questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from both teachers and students. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data.

Findings

Regarding the first research question, results of questionnaire and interview revealed that both the participating groups advocated

the importance of English-only ambiance in the classroom. However, they did not deny the need for using the mother tongue when complexity arises. All the teachers agreed that they should use L1 at a minimum range. In the interview, 40 % of the teachers said that they directly switch to Bangla whenever necessary, such as for explaining difficult grammar rules and concepts. Half of them said that they try to explain ideas in English by speaking slowly and using simple sentences. About 90% of the students found it useful when teachers talked in Bangla to teach grammar, new vocabulary and difficult concepts. Bangla use reduced their anxiety and fear of English. At the interview session, students reiterated the fact that teachers tend to speak in English most of the time, and they expected them to use Bangla sometimes for better comprehension.

Conclusion

It is advantageous to make a judicious application of L1 in the classroom. It could be recommended that for reaching a balanced use of L1, teachers should consider students' previous experience, proficiency level, stage of the course and phase of the individual lesson the students are attending.

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Using Technology in Teaching English at the SSC Level

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Introduction

Technology has great use in every sphere of our life. Like other spheres, technology is being widely used in foreign/second language teaching throughout the world due to the influence of information technology in society. Nowadays, teachers like to use technology in their class to teach the English language effectively. Since the internet is easily accessible and provides the required resources, teachers are fond of accessing the internet to search for useful language resources for preparing themselves in teaching the English language. Singhal (1997) also remarks that technology and English language education are related to each other. Teachers mostly use computers, multimedia project, mobile phone, sound box, social media, CD, and DVD player, and pen-drive while teaching in English language class. Internet plays a key role here in operating these tools. Teachers are able to teach the English language effectively using technology.

Moreover, students also get opportunity to use technology for language learning individually or in a group through the internet.

In spite of these developments, technology has some drawbacks in both teaching and learning the English language. Teachers and students, in most cases, face significant challenges in using technology.

Objective of study

Teachers use technology in different ways of teaching the English language at the SSC level in Bangladesh. It has a high impact on both teaching and learning. Therefore, the primary objective of the study was to find out the effect of technology on teaching the English language at secondary level in Bangladesh.

Methodology

The study is both qualitative and quantitative and was conducted by using semi-structured interviews, class observation and questionnaire. Four English language teachers teaching at secondary level in the private schools of Dhaka city were interviewed; and their classes were observed to collect qualitative data. Questionnaire was distributed to sixty students from four different schools for collection of quantitative data.

Findings

After analyzing the data, it has been found that technology has both the positive and negative impacts on teaching and learning at the secondary level. The qualitative result shows that the teachers mostly feel comfortable in technology-affiliated classes. They feel confident when they use a computer with multimedia projector. They can engage all the students in the lesson. The teachers get the scope of developing their creativity. They use technology to update themselves though they face some problems with modern technological tools. It was observed that students can learn more quickly when teachers use a multimedia projector to teach the English language. Some teachers cannot operate all the technological tools. In addition, they need much time to set up the class and to decide the contents. They are not well skilled

in making slides and videos for the course. Moreover, all teachers cannot afford all the technological tools, as they are very much costly. It was also observed that students become interested in using the technological devices. They start to use their computers or mobile phone to browse the internet. Doing so, they even spend time in playing games. Thus, they waste their time and deviate from their actual learning. The quantitative result of the study shows that technology helps to make English class more effective and interesting. In technology-affiliated classes, most of the students (91%) feel comfortable. They enjoy the class with laptop and projector. However, some of the students (8%) feel bored in the class as they do not get a clear idea; and they cannot operate all the computer tools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following suggestions could be considered for the successful implementation of technologies in teaching the English language at the SSC level in Bangladesh.

1. Teachers should be more assertive and technical in choosing different technological tools in the classroom.

2. Training for one-to-one or small group tutoring is required, so that teachers can practice computer literacy skills and can be competent in different modern technologies in their contexts.

3. English teachers should encourage their students to use technologies in developing language skills.

4. Authority should come forward. They should think about the development of teaching.

5. Training and workshop should be arranged in different phases to make the teachers more active and to make them understand how to use modern technology.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that, in Bangladeshi context, technology-based language teaching will be successful; and use of technology will be fruitful and effective only if there is coordination between teachers and the school authorities.

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Increasing students' participation through Group and Pair works - Action Research

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General background

As an English teacher in a community school, I found that my students in Nepali medium did not participate in teaching-learning activities and showed less interest in speaking English. As a result, the teacher was talking more and students were talking less in the classroom. Fortunately, I got a golden chance to do action research as part of training on behalf of The British Council Nepal.

After the acceptance of the proposal by The British Council, I continued my research in my school Janata Secondary School, Danda in Grade ten. The focus of the action research was improving students' participation in classroom activities and promoting student-talking time in the class through pair works, group works and games.

Problem identification and description

My Grade 10 students, especially in Nepali medium, always hesitated to participate in TL activities, and I found myself talking

more in the class. I reflected that it was my fault, too. Therefore, I decided to use new techniques to improve student-talking time (STT) in my class. I planned to use pair and group works and some games during the course. I guessed my attempts would be fruitful to motivate them in TL activities. The use of more teacher talking time (TTT) in the class makes language teaching process less effective.

Statement of problem

The research was on *How to improve students' involvement in classroom activities and develop students' talking time?*, and *how could the class be more student-centered?* I wanted to know how I could bring change in students' participation by using pair works, group works, and games in the class.

Research questions

What activities can I include in my lesson plans and use in the class so that my students would be more engaged in language learning process?

Interventions

To accomplish my research, I used the following interventions in 6 phases.

Phase 1: I prepared a detailed proposal and sought approval from The British Council.

Phase 2: I prepared task-based lesson plans, baseline questionnaire and checklist, then used the baseline questionnaire and checklist in the classroom.

Phase 3: After studying the baseline, I used pair work and group work, discussions, and then made the students play some language games inside and outside the classroom. I let the students practice a lot themselves. I just kept myself guiding, encouraging and helping them to

speak. I used more English rather than Nepali in the class. I did this for some weeks.

Phase 4: After the implementation of these new techniques in the class, I used the same questionnaire and checklist in the class. The checklist was used during the research, too. My school head teacher as well as English teacher used the checklist as a fellow teacher (See Appendix).

Phase 5: I collected the data from the students' responses and the checklist used by the fellow teacher and head teacher. I compared the checklists and found the differences.

Phase 6: I analyzed the data with the help of head teacher and reflected on the outcomes of the research. I have decided to re-plan for betterment again.

Phases 7: I prepared the final report and submitted it to The British Council Nepal.

I got the support of my students, fellow teachers and the other trainers from BC and experts to accomplish my mission. Altogether twenty students constituted the sample of the study for the baseline and post research; and the fellow teacher was asked to work on the checklist (See Appendix). Though it is a small attempt, I found it interesting and fruitful, too. Though the proposed dates were not strictly followed due to school holidays, the mission was completed in time.

Close examination of the data

I. Before intervention students wrote:

- The teacher speaks more in the class.
- They do not get time to speak.
- They like to speak in the class.

- The teacher does not use pair or group works and games.

- They like pair and group works; and they like to communicate with each other.

II. After intervention they wrote

- Students participated more in the class.

- They got chance to speak and share.

- They enjoyed working in pairs and groups, and learning by playing games. Onion ring game was used for better conversation.

- Teacher manages, and they speak. (Some sample questionnaires and photos are in the appendix at the end.)

From the above data, I conclude that if we attempt to bring change, we can. The students are more interested in participating in the pair works and group activities. The more the students practice, the more they can learn.

- They like to learn by playing and sharing.

- The more they are involved in the activities, the better they can learn.

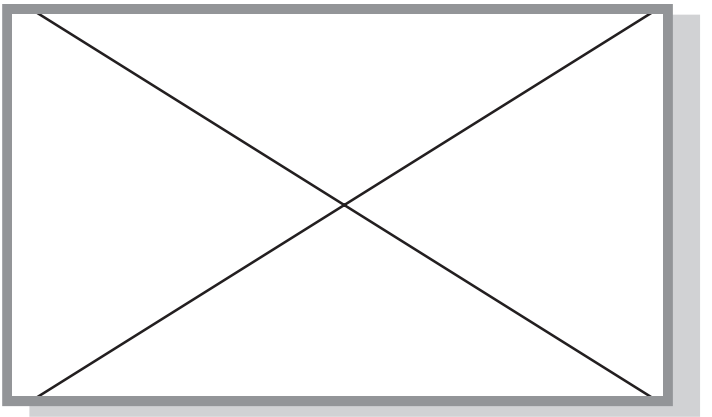
Outcomes/Reflection

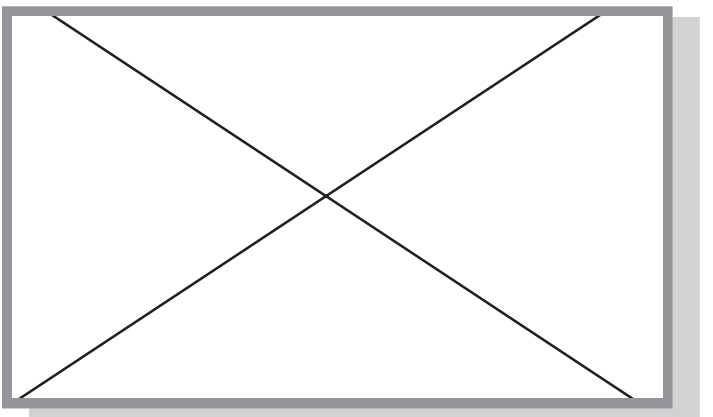
From the research, I conclude and reflect that when I talk more in the class, my students remain passive. If we engage them in TL process through pair works, group works, and games, we can increase students' talking time and increase their participation. However, short attempt and such practices alone in a subject are not sufficient. This way should be practiced in other subjects as well. The confidence level in students now is

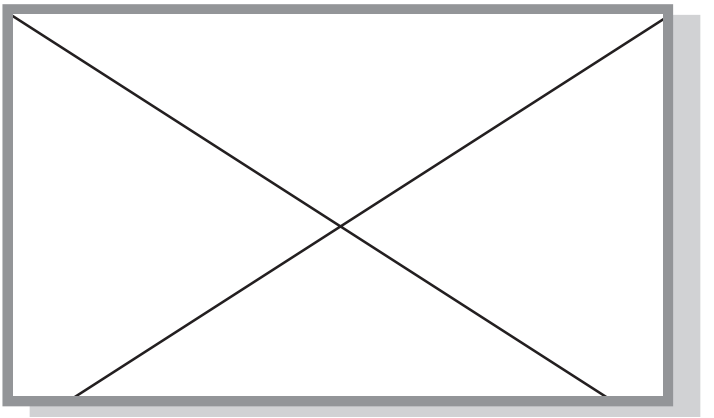
high, yet they need to practice a lot, and as a teacher, I have to launch other practices to keep it up.

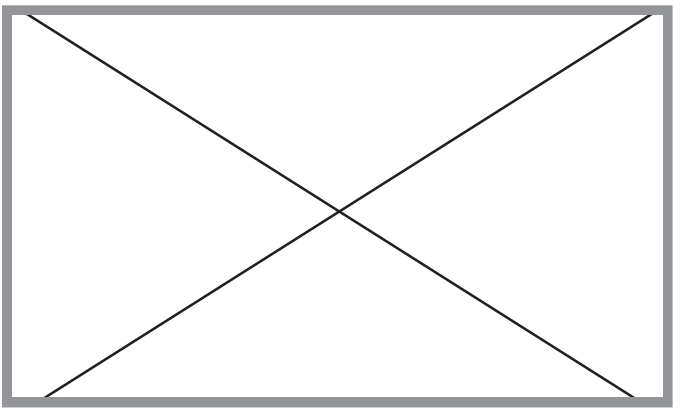
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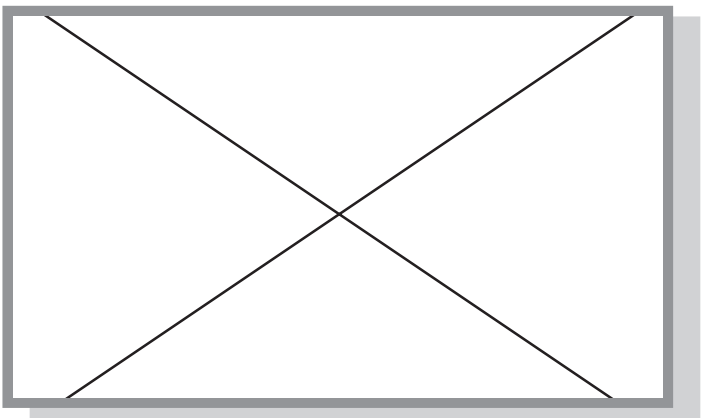
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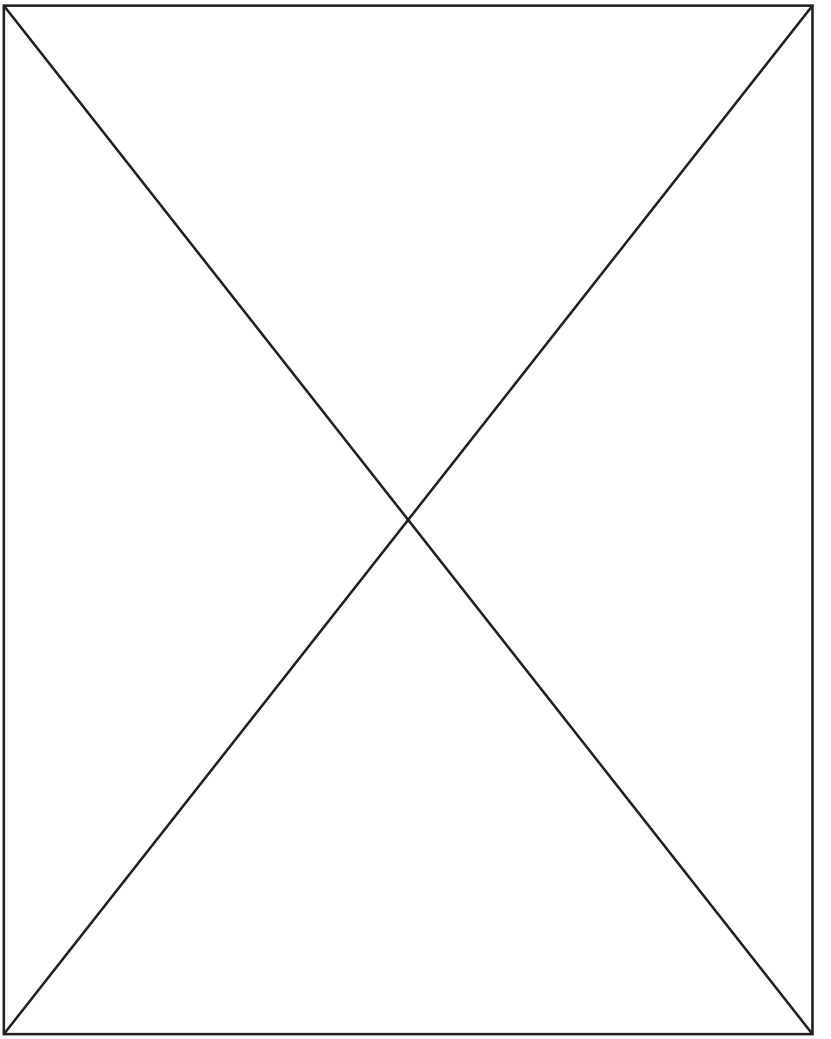


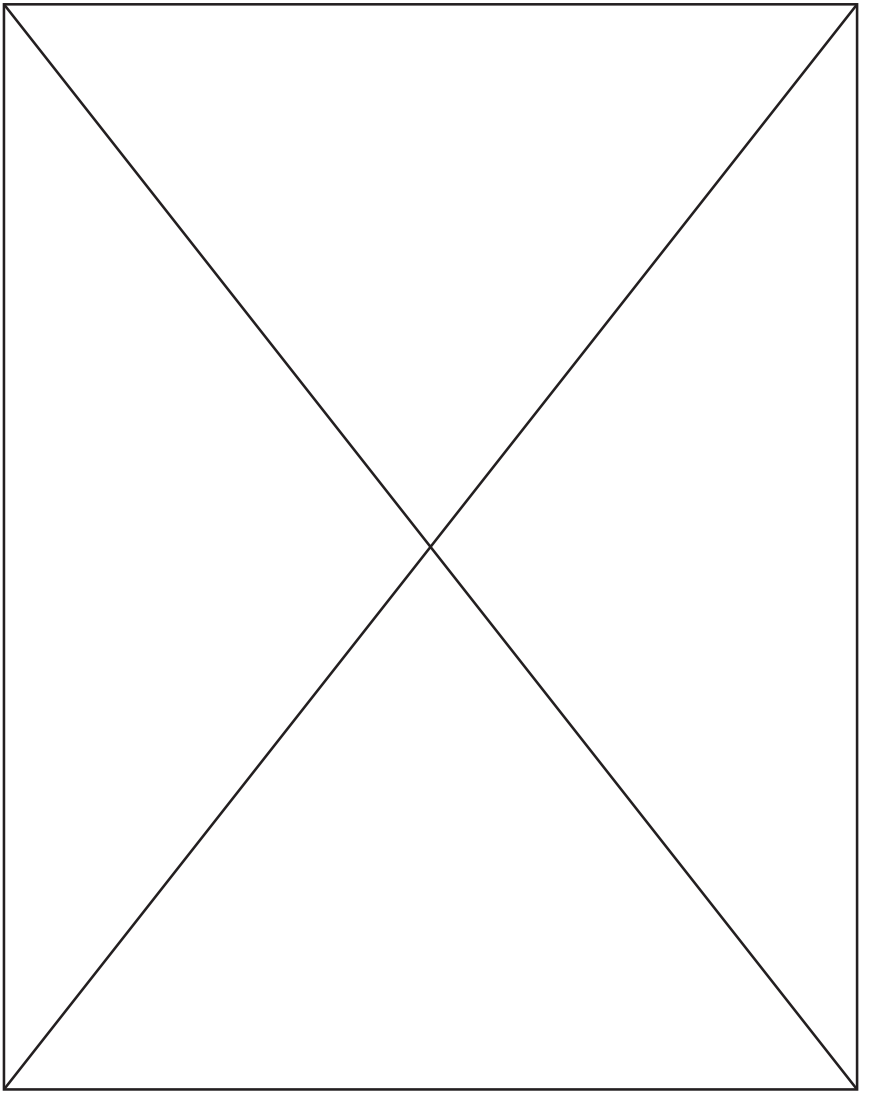


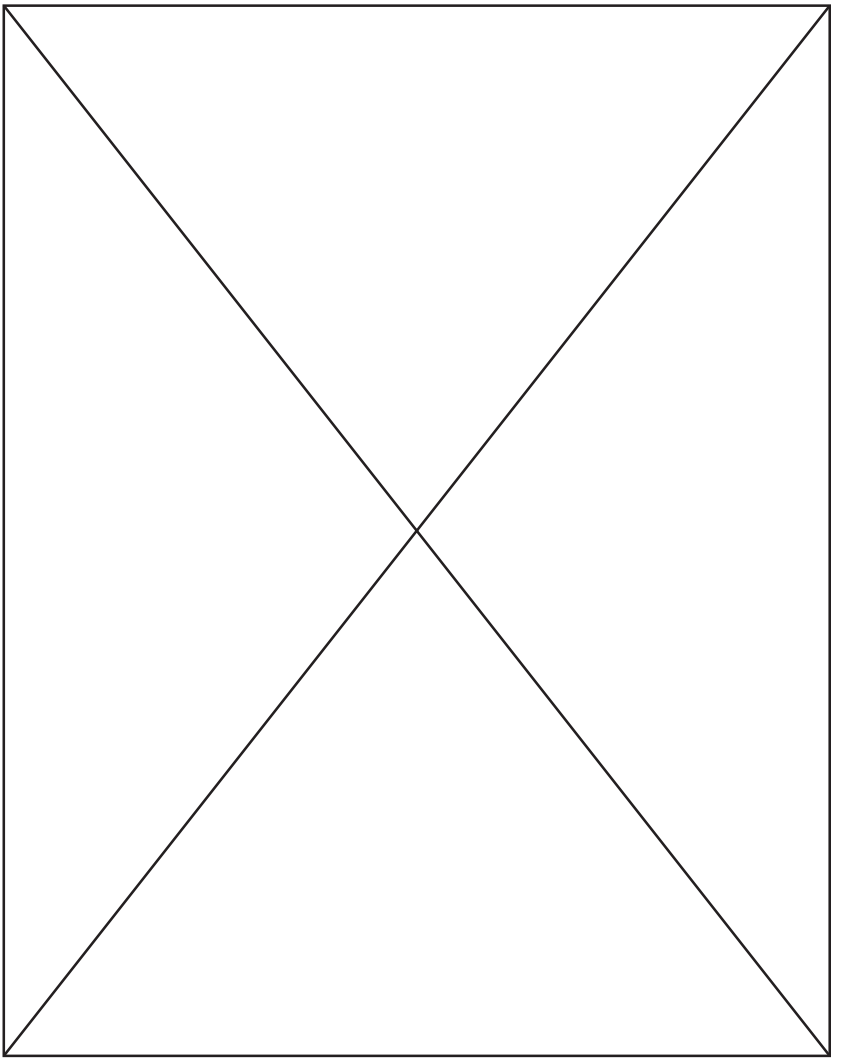




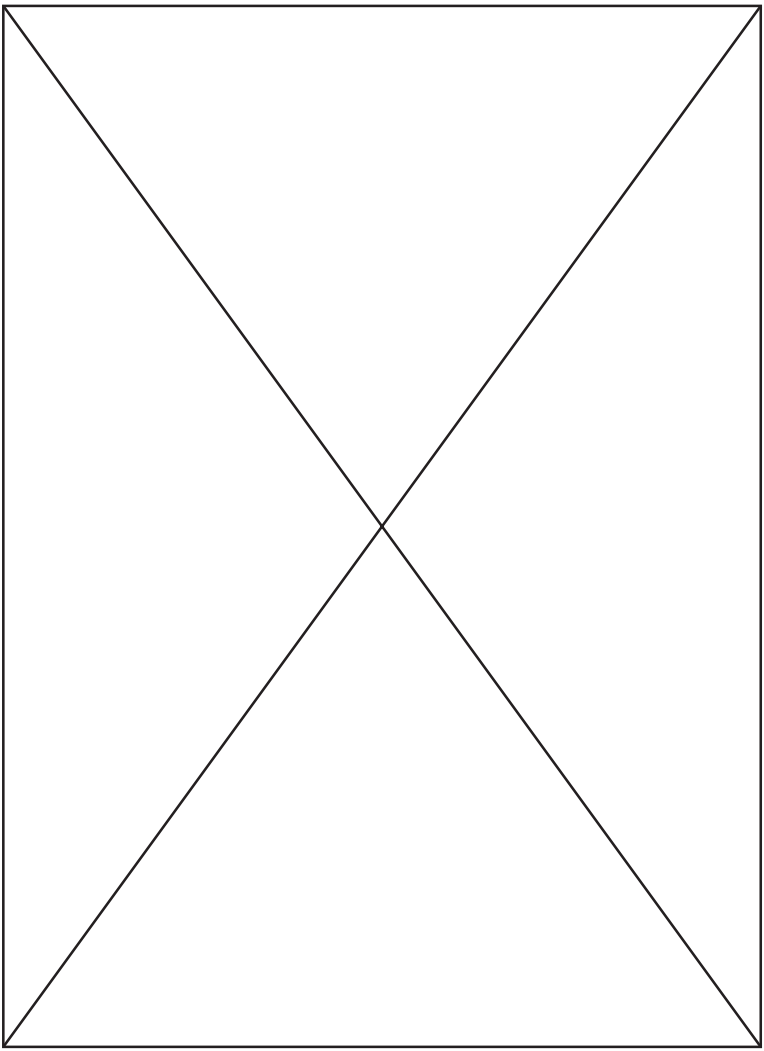
Questionnaire







Checklist



Use of Smartphone in the Nepalese ELT

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Introduction

The use of mobile phone for learning can be of any kind; but when it comes to language learning, mobile learning technologies such as mobile phone or smartphone are being used for various purposes and by people of different nationalities having various geographical, cultural and educational backgrounds. This research seeks to provide answers to different questions related to use of smartphones in English language teaching (ELT) by secondary level students.

Learning with Mobile Learning Technologies

Mobile learning technologies are quite promising in addressing a number of educational issues. According to West (2012), technologies of mobile learning have the potential to transform the educational field in favor of learners – as the ability of students to have access on internet using their smartphones, tablets or laptops create great learning opportunities for them in different respects.

Learning Languages with Smartphone

Mobile learning technologies such as smartphones can be used for different instructional purposes in classroom settings and outdoors. According to Kennedy and Levy (2008), educators have claimed that mobile learning technologies are great tools, which provide great and highly potential language learning opportunities regardless of the environment where students are. As Hashemi and Ghasemi (2011, as cited in Bllaca, 2016) claim, Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) does not solely provide language learning opportunities, but it also supports students with enough chances for exercises which incorporate the four main language skills

Methodology

The survey took place in one of the higher secondary schools in Kathmandu. Prior to conducting the research, the consent from the principal was obtained. Consent was taken also from the CEO of the school. Students volunteered to participate in the research. The procedure of conducting the researches was as follows: Students were given a question which was to compose a paragraph related to smartphone use in language learning. Then they wrote that themselves and handed over to the researcher. The data were collected from the questionnaires, then analyzed, and the findings of the research were interpreted using simple charts in order to have a detailed understanding.

Findings

I have selected five quantitative and one qualitative questionnaire to explore my research. The questions were as follows:

a. Where do you mostly use your smartphone?

b. Do you think that long use of smartphone can be harmful?

c. Do you think that adequate and relevant use of your smartphone will help you to learn English?

d. When do you use your smartphone in learning English, and for what purpose do you mostly use it?

e. Do you think that using your smartphone for a long time and inadequately can have any negative effect on learning?

Discussions and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the questionnaire, it was clear that smartphone use in education can have positive impact on learning. However, if they are not used adequately and in a controlled way they might have negative impacts not only in learning issues but also in health related issues. All participants in the research thought that adequate use of smartphone can help them in their attempts to learn English. Smartphone use in language learning can be of great benefit especially in vocabulary acquisition, spelling and pronunciation, grammar, listening and reading skills.

Recommendations

As the findings of the research show, one needs to have in mind the following things in order to benefit from smartphone use in education in general, and language learning in particular:

a. Use it for a short period of time and for learning purpose.

b. Use the smartphone applications which enable practicing language skills.

c. Use it either at home or in classroom, but keep using it in a controlled way.

Limitations

This study has the following limitations:

a) small number of participants in the research

b) focused less on qualitative approach, which leads to have limited understanding over the smartphone use in education

c) no interviews with experts from language learning field

Conclusion

As findings of the research suggest, using smartphones and other mobile learning technologies can benefit a lot, as they offer language learning opportunities everywhere; and this is due to their portability and connectivity. The findings suggest increased opportunities for language learning by taking advantage of a tool that students are intimately familiar with. Dealing with the challenges of using smartphones is important for the teachers who use them in their language teaching.

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