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Initiating Another Legacy

This volume, NELTA Conference Proceedings, is the outcome of NELTA 15th International Conference that took place from February 19 to 21 at Little Angels’ School, Hattiban, Lalitpur. With its theme as ‘English in Diversity’, the presentations in the conference focused on contemporary issues of English Language Teaching (ELT) like ELT in mixed ability classes, ELT in multilingual context, inclusive pedagogy, World Englishes, and Technology in ELT. The conference was able not only to attract English teachers from all corners of the country, but also to applied linguists and English teachers from countries like Bangladesh, Japan, India, the USA, the UK, Poland, Thailand and Pakistan around the world pulling the leading figures in our field like Numa Markee and David Graddol together with our own local scholars. This kumbha mela, in Professor Awasthi’s words, proved a unique venue for sharing the knowledge and skills as well as strengthening professional networking among the teachers.

Two key speakers David Graddol and Numa Markee focused on the increasing role English is playing in today’s world. Both the speakers highlighted that not only the population of English speakers is increasing but also the varieties of English are increasing rapidly. This implies that the distinction between native and non-native speakers of English is increasingly becoming blurred. We have different varieties of English in different countries and within a country.

This collection is a product of an arduous work by our contributors and of the work of editors behind the scene. As editors, we faced some challenges that we did not anticipate, and therefore did not have a very rigorous editorial process in
place. We did not have many submissions, some submissions were not consistent with the guidelines provided, and we could not avoid some shortcuts for finishing the work on time. Next time, we will advertise for submission a bit more aggressively, implement the submission guidelines more rigorously, and work more closely with the contributors after submission. Nonetheless, we would like to express our appreciation for the cooperation extended to us by our contributors. The editorial team will try its best to make the upcoming proceedings more scholarly.

In this first volume of NELTA proceedings, we are pleased to present the Presidential Address followed by 22 papers that discuss diverse themes in applied linguistics and language teaching. Building on the theme of the expanding nature of the English language and its profession, Abhi Subedi mentions that discourses on politics, economic downturns and upturns and IT breakthroughs have multiplied the use of English, and comments on the nature of globally spreading English as “what spreads outside becomes a variety, and what is taught inside the classroom sometimes remains a curricular form.” Sajan Karn presents seven wonders of English Language Teaching (ELT) today and urges all local teachers that deconstructing the global perspectives and practice is the most pressing challenge before us. Drawing on the global nature of the English language, Sarwet Rasun presents a case of two children’s magazines from Pakistan to examine the practice of borrowings and code mixing in terms of their frequency, causes and functions.

We have received the largest number of contributions in the area of technology and language teaching. Susan Kennedy has two papers that extensively discuss how we can use video technology creatively in a communicative language classroom and how digital storytelling projects can foster collaboration. The author argues that using video for teaching and learning can help teachers fulfil two broad roles, to record performance as an artifact and to provide a reflective or action research tool
for collecting evidence of learner communicative capacity and the learning process taking place. Similarly, Susana Gómez Martínez’s paper provides a quick view on how Audacity- a free audio software- can be used to create their own homemade listening materials by the teachers and students. Veneti Foteini argues that filming projects in English class can help EFL teachers and students develop their social skills, enlarge interpersonal relations, combine English and Art, enhance holistic learning, create a challenging and communicative class environment and get acquainted with multiculturalism, a social phenomenon in most countries. Another paper that presents an interface between technology and pedagogy is Hem Raj Kafle’s paper ‘Rhetorical blog for composition classes’ that discusses a reflective case study and argues that a blog maintained with the features of rhetoric is innovative, inclusive and influential. Kamal Poudel, Ghanashyam Sharma, Bal Krishna Sharma, Prem Phyak, Sajan Kumar Karn based on their presentation on plenary session present a groundbreaking ideas on professional collaboration and networking online through a project called NELTA Networking. Their article ‘Building Connections for Professional Conversation’ builds on the idea that collaboration is possible through networking activities, via mailing group, website, and recently blogging and use of wikis.

We have also articles that connect pedagogy with critical aspect of our life and realities. Prem Phyak and Rachel Bowden in Critical Literacy in Practice argue that we can make students aware of both local and global social challenges while teaching English if we consider English as a means (not an end) which is used to share, negotiate and respect diverse ideas and beliefs. Rachel Bowen in another article ‘Teaching English for Sustainability’ suggests that as a result of its evolution, ELT can and should be a medium for critically evaluating and reforming global ways of knowing. Similarly, Stefan Colibaba nicely explores the connection between citizenship education and foreign language development and argues that successful
communication implies respect and understanding of the other, critical thinking, evaluation of context, self evaluation, negotiation, consensus building and willingness to establish constructive dialogue. Sanjoy Banerje also bridges language teaching with community service and argues that service learning should be incorporated in the course curriculum. Md. Golam Jamil reports a success story of how humanistic approach to teaching can yield better results in an academic writing class where the learners can focus on ‘critical thinking’ and ‘shared learning’. Lekhnath S Pathak and Sunita Dahal present findings from a research on transforming dyslexic young learners. They argue that teachers should follow multi-sensory approach while teaching such differently able students. Chandika Prosad Ghosal’s article makes a connection of English learning with learning life-skills prescribed by the WHO. In his own words these skills have to be practised by students to achieve self awareness, self assertion, self esteem, confidence, decision making, coping with stress, creative and critical thinking, problem solving, emotion management, and interpersonal relationship.

We also present articles that have more pedagogic focus. Binod Luitel presents results from an experimental study regarding how cooperative learning model can be an effective strategy to address learner hierarchy in and English classroom. He presents the idea of managing the classroom learning by using different versions of reading texts for three types of learners: poor, average and brighter presenting three different types of texts. Abdullah al Mahmud, Sabrina M. Shaila, and Amatussalam Kaosar also present teaching tips for teaching vocabulary items for advanced learners. They argue that advanced or tertiary level learners need not only to understand the meaning of words, but also to use them appropriately while taking into account factors such as oral/written use of the language; degree of formality, style and others. Kashi Raj Pandey and Eak Prasad Duwadi present a step by step teaching procedure for teaching
a five-paragraph-essay. We have three articles that address the challenges of large multilevel classes. Deepa Prasad L. presents stepwise practical tips for motivating students to participate in large classes. Laxmi Bahadur Maharjan presents the role of features in English phonology and stresses that English teachers should have knowledge of phonological features of consonants and vowels. Similarly, Janak Singh Negi and Ashok Raj Khati in their separate articles give practical tips for teaching in large and multilevel classes like learning students’ names, establishing classroom rules, minimizing teacher talk, and engaging the students in pair and groups works.

We thank the presenters and authors who contributed to this volume with their valuable works.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to Routledge Publications India for sponsoring the publication of this volume.

*Editor-in-Chief*

Jai Raj Awasthi

*Editors*

Ghanashyam Shrama
Bal Krishna Sharma
Prem Phyak
Fifteenth NELTA International Conference
Presidential Address

Ganga Ram Gautam

Rt. Honourable Chair of Constituent Assembly Mr. Subash Chandra Nembang,
Honourable Member of National Planning Commission and Founding President of NELTA Prof. Tirth Raj Khaniya,
Past President, Current Advisor and Chief Editor of NELTA Journal Prof. Jai Raj Awasthi,
Prof. Abhi Subedi sir,
Secretary, Ministry of Education,
Paula Middleton and Ewan Davies, British Council,
Amanda Jacobson, the US Embassy,
Founder Principal, Little Angels’ School,
Distinguished Guests on the dais,
Key speakers, Presenters, participants from home and abroad,
publishers,
NELTA colleagues, media persons, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning and a very warm welcome to you all. This morning I feel very honoured and privileged to be here as the President of an association which we co-founded with my seniors 16 years ago. On this occasion, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all my seniors and all NELTA members for entrusting the current team to lead this wonderful association.

NELTA now serves through its 26 branches across the country with over 1300 life members and thousands of general members. Our members include English teachers of all levels of education, materials writers, ELT practitioners and experts
working both in government and non-government sectors. Now NELTA has established itself a truly voluntary professional organisation. NELTA members contribute to the framing of ELT curriculum, training packages preparation, their delivery and trainers’ preparation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

NELTA operates through its strategic plan and in the last one year we have achieved a lot. The details of the accomplishments have been presented in the conference booklet and it will also come in the General Secretary’s report at the AGM tomorrow. To highlight the key achievements, we have made some progress in the ELT survey in which NELTA works with the National Planning Commission, Ministry of Education, British Council and the US Embassy. We have done the preliminary work and detailed discussion is being carried out on its size and modality. David Graddol, a world renowned expert in this kind of research, has kindly accepted our request to contribute to the design of this survey and we have him here at this conference as one of the key speakers. NELTA and other key stakeholders will have a detailed discussion with David on this ELT survey.

Secondly, B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses at Tribhuvan University have been recently revised. In order to make our teacher education system compatible with the global ELT framework, NELTA and TU requested the US Embassy to make an international expert available to review these courses. As a result, we have Dr. Numa Markee with us here who kindly accepted the request and contributed to the standardisation of the courses.

When we asked Numa to give us his impression about our courses he said, “Overall, I think that the quality of the curriculum you have devised is certainly comparable to that of British, American and Australian universities with which I am familiar”. Numa will also be giving a key speech, plenary sessions and workshops both in Kathmandu and Surkhet
conference. We are very grateful to both David and Numa for their important contributions to NELTA.

Thirdly, we have two key partners working with us since NELTA was born. Currently, we partner with British Council to implement the English for Teaching and Teaching for English (ETTE) project at the branch level. Similarly, with the support of the US embassy, we plan to run a new program called Access in which we will teach English to the youths of the disadvantaged communities and this program will be implemented by the NELTA branch locally. Also, the US embassy has been very kind to supply the ELT Forum magazine to all the life members of all the NELTA branches. NELTA has collaborated with Radio Sagarmatha in the English by Radio program supported by the Embassy and it is very popular.

One of the significant achievements of this year is the outreach program. We have two highly dedicated friends with us who have reached the unreached in the NELTA network. Gretchen Coppedge, the English Language Fellow sponsored by the US embassy travelled with NELTA trainers to eight different branches and reached more than one thousand teachers. Similarly, another untiring friend Kate Miller from the UK who has been with us for the last four five years at different times voluntarily travels to the very remote branches and trains the teachers. This year she conducted teacher training in Baitadi, Dhangadh and Chitwan and she also conducted TOT in Lalitpur. After the conference in Kathmandu and Surkhet, she will conduct another TOT in Surkhet. Gretchen and Kate, thank you both of you for your great contributions.

Capacity building of the NELTA leaders has always been our priority. With the support from the British Council and the US embassy, NELTA members have participated in different international courses and events. We are very pleased with the Bell Centre in the UK for providing NELTA with the scholarships to attend trainer’s development course in the UK.
Our warm welcome to Jim Scrivener from Bell Centre, UK who will be presenting here and in Surkhet.

Decentralisation is yet another key strategy NELTA has included in the current plan. We would like to build regional hubs regionally so that sustainable growth can be observed at the branch level. NELTA Birgunj successfully organised a regional conference and NELTA Surkhet is undertaking a responsibility of organising international conference immediately after this conference. This shows that the branches have built up their capacity to function independently and NELTA Dhangadhi branch has acquired land and they are soon constructing building. I am happy to report that most of the branches have been very active and vibrant and with some support from the centre and the collaborating agencies. We have also had some discussion with the Fulbright Commission in Nepal and we have planned to have six ETAs to work with NELTA next year. We thank Fulbright for their willingness to partner with NELTA in this program.

The present NELTA journal is a historic one as it was peer reviewed and got registered with the ISSN number. The credit for this goes to the highly dedicated editorial team led by Prof. Awasthi. Along with him, Prem Phyak, Ghanshyam Sharma and Bal Krishna Sharma were behind this Herculean task and they have worked day and night to bring the journal in time.

Similarly, the online discussion forum moderated by the journal team along with Sajan Karna and Kamal Poudel and yahoogroups have been excellent forums for our members to connect themselves with the global ELT. Please log on to these sites and enrich yourself through mutual sharing.

In the next couple of years, NELTA should continue the projects that it has initiated and we need to create more space for collaboration with the key ELT stakeholders. Consolidation and capacity building of the branches should remain the top
priority and the implementation of the ELT survey project should be our main target for next year. In order to accomplish these ambitious targets, we need your active participation and cooperation from all the sectors including the government. I am sure if we are together we can achieve what we aim.

Nepal at present is undergoing a big political shift. We are going to have a new constitution in a couple of months and the language issue is one of the hot topics. As an association of English teachers, we feel that the new constitution should also talk about the role of English in new Nepal. Since English is now a global language and language of education and business, a systematic positioning of English would certainly benefit our country to keep ourselves abreast with the rest of the world. In this context, I would like to request the Chief Guest of the ceremony Rt. Hon'ble Chair of the CA, to bring this discourse in the constitution framing process. NELTA shall be happy to contribute to this and we will be ever ready to collaborate with the CA for the appropriate positioning of English in the new constitution.

This conference marks the historic one with more than 100 speakers from different countries. I would like to welcome the two key speakers, all the presenters including the representative of our neighbouring ELT organisations like SPELT, BELTA, SLELTA, ELTAI and all the participants from home and abroad. On behalf of NELTA, I would like to express my gratitude to you all for accepting our invitation. I wish all the participants and experts to have fruitful deliberations. I also wish the foreign and out of valley participants a pleasant stay in Kathmandu. Please bear with us the very humble arrangements we, as a voluntary association, have been able to make.

Finally, in order to make this conference happen, Little Angels’ School System has given us a great support without which we would not have been able to carry it out so smoothly. Thank you LAS team. Similarly, for the last few months, NELTA
colleagues have worked day and night. I sincerely acknowledge their voluntary contributions and I truly feel that they deserve the credit of the success of this conference.

Thank you very much indeed.

* President, NELTA
What a Gathering It Was

Abhi Subedi

Nepal English Language Teachers’ Association (NELTA) brought a massive crowd of Nepali and regional English teachers at its 15th conference at Little Angels school in Kathmandu on Feb. 19, 2010. It was a kumbh mela of English teachers in the words of its founder president Prof. Jairaj Awasthi. Hundreds of thousands of sadhus gather in Prayag, Allahabad in what is called “the biggest show on earth” for ablutions in the holy rivers. A sea of ash-smeared bodies surprises the world. Their purpose is anarchic, holy and transcendental. But the Nepali English teachers’ gatherings such as these are comparable to the sadhus’ mela only in terms of the spectacular size and passionate engagement.

I too was invited to speak at the opening about my long English teaching experience in the form of formulaic “wisdom”. What struck me was the presence of my favourite politician Subhas Nembang, speaker of the Constituent Assembly (CA) where he addresses the elected and grafted members of nearly two dozen political parties, dominated, however, by only a few parties in number. Indeed, there were commonalities and differences between the CA and this conference. The English House had drawn many teachers who later I found supported one of the big parties — the Maoists, the Nepali Congress, the United Marxist Leninists or any of the Madhesi parties.

But there is an important difference. English teachers work together — attend workshop sessions, draw out common

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1 This article was published on *The Kathmandu Post* on 3 March 2010. We are grateful to Professor Subedi for his permission to publish the article in this volume.
resolutions, implement the programmes and are committed to the accomplishment of their goals. But one important commonality with the CA appeared when Nembang, addressing the teachers after the inauguration of the conference, called upon all to help in creating an atmosphere for writing the constitution on time. This sincerely engaged statesman’s voice was tinged with a little sadness as he was spreading the word among the English teachers too. He talked about the apocalypse, or the terminality of the time of constitution writing, to this crowd of neo-sadhus gathered with a realistic programme plus some undefined metaphysical anxieties.

David Graddol, a renowned English language scholar, spelt out the nature of the apocalypse. Making a PowerPoint presentation, he showed the Baman avatar of English to the audience. He explained, English is spreading so fast that it is going to swallow many prominent European languages not before too long. In his colourful percentile rank, French, once a rival to English, appeared only as a small red brick at the bottom of the graph. I remember reading the quip of a French politician who commenting on the saying “the sun never sets in the British Empire” said, “That is because God cannot trust the English people in the darkness.” Other European languages except Spanish, which is spreading in the Americas, looked diminutive in size. Gaddol’s tone was apocalyptic. Chinese rose very high; even Bengali and Hindi-Urdu (spoken by the same people divided by the same language) appeared to be gaining newer grounds each day, in his percentile bricks.

Language follows the speed of economic achievements and political exigency. English gained through oppositions. In the post-colonial times, English was vehemently attacked in English itself. Gandhi who refused to publish his autobiography in English explained the reason in “impeccable” British English of his time. Everywhere, the British left their English language baby to multiply. Unitary power centres were divided into federal structures, and English was used as the language of
communication among them. We can see the miniature of that in the case of Nepali. Its monopoly and spread is attacked in Nepali, and it promises to be the language of communication among the federated states. This language is thus sure to gain tremendously in the republic of Nepal. Such are the ways of language.

But other languages, if they become the languages of economically strong countries, can spread fast and take prominent places in the world. Chinese promises to be one. Language pictures keep changing. The present position of English, however, is that it is growing into multiple forms in terms of functional registers and regional varieties. Numa Markee, another well-known English language scholar, justified and explained the realism of Englishes around the world. After that, Markee gave a conference to English teachers in Surkhet in the first ever international conference of this nature in that place.

I put my own miniscule wisdom of English teaching after Ganga Ram Gautam’s presidential speech, and the wisdom and epistemology of English teaching dharma explained by its former presidents Jairaj Awasthi and Tirtha Raj Khaniya, and other architects of this movement Hemanta Dahal and Laxman Gyawali. I said, “We taught English according to the syllabus we had designed inside the classroom. But soon we realised that English was growing outside beyond our curricular injunctions. We taught alveolar stops in the classroom, English grew only with retroflex consonants outside; we taught long and short vowels inside the classrooms, English grew outside with only short vowels; we taught intonation patterns in the class and explained the differences between polite and impolite modes of expressions, English grew outside only with straight intonation; we taught standard grammatical structures in overcrowded classrooms, English spread like luxuriant grass with functional thrust and in a few cases only as a communicative Creole outside.”
What spreads outside becomes a variety, and what is taught inside the classroom sometimes remains a curricular form. Inside the English classroom, we hopped from one model of ELT into another. English spread outside without our models, perhaps. We made a radical departure in English syllabus at the Central Department of English in 2000. I recall how as head of the department then, I had found my colleagues working with their scholarship and wisdom. Prof. Awasthi and his colleagues did the same in the faculty of education.

I am not supporting the Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiongo’s idea of abolishing the English departments by saying that the syllabuses we taught were redundant and carried the legacy of British colonial rule. The judgement about retaining or abolishing the English departments does not lie with one or two educational or political authorities any more. The nexus between globalisation and English nexus has given this language a tremendous boost. Discourses on politics, economic downturns and upturns and IT breakthroughs have multiplied the use of English. Classroom teaching has given the English language its reason to be used as a language of the media, technology and creative works. I wistfully and proudly look back at our English language teaching in the classroom.

Our English departments have remained the principal source of English language pedagogy in this country. They have covered long miles. Happily, the two different modes are beginning to come to one place now. NELTA is precisely architecting that nationwide. I have talked to foreign English scholars at different NELTA jamborees, and they have confessed that this NELTA is a phenomenal English teachers’ association and could be a model for many around the world.

Nembang left with a sense of mission accomplished; I stayed behind to see the old mission take new avatars. The kumbh was a raging success. I saw a quest for meaning and creative power in turbulent times at that mela.
NELTA Networking: Building Connections for Professional Conversation

Kamal Poudel, Ghanashyam Sharma
Bal Krishna Sharma, Prem Phyak
Sajan Kumar Karn

Networking and dialogues are two major components of professional collaboration and development in language teaching research and practice. In this brief paper, we will report the mission and plan of NELTA networking project and its implications for professional development of English teachers in Nepal.

The mission of NELTA Networking Project emerges directly out of NELTA’s professional development mission:

- to enhance the quality of English language teaching and learning through professional networking, supporting and collaboration.

- to enhance quality of English language teaching and learning in Nepal and high degree of professionalism among the ELT professionals.

NELTA Networking Project aims to contribute to these core missions of our organization. Networking activities, via mailing group, website, and recently blogging and use of wiki, have become established in Nelta. In order to provide a platform for these and other professional exchange mechanisms, volunteer members of NELTA felt the need to collaborate and create an initiative, to coordinate and promote networking activities on the web, connecting them with NELTA’s overall
professional development initiatives. The networking initiative will encourage and help those who have access to make online discussions and resources available to their colleagues who have too limited or no access.

In the discourse of technology, there is a theory called the “critical” theory of technology, which neither considers technology as mere tools that help us do better what we already do, nor regard them as substantive game-changers in the human environment, relationship and behavior. It is how use the tools that matters. In the context of NELTA, we can use the simple tool of email to share and learn what is going on across the country and the world. We can use blogs to discuss more substantive issues of our profession and social networking sites to stay connected with fellow ELT practitioners across the country and the world. We can convert Nelta’s email into a discussion forum and our website into a democratic knowledge database where teachers share their knowledge. We can take the world into our classrooms with just one laptop that we already own.

What kind of projects will the proposed initiative involve? We have in mind a list of projects and we are embarking on them on a priority basis. But we need your input and your participation to make these effective, for in fact your involvement is one of the key goals of networking. So please share your thoughts.

i. **Networking with other ELT organisations**: NELTA has always networked with the other regional teachers’ associations (like SLELTA), supporting organizations (like the British Council), and other academic/professional agencies in SAARC region and beyond. Adding technologically advanced networking to these initiatives will help NELTA realize this collaborative mission much better.

ii. **Networking with global elt professional forums**: This might involve helping NELTA members subscribe to networks of organizations like TESOL, IATEFL SIGs,
ELTeCs, informing NELTA members about opportunities and promoting Nelta with such international bodies.

iii. *Nelta choutari’s monthly discussions:* The discussion will continue to promote professional discussion among ELT practitioners interested in ELT in Nepal, and increasing the participation of the branches will be one of its objectives going forward.

iv. Building resource online and exploring possibilities for including Nepal’s scholarship in global knowledge databases. This also means making it possible for NELTA members to be able to contribute directly to the process of resource building, at least through sharing experience, discussing issues, informing the broader community about branch activities, etc.

v. *Social networking among nelta members:* By further developing and expanding the use of social networking media like Mailing group, Facebook, Twitter, RSS feeds, and social bookmarking, this project will inform members about NELTA activities at the center and the branches. More broadly, this project is also a part of connecting online and offline networking and resource building. We are planning to find out easier mechanisms of strengthening local branch communication.

vi. *Further development of nelta website:* Our current website is a great source of information and resources, and we plan to develop it further as a hub for coordinating all the above activities and projects. Responding to the advancements in web technology, we will be structuring it in ways that branches and members can contribute more directly and easily, especially updating their activities, sharing their resources, learning networking skills, and so on.

Nelta Networking projects will try to create a platform for NELTA members to do extraordinary things by using ordinary tools. For that to happen, your participation, your contribution, is essential.
A Cooperative Learning Model: Strategy to Address Learner Hierarchy

Binod Luitel

To study a traditional classroom, we can envision a pyramid structure of students’ population, having several layers that make a hierarchy of various ‘strata’ established pedagogically from the point of view of learners’ preparatory condition required for learning (such as aptitude and motivation), their participation, and the level of learning achievement. However, mostly this situation either goes unnoticed for the teacher or is neglected even after knowing this ground reality. In such classrooms, the teacher does not usually plan the pedagogical processes considering the learners’ condition; or, even if s/he plans, the planning is entirely based on the preference, learning style and pace of progress demonstrated by a small group of students who are on the top layer of the hierarchy – thus ignoring a large group of students in the bottom layers. Worst of all, to consider their socialization, learners belonging to the top layer do not demonstrate the willingness to approach the ones who are in the bottom layer; nor does one from the bottom position dare to be close to the top (or comparatively more intelligent) student and learn from him/her. This problem gets initiated in the elementary level of schooling, perpetuated continually thereafter, and becomes more and more complex as learners go to the upper grades of schooling.

How can we address this problem in the classroom? Two attempts were innovated, discussed and piloted in this connection, as described below.
i. Separate reading materials were prepared for 3 types of learners: brighter, average and poor. For this purpose, based on the learners’ reading passage given in the textbook, two other versions of the same were prepared: (i) a more simplified one and (ii) a bit more complicated than the original in terms of sentence length or types and word choice. Thus, three versions of a reading text were ready for the learners. The idea of managing the classroom learning by using different versions for three types of learners (poor, average and brighter) was discussed, whereby the poor learners begin with the simplified version and average ones with the original version, while brighter learners can begin directly with the more complicated version. After comprehending the given text, the poor and average level learners can be provided the original and more complicated versions respectively.

After reflection, it was concluded that this model can address the problem of individual difference by providing opportunities for learners to learn from the materials that suit their level and proceed ahead for further learning. However, it has still encouraged learners to work individually, so the situation of working together between a bright student and a poor one virtually does not exist in the use of this model, since there is no room for compulsory cooperation between the students taught in this way.

ii. To look for an alternative, a new model was innovated, in which the learning task mandatorily required cooperation between learners. To implement this model, task sheets were designed in such a way that a student must seek feedback from his friend sitting together and must help other in solving problems – whether s/he is poor, average or bright in learning. In the task sheet, the problems given to students and their solutions were interchanged; so that a learner, in case of inability in problem solving, could find the solution only after consulting his/her friend sitting
together. When students of mixed learning ability were grouped together for sitting arrangement and assigned the tasks designed in this way, cooperation among them was established automatically; and they proceeded in learning tasks without consulting the teacher. Thus, the situation of mandatory cooperation among learners was established using the organized task structure, rather than through the hard and fast instruction given by the teacher.

The major characteristics of cooperative learning include: (i) positive interdependence among learners in learning, (ii) individual accountability in the group tasks, (iii) equal participation in problem solving; and (iv) simultaneous interaction while solving the problems (Kagan, 1994). Taken together, these points provide the framework for classroom socialization among students, which is one of the essential attributes that our future citizens must possess – if we want them to contribute positively for social transformation.

Researchers have pointed out the following advantages of cooperative learning (Luitel, 2005 pp. 124-28):

- Increase in the learners’ involvement in learning
- Increase in motivation towards learning, made possible in two ways: i) learners’ giving more value in subject matter and learning tasks; ii) increase in social satisfaction
- Increase in their learning achievement
- Development of interpersonal communication skills
- Decrease in teacher dependence; and increase in learning from peers
- Development of positive attitude towards others, etc.

References

Critical Literacy in Practice

Prem Phyak and Rachel Bowden

Introduction

This workshop was a follow-up of our presentation “Teaching English for Sustainability: A Critical Literacy Approach.” In this workshop, we tried to put the theories of critical literacy into practice following Open Space for Dialogue and Enquiry (OSDE) methodology.

Critical literacy

Critical literacy is an instructional approach which involves students in a constant negotiation, reflection, appreciation and evaluation of texts. It aims to enable students to become critical learners who are aware of both local and global issue.

However, critical literacy is not a new thing. It is a practice of being literate in a critical way. Generally, we define literacy in terms of ability to read and write. But this ‘basic’ notion of literacy is not enough to help the 21st century-students to be able to cope with growing challenges and complexities of the world. They have to be well informed with the social changes taking place in locality and around the globe. Wray (n.d.) claims that critically literacy assumes that;

the meanings of words and texts (which can be verbal, digital, printed, moving or pictorial) cannot be separated from the cultural and social practices in which - and by which - they are constructed. The way that we use language to read, write, view, speak and listen is never neutral or value-free. Even activities as seemingly
benign as reading a picture book to young children are culturally and politically complex. (p.2)

He goes on to say that;

Teachers who value critical literacy will thus tend to have a stake in social change and will encourage their pupils to investigate, question and even challenge relationships between language and social practices that advantage some social groups over others. (p.2)

We see that the basic idea of critical literacy is to develop learners’ analytic habits of thinking, reading, writing, speaking, or discussing. By using varieties of materials e.g. pictures, texts, images, and videos which represent learners’ socio-cultural realities, we can engage them in a constant negotiation.

Procedure

In the workshop, we adopted following steps to translate the above mentioned assumptions of critical literacy into practice.

1. We presented some challenges e.g. global warming, and elicited the problems they have been facing in their own context.

2. We asked the participants to discuss where these problems (as identified above) come from in pair.

3. Then we displayed the picture (see picture 1) and asked three questions and ask them to work in group:
   (a) What are the three words (s) you (participants) use to describe the picture?
(b) What problem is reflected on the picture?
(C) What is the condition of children on the picture?

4. After that, we presented another picture (see picture 2) and gave participants a task:
   *In a group, write three questions related to the picture, and share your questions among the groups.*

5. After that whole class was asked to vote for the best question of each group (This means although there were three questions of each group, there was only one best question which is voted by the whole class).

6. We wrote the best questions from each group on the board. And assigned one question to each group to discussion. Based on the discussion either they wrote a six-line poem or a short story related to the question and read them for all.

7. Then we presented the last picture (see picture 3) and asked participants to write one positive and negative aspect of the picture individually and share for all.

8. Finally, we asked participants to discuss in pair how they can it their classroom. All the participants agreed that they can bring local social issue as a picture, texts, videos etc. in the classroom and engage students in interaction and discussion. This process enhances the critical literacy skill of students.
Conclusion

This workshop was an example of how we can help students develop critical literacy skill. The participants were enjoyed the task based on the picture. Based on the reflections of the participants, we argue that we can make students aware of both local and global social challenges while teaching English if we consider English as means (not an end) which is used to share, negotiate and respect diverse ideas and beliefs. We could see that there is no single right answer and nobody (even a teacher) does not know it. The answer is constructed through interaction among students who give social meaning to an issue through English.

References


Citizenship Education and Foreign Language Development

Stefan Colibaba

The concept

Although there is no accepted definition of democratic citizenship and no standard model of what an active citizen is, there is a general agreement that it refers to the involvement of individuals in public life and affairs. This can take place at local, national and international levels. The term is used especially at local level to refer to citizens who become actively involved in the life of their communities tackling problems, bringing about change or resisting unwanted change. Active citizens are those who develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to be able to make informed decisions about their communities and workplaces with the aim of improving the quality of life. At national level it can move from voting to being involved in campaigning pressure groups to being a member of a political party. At international level the global active citizen may be involved in movements to promote sustainability or fair trade, reduce poverty or eliminate slavery.

One can rightfully infer from the above that an active citizen is not necessarily a ‘good citizen’ in the sense that s/he follows the rules or behaves in a certain way, but rather s/he may challenge the rules and existing structures while staying within the bounds of democratic processes and not become involved in violent acts. There are values and dispositions that can be associated with democratic citizenship including respect for justice, democracy and the rule of law, openness, tolerance, courage to defend a point of view and a willingness to listen to, work with and stand up for others.
Specifics of citizenship education

Citizenship education includes development of knowledge, understanding of issues, concepts and values in democracies, development of participatory skills for active democratic self-government, and civic virtues. Issues, concepts and values include peace, truth, justice, human rights, equality, individual dignity and freedom, environmental preservation, and sustainable development. Participatory skills include critical thinking, nonviolent conflict resolution strategies, ability to use various communication channels to exercise self-government, democratic decision-making, and of course, political literacy and participation in voting.

Training in citizenship education necessarily covers a variety of relevant topics, different methodological angles; a lot of ground is also covered in cultural studies, task-based learning methodology, citizenship education and language development methodology, use of multimedia sources, action planning, schools and community, networking and project planning.

Communication for democratic citizenship

The (foreign) language development dimension is particularly visible in the area of identity where tutors systematically explore the pragmatics of ‘what is said versus what is meant’ and the implications of ‘naming’ with a view to exploding negative stereotypes and changing mentalities. The issues of language of the media and language as carrier of meaning and attitude go extremely well in sessions about violence and war, and school democracy.

Of particular relevance is the systematic development of communication for democratic citizenship as a specific competence. It informs understanding of the way we interact socially and is an essential aspect of democratic citizenship. Democratic citizenship is about communicating and sharing, about learning, living and working with other people with whom
we already have or are trying to reach shared understanding of the values we believe in: participation, partnership, access, equity, responsibility and solidarity. Successful communication implies respect and understanding of the other, critical thinking, evaluation of context, self evaluation, negotiation, consensus building and willingness to establish constructive dialogue.

**Participants’ voices**

Following the two NELTA presentations I have in Kathmandu and Surkhet, here are a few participant responses to the concepts and activities aiming to foster (foreign) language development and democratic citizenship. Their words, and the feelings behind, speak loudly:

‘The questions made me think of things that I do not normally take into consideration.’

‘I liked it because the issues discussed here are very interesting and should be available to other people who did not attend. Also, I am into citizenship and human resources and I would like to have the chance to change the world for the better.’

‘I started thinking about how we deal with race issues here.’

‘I liked it because it was different from anything that I’ve experienced before.’

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Dyslexia in Young Learners: Transforming Problems into Solutions

Lekhnath S Pathak and Sunita Dahal

Introduction

Dyslexia is a pattern of difficulties related to language and memory and may affect reading, spelling and writing. It also affects other areas like organization, memory and sequencing of time, and remembering right and left. Everyone experiences dyslexia in his or her own way. It need not be disastrous as it bears no relation to intelligence but is quite a difficult situation in learning. The impact of dyslexia can be mild through to severe relating to the demands being made on the child. Our presentation highlighted on some of the dyslexic situations faced by young learners in schools and also studied the awareness of dyslexia in learners among the teachers. Half of the solution to a problem lies in understanding the problem itself. With this presentation, we intended to sensitize parents and teachers about this problem and suggest some of the ways of dealing with the situation. The presentation was based on the insights gained from the study on dyslexia and data collected from among the students in primary classes in some of the schools in Kathmandu Valley and analysis done on the basis of the study.

“Dyslexia” sometimes also referred as specific learning disability comes from Greek word dys- ‘problem’ in learning and lexia mean ‘words’. The term was first coined by Rudolf from Germany in 1887. He used the term to describe the reading inability particularly in school going children. Dyslexia affects 3%–10% of schoolchildren (Lerner, 1985) and in later days it affects educational, social, emotional, and economic
repercussions (Spreen, 1988). Dyslexia may be defined as the particular difficulty in learning language (reading, spelling decoding the sounds associated with letters) in spite of normal intelligence, adequate educational facilities. It is characterized by the individual’s reading, writing, and spelling below the level expected based on intelligence and chronological age. (Thompson, 1990)

Types of dyslexia

Dyslexia are broadly of two types: acquired dyslexia (caused by a difference in brain structure which is present at the time of birth or brain injury) and developmental dyslexia (due to genetic/hereditary factor).

Features of dyslexia

The following are some of the symptoms;

*Confusing gap between written language and intelligence* – not able to write in words on paper what he knows in his mind.

*Delayed and poor reading and spelling* - Often gets confused with reversal and ordering of letters, syllables and the words like b-d, m-n (letters) was-saw, god-dog, of-fo, place-palace etc.

*Strange Spelling* - There be may be strange spelling: wait- wyt, knife-nif, know-no ass- as and dance- danc or dans etc.

*Sequencing difficulties* - I (Sunita) remember when I was young always my father had to struggle to teach me number sequencing. I used to confused with what comes after nine ending number such as 29.. 39.. 49..

*Poor Short Term Memory* - They feel that they have understood everything but later find it difficult to remember what they have learnt.

*Left right and directional confusion* - They have little idea of left and right position in space.
Causes of dyslexia: Inherited factors

Where dyslexia is identified, between a third and a half of children have a history of learning difficulties in their family, and more than half have a family member who is left-handed.

Early ear infection

If a child suffers frequent colds and throat infections in the first few years, the ears can be blocked from time to time so that hearing is impaired. If the difficulty is not noticed at an early stage, then the developing brain does not make the links between the sounds it hears. The lack of clear hearing will also delay the child’s phonemic awareness - the ability to hear the words which are made up of smaller sounds and syllables, like ‘c-a-t’, or ‘in-ter-est-ing’.

How to identify dyslexic child in the normal classroom?

The following are the clearly noticeable points to identify a dyslexic child in normal classroom-

- Poor and messy hand writing
- Misses punctuation
- Often complains hand pain
- Forgets to put (-) over t or(.) over (i)

Problems with similar looking letters or words like b/d, m/n, Words like dad/bad

- Poor in dictation
- Always give more attention to extracurricular activities such as dance, sports and music
- Feels neglected in the classroom
- Feels jealous of fellow students who score good marks
- Poor in reading and writing, dose something even negative to get teacher’s attention
• Does not complete homework
• Copies fast from the board but later will not follow what he has copied
• Loses place on the line, loose line while reading the passage and find it difficult to catch it if the attention is diverted.
• Does not make sense of what he read
• Add words which are not there
• Incomplete, omission of function words, run on, or confusing sentences, poor punctuation
• Confusion with similar looking words and letters
• Spelling errors- like (beelike for delight, chess for chest, dog for god, nife for knife, bid for did

Need for the present study
• An attempt to bring knowledge from the field of dyslexia to the classroom and sensitize language teachers.
• To find out what problem children in Nepalese learning setting face.
• To explore what can be done to improve the teaching-learning situation in our context.

Participants
A group of 10 students: 6 males and 4 females typically-developing school-going children from 6th to 7th grade of average age 14 were selected for the study. It was made sure that the children had no speech and language disorders.

Procedure
The following task was given to the students:

i) Picture description
ii) Rapid naming
iii) Dictation
iv) Passage reading
v) Play description

**Kind of mistakes we found: Sentence level**

- There are to many storeys in that building.
- The man are walking freely.
- In picture there are four people’s they chosed a comfortable house to live.
- Their was four persion who is waking in the ground
- Their was frais air.
- There are so nice – nice.
- There are two womens and two men.
- The mens and womens are thinking about standard life.
- It game only to plare thes school people also pay badminton.
- Badminton is the which is played in everywhere.

**Kind of mistake we found: Spelling level**

- Their –there
- Women –womens
- Men- mens
- Player- plare
- Opposite- uppsit
- Exercise – exsasize

**Principle of language teaching to dyslexics**

- Three main areas of input and output are keystone in the concept of teaching; the auditory visual and kinesthetic modalities. For a dyslexic teacher, the precept of awareness to these possibilities must figure large. There are a number of points which need to be aware.
- The underlying structure of language you are teaching must be taken into account.
• Should follow multisensory approach while teaching.
• Phonetic system of teaching should be followed.
• Minute errors analysis is important.
• Teaching spelling rule of the language is most important in English.
• Reading aloud.
• Reading together.

References


Seven Wonders of ELT

Sajan Kumar Karn

This paper presents key canons of emerging English Language Teaching (ELT) in the periphery. Nevertheless, primarily it aims to advocate the divorce of ELT in Nepal from the mainstream, thereby moulding it in accordance with Nepalese socio-political, educational and cultural values to give it distinct but more productive directions.

Periphery ELT and its foundations

There is no denial that ELT has undergone radical changes in its philosophy, content and methodology. Of late, a strong wind feels to be blowing against centralized, hegemonic, prescriptive, and top-down practices. Consequently, efforts have been diverted to give periphery ELT coherent foundations with local socio-political, educational and cultural realities. I have labeled them Seven Wonders of ELT as they have drastically reversed the perspectives and practices. They have been presented here as an acronym WONDERS:

W-Worldly ELT

The most hegemonic slogan ‘Think globally and act locally’ has virtually undermined the significance of local contexts and has merely inferred adopting and adapting theory and practice developed abroad irrespective of their implications. Global changes and local contexts are often poles apart. The burning questions, therefore, have been: should we keep on practicing trends developed elsewhere at the risk of our distinct social, educational and cultural values? How long shall we remain adopters and adapters? Do the trends apply equally well in our
situations? Does expertise necessarily come from abroad? and so on.

Language teaching is an ideology based practice and so is ELT. This necessitates realistic worldly ELT, one which is based on local socio-political and cultural realities than globalised one erroneously assumed to fit in every situation.

**O-Omni ELT**

Local ownership of English has proved advantageous in that with the owning of it. English linguistic and cultural imperialism seems to fade away gradually. English instead becomes a means of expression of their identity and cultural values. Therefore, it is the time we prioritized the local variety i.e. Nenglish than clinging on native speakerism which is arguably likely to alienate the learners.

**N-Non-methodological ELT**

The search for the best method continued from 1880-1980 but no method was found a panacea. It has been realized today that there never was and probably never will be a method for all. Pedagogy is replacing method. It suggests the dynamic interplay between teachers, learners, and instructional materials during the process of teaching and learning.

**D-Decentralized ELT**

All pedagogy, like all politics is local. ‘This is the right moment to empower the local knowledge of teachers, deriving from their years of accumulated experience, wisdom, and intuitions about what works best for their students’ (Canagarajah, 2002 p. 140). Cultures with their own socio-political, cultural, historical distinctiveness should be the lens to develop critical approaches.

**E-Eclectic ELT**

Eclecticism is what most language teachers practice today as
their classroom activities seldom resemble any methodological procedure exactly. ELT practitioners instead pick and choose from methods to create their own blend according to the contextual needs of the classroom.

R-Research based ELT

Exploratory practice which I have termed research based is a process that seeks to empower teachers by bringing a research perspective into their classrooms where familiar, everyday classroom activities and tasks are used to reflect consciously on their effectiveness in supporting learning (Allright and Lenzuen, 1997).

S-Strategic ELT

Kumaravadivelu (1994) proposed situation specific and need based strategic approach to language teaching. This approach encourages teachers and students to become more reflective and critically conscious of the strategies they themselves find useful according to a variety of contextual determinants. Since learning strategies and abilities differ from students of one community to another, there is a good scope to develop context sensitive and community specific approach to ELT (Canagarajah, 2002).

Directions for Nepalese ELT

There is no doubt to the fact that state of Nepalese ELT is still disappointing though a revolutionary paradigm shift does have intervened recently. Our existing practices have not fetched the expected. Deconstructing the global perspectives and practice is the most pressing challenge before us.

The following are the proposals for the deconstruction of Nepalese ELT:

a) Understand and acknowledge the potential strengths and limitations of learners, local knowledge and culture
and teaching context sensitivity such as people, physical settings, course and institution nature, time, and teaching resources (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

b) Build solid and conducive ELT professional communities—online and offline both to tap local resources to overcome local problems using local expertise and experience (ibid.).

c) Develop our own tradition of professionalism and expertise by theorizing r successful practices.

d) Let our ELT base on educational and social theories too, not merely on linguistic ones.

References


New Tools in Teaching Listening Comprehension for the Digital Classroom

Susana Gómez Martínez

Abstract

Integrating ICT in our teaching cannot only improve motivation and performance among our digital students, but also make teachers’ lives easier. In this article, I will suggest the readers some practical ideas on how to move towards the digital era in teaching listening comprehension by using Audacity, a free open source software for recording and editing sound. This article will constitute a crash course on how to download and use the programme, how to create tailor-made listening materials for the EFL classroom, and a list of links for self-teaching guides and further information for more advanced users.

Audacity is a free, open source software for recording and editing sound that runs on Windows, Mac, and Linux. All you need to use it is a computer, a set of earphones, a microphone and a jack to jack cable that can be found in any local computer store or even a large supermarket. Audacity allows us to do plenty of things (check the links provided at the end for advanced use), but in this paper I will cover the basics and the three actions I consider can be more useful for language teachers, which are voice recording, digitising tapes and records and recording audio playing on the computer.

As we have just said, Audacity can be used to record any sound of our choice, whether it is voice, music, audio playing on the computer, etc. Secondly, we can digitise tapes and records, i.e. convert analogical into digital material. And third and most
important, we can edit all kind of sounds, in exactly the same way we edit a text with the *Word* programme. Thus, we can cut, copy, paste and delete part(s) of the recording, insert silence, pause, music, split recordings into separate tracks, mix tracks, raise or lower the volume, speed the recording up or down, and even improve the audio quality by removing noise from it (also known as “audio restoration”). In other words, we can create our own listening extracts exactly the way we want. [1]

The interface of the program and the tags for each of the main buttons can be seen in the illustration below. [2]

The first thing we have to do if we want to work with the programme is to download the from [http://audacity.sourceforge.net](http://audacity.sourceforge.net) (remember that this is free, so you can download it in as many computers as you want or need). Once it is installed, and you are familiarised with the basic buttons explained in the previous section, we can start our recording.

If you want to record your own voice, get hold of a microphone and follow the instructions below:
Step 1

1. First, plug the microphone into the Mic In port of your PC (pink socket or the one with the loudspeaker icon)

2. Open audacity

3. Click the red button and start talking. You will see a graphical representation of your voice move across the screen, as in the picture below.

4. Once finished, click the Stop button

Step 2. When you have finished your recording, you can edit the sound track, as explained in section 1.

Step 3. When you have completed your editing, you can save it as an Audacity project (so that you can keep on with the edition in the future) or export it as an MP3, as shown in the picture below
On the other hand, if you want to digitise tapes and records, then, you should run an appropriate cable (minijack/miniplug) from an “out” jack on the external device to the line-in port of the computer (see picture below), then press the play button & follow steps explained above, from 1.2 onwards.
And last, but not least, another useful task this programme can do for us is to record audio playing on the computer. In order to do that, just plug both the “in” and “out” jacks in the sockets with the loudspeaker and microphone icons and follow the steps mentioned above.

For a live tutorial with a step-to-step video on how to use the programme, I would strongly suggest you to watch Russel Stannard’s useful explanations at http://www.teachertrainingvideos.com/audacity1/index.html or any other tutorial on youtube; moreover, you can check the reference section at the end of this paper for further information about the programme and its different usages.

With this paper I have tried to both provide a quick view on a new tool that can be used within the EFL classroom and also encourage language teachers to start using it so as to create their own home-made listening materials adapted to their students level, preferences and needs.

References
Download Audacity from: http://audacity.sourceforge.net
Audacity Wiki: http://audacityteam.org/wiki/
Audacity Forum: http://audacityteam.org/forum/
Audacity tutorials:
http://www.teachertrainingvideos.com/audacity1/index.html
http://www.guidesandtutorials.com/audacity-tutorial.html
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[1] For more information on how to perform all these tasks, the best way to start is to watch Russel Stannard’s video on how to use the programme at http://www.teachertrainingvideos.com/audacity1/index.html and also check the links provided at the end under the heading “Audacity Tutorials”.

[2] For a more detailed information on all the buttons used in the programme, go to http://www.classroominthecloud.net/2010/03/audacity-tip-sheet-for-students.html

Sarwet Rasul

Introduction

One of the dimensions of spread of English is heavy borrowing and mixing of English words/phrases in other languages of the world. As far as Pakistan is concerned, English vocabulary is frequently borrowed and mixed in Urdu, the national language of Pakistan. The tendency of borrowing and mixing is not restricted to the spoken discourse rather is evident in the written discourse as well. The present paper explored how this trend is exhibited in Pakistani children’s magazines. Two Children’s monthly magazines- Naunihaal, and Taalim-o-tarbiyat – are taken as a sample. Practices of borrowings and code mixing in these magazines are explored to examine their frequency, causes, and functions. These explorations are interesting in the backdrop of general claims of these magazines that they use stylized Urdu syntax, and work for the perpetuation and dissemination of standard Urdu.

Complexity of the language situation in Pakistan: the historical background

Language situation in the multilingual society of Pakistan has always been very complex and sensitive, capable of triggering volatile responses from various fragments of the society.

Apart from the national language - Urdu, today more than 70 local and regional languages are used in Pakistan. English,
with its ever expanding influence, adds to the complexity of the situation as these ‘language practices are socially and politically embedded’ (Heller, 2007 p.1).

**Code-switching/mixing and borrowing**

Code-switching is the amalgamation of two or more languages within one utterance. This switching can be both inter-sentential and intra-sentential. Coulmas (2005 p.110) affirms,

> Code-switching occurs when speakers are aware of the two varieties being distinct and are able to keep them apart, although they may not do so habitually and may not be conscious of every switch they make.

The intra-sentential code-switching which is usually at word level is generally named as code-mixing. Code mixing can be further distinguished from borrowing. Borrowings are the words that originally belong to another language, become a part of the language of a bi-multilingual society through constant use. Mesthrie, Swann, Deumert & Leap (2000 p.249) take borrowing as ‘a technical term for the incorporation of an item from one language into another’. On the other hand, code-mixing takes place when despite the availability of an equivalent in the native language, the bilingual speaker prefers to use a word from another language in his/her language.

**Data for the research**

The presentation ‘Borrowing and Code Mixing in Pakistani Children’s Magazines: Practices and Functions’ was an attempt to examine the use of English, in the Pakistani Urdu magazines written for children. Two monthly children magazines are selected as a sample for data collection. The findings were categorized as **Code-mixing** and **Borrowing**. The category of Borrowing was further sub-categorized into various sections such as Names/Titles/Designations/Occupations/Edibles, and
Measurements. A sub-category ‘General’ was also created to fit in those linguistic items that did not fit under any other category. In the category of code-mixing, it was looked if the words that are code-mixed have an Urdu equivalent or not. In *Talim-o-tarbiyat* there were total 493 occurrences of both code-mixing and borrowing found and total instances were 213 in all; whereas in *Nonihal* total occurrences were 194 and if the repetition of linguistic items is not counted the total number of instances was 108.

**Analysis of borrowings in children’s magazines**

In the analysis of borrowed words, it was observed that the words that have been identified are those that have become a permanent part of the Urdu language, the researcher had to look for their Urdu equivalents/meanings in the dictionary, as the frequent use of these borrowed words has led to the general phenomenon of forgetting their Urdu equivalents even if they exist. It was found that the borrowed words for edibles and measurements that are mostly used in these children’s magazines are in English such as ‘Foot’, ‘Kilogram’, ‘Kilometer’, ‘Inch’, ‘Liter’, ‘Meter’, ‘Minute’, ‘Ounce’, ‘Pound’, ‘Second’, ‘Passport-size’ etc. These choices show the socio-linguistic trends in the society where either Urdu equivalents do not exist or are not identified by the readers. Moreover, instances of assimilated borrowing were found such as ‘Fees’, ‘Program’, ‘Torch’, ‘Model’, ‘Form’ (/a: /sound replaces /ɔ:/ and /œ/ ).

Some hybridized compounds are half Urdu, half English such as ‘lightain’, ‘Engineeron’, ‘Hamdard-Foundation’ etc.

**Analysis of code-mixing in children’s magazines**

*Taalim-o-tarbiyat* and *Nonihal* are children’s magazines that are associated with the middle-middle social class who do not identify themselves with English and the power of English. Difficult Urdu vocabulary of formal written discourse is used in these magazines. Complying with the overt and covert claims
and of these magazines that they promote Urdu and use stylized Urdu, it was expected that if borrowing was unavoidable, code-mixing would have been avoided. Interestingly a large number of mixed items were found which have commonly used or identifiable Urdu equivalents. The words which have in-use Urdu equivalents such as ‘Bedroom’ (Khawbgah), ‘Businessman’ (Tajir), ‘Checkup’ (Muaainah), ‘Class’ (Jmaat) etc were mixed in these magazines which goes in contrast with the claims and policy of these magazines.

A few insightful instances

During the presentation a few insightful contextualized instances were shared with the participants such as:

- **Aath feet aik inch tha**
  
  W **Muashra ya society ya smaaj**
  
  W **Factorian aur karkhanay bn ruhay hain**
  
  W **Aam kay mausam mein mango ice-cream**
  
  W **Javed and Company**

In these instances, code-mixing is used for various socio-pragmatic purposes such as repetition for elucidation. The Nepali participants also shared fruitful insights from their national and local languages where code-mixing of English is used for the same linguistic sand socio-pragmatic reasons.

Conclusion

It was a very interesting experience to realize that Pakistan and Nepal share the sociological and linguistic scenarios. English, as an international language, is code-mixed and code-switched in the national and local languages of both the countries. The researcher and the participants shared their views and exchanged many interesting examples that actually corresponded to the linguistic dominance of English all over the
world. The presentation, thus, appeared not just as one-sided information transference rather a mutual appreciative inquiry into the linguistic fabric of both the countries.

References


Using Video Technology Creatively in a Communicative Language Classroom

Susan Kennedy

Using video for teaching and learning can help teachers fulfil two broad roles, to record performance as an artefact and to provide a reflective or action research tool for collecting evidence of learner communicative capacity and the learning process taking place. While implementing negotiated curricula and a communicative approach to language learning with Early Years students in a Speech and Drama subject for ESL speakers with a range of abilities and language backgrounds, my students and I produced a video presentation celebrating learner attributes which also became an important document of their language development. The Early Years students produced a video profiling learner characteristics described by the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program called the ‘Learner Profile.’ The demands of performing for the camera provided opportunities for students to adjust scripts, roles and group dynamics while they increased their student awareness of their speaking and listening skills, cues and gestures. Both the rehearsal and final videos provided valuable feedback about student communicative competencies, learning strategies and language development. It captured the innovation and creativity of students translating group ideas into scripted text and subsequently, the drama performance.

Brumfit’s criteria for communicative language activities

Brumfit (1984 in Hedge, 2008) proposed a model of fluency-
based activities, which includes basic criteria that reflect the principles of communicative methodology. This model describes essential criteria for communicative tasks that teachers can use to design for and implement the communicative approach in classrooms (the model is listed in the Appendix). Brumfit’s approach aims to assist teachers to develop in their students independent, real-life communicative skills from the classroom environment (Hedge, 2008). Bruner’s (in Hedge, 2008) view of the teacher’s role in scaffolding is compatible with Brumfit’s model of fluency-based activities. However, Bruner’s approach tends to support learners at an earlier stage of the language learning process where the language forms that will be used for independent communication are still being acquired. Although my student cohort was quite young and some students were definitely not yet at a stage where they communicated independently in the classroom on a daily basis, I found that when sensitively applied, Brumfit’s criteria helped to develop in students more independent communicative strategies and provided enough ‘space’ for students to work together that they were able to form quite creative working groups.

The role of teacher, assessment and curriculum in the communicative and international baccalaureate primary years program approaches

In the communicative teaching approach, teacher intervention is strategically minimalised while learners are encouraged to rely on themselves and each other for language (Hedge, 2008). Because students determine the essential learning content in order to enhance their communicative competence via using language, through language and about language (to employ Halliday’s terminology), teachers perform the role of facilitator and guide, rather than direct instructor as we find in the traditional, transmission model of teaching. The learners are
perceived to have ‘expert’ knowledge about the content being utilised in the classroom, rather than the teacher (as in genre methodology, which is Bruner’s perspective). It is the reliance on the student to become the author of their own communicative content that I believe provokes creativity and innovation, as will be described in the reflection, using examples of student’s experiences recorded during rehearsals.

In communicative tasks and the International Baccalaurate Primary Years Program approach (Making the PYP Happen: A Curriculum Framework for International Primary Education, 2007), the written curriculum is a starting point; students negotiate the enacted curriculum and as such it may evolve into a somewhat retrospective document. Teachers can provide ongoing assessment to capture what is learned, ensure learners remain connected with the written curriculum and guide students to use correct language forms while making their messages understood (Brumfit, 1984 in Hedge, 2008). Of course teachers should always keep in mind when implementing a flexible and/or negotiated curriculum that unit and lesson structured is still required and that it is essential to make efforts toward intuitive pre-lesson planning and systematic, on-going assessment.

**Purposes for using video technology in the classroom**

Using video for teaching and learning can be used to record artefacts of student work or as a tool for appraisal and improvement. The most comprehensive account of the learning process can be obtained from recordings of the actual learning process. Recordings can capture details of classroom life that are not readily picked up by other means. Other tools that can be used for this purpose include audio recording devices and photography. Although with good camera positioning much classroom activity can be captured, there is also the choice of strategically using the camera to focus on objects, people
and processes, such as teacher interaction, student interaction or particular resources being utilised (Richards & Lockhart, 1996). Video recording can help teachers capture an event without them having to rely on their own memory which can be influenced by idealistic, stereotypical or otherwise problematic interpretation. Computer storage of digital video files allows us to develop and modify our interpretations and to view connections between events of phenomena events over time (Freebody, 2004).

Video is particularly useful in the action research process, where teachers are required to evaluate and make changes in cycles of planning, action, observation and reflection to improve their practice (Richards & Lockhart, 1996). It offers the opportunity to record situations identified as needing improvement by teachers in their current form, for analysis. Video can then be used to record changes after they are implemented and comparisons made. It can also be used to record the actual process of change: the teacher explaining and negotiating with students, students practicing with a new task and later, demonstrating task mastery.

Freebody (2004) reminds us of the beauty of everyday interactions and communications that is preserved by recording educational transactions,

> Close and continual examination allows us to move beyond the ‘ordinariness’ or ‘obviousness’ of the participant’s actions, and towards an appreciation of the intricacy and artfulness of ordinary social experience. (p.92)

I hope that this brief account of approaches to my communicative learning project using video technology will help teachers feel more confident in implementing communicative teaching strategies in their classroom. You do not need to be a teacher with many years
experience to manage an communicative environment or to be an expert with the target language; rather, empathy for your students, flexibility and a little courage to ‘let go’ of the reliance on teacher-fronted classroom model is all that is required.

References


Digital Storytelling in the Collaborative Classroom

Susan Kennedy

The need for teachers to develop information and communications technology (ICT) skills as part of their repertoires of practice becomes more pressing over time. Teachers may be challenged to constantly acquire new ICT skills that keep their practice at the forefront of technological developments, while expectations about their proficiency with technology continues to increase. At the same time, emerging images of learners and learning describe young people as ever more capable users of ICT. This paper considers images of learners that view young people as increasingly responsible, autonomous and collective in their thinking in the light of recent research about digital natives that questions assumptions and generalisations that have been made about children’s natural or inherent capacity to utilise technology.

Some contemporary models of education, such as the communicative teaching methodology and the International Baccalaureate curriculum position learners as ‘Agentic’. The image of the Agentic Child (Sorin, 2005 p.7) describes children as social beings who actively participate in their education (James, Jenkins and Prout, 1988 in Sorin, 2005), co-construct their childhood with adults (Corsaro, 1997, in Sorin, 2005) and create new knowledge with adults in their world and across their school curriculum. This position views the child as an agent of change, and adults as co-learners who negotiate, challenge and guide while sharing power with them (Woodrow, 1999 in Sorin, 2005). In this model, planning and research is
performed with children, rather than about them, as their voices are given serious consideration (Sorin, 2003 in Sorin, 2005).

The Agentic learner is a relatively new model of the image of the child which has been popularised by the early learning philosophy of the Reggio Emilia movement (Sorin, 2005) and we can find many similarities between this model, the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program model is unashamedly pragmatic, drawing on a wide range of research and experience for it’s Primary Years Program curriculum document (Making the PYP Happen: A Curriculum Framework for International Primary Education, 2007). The Agentic learner model can be used as a bridge connecting teachers, students and the new literate practices that are mediated by technology. It fits the type of learning and assessment that is occurring with technology, where students are ‘engaged’ by technology. The model is flexible enough to include digital texts and visual designs, while also values traditional written, paper-based modes of communication and images. The increasing self-initiated use of mobile phones by students in the learning process is a good example of how the model of the Agentic learning is aligned with ICT learning developments.

The kind of data collected to construct a picture of the Agentic learner for assessment purposes includes conferences, exhibition of student work, ‘the written report’ and recordings of student dialogue and the portfolio, including work chosen by student and teacher, such as interviews with students about their learning and peer review (Making the PYP Happen: A Curriculum Framework for International Primary Education, 2007, pp.50-55) (Sorin, 2005, p.7). Authentic texts are valued, so that note-taking and drafts of final pieces of work are also collected and analysed. This broad approach to assessment is aimed at capturing student abilities across the whole curriculum, including aspects of student performance such as deep learning, interdisciplinary or big picture understandings, effective communication strategies and values development, the ‘soft
skills’ that are so important for students to work effectively in collaborative and cooperative environments that may not be measured using more traditional, standards-based methods. This approach has also been suggested for English language learning by Hedge (2000, pp.397- 400), who highlights the capacity of this type of assessment to be pitched for range of purposes to different audiences such as parents, teachers and other education stakeholders such as para-professionals (for example, classroom aides, a psychologist or medical doctor) and school managers (to show evidence of class or whole school needs), although primarily the focus is to demonstrate what an individual student can do. Portfolio assessment paints a picture of an Agentic learner who is capable of ‘showcasing’ their work at any level of language or academic development.

A theme that emerges when examining the learning process through digital technologies and the internet is the collaborative and communal nature of the learning that takes place. The approaches and methods of socially networked communities appear to be gradually filtering into the classroom. Luke (2000) notes that classrooms in which online learning takes place are characterised by collaborative and collective authoring. She explains that because students identify with and use multimodal and iconographic communication online, they become part of the authentic texts of language students. Student motivation increases while anxieties and obstacles decrease when students are engaged in online learning. Rosen (2007) describes the immersive nature of learner participation in social networking. Charlton (2007) observed that as students work and experiment with communications technology in the classroom, they begin to demonstrate their learning to each other in the classroom space and automatically upskill their authoring and technical capacities in a collaborative fashion. In Charlton’s context, technology led her students to the kind of transformative practice that Cope and Kalantzis (2000) describe; the construction of digital texts became self-motivating, creating an impetus for
students to become more deeply involved in their own learning process. As a fully integrated resource, ICT created a bridge between students and their teacher as teaching and learning became a natural, evolving and shared enterprise.

Taking into account that these authors all highlight the collaborative nature of ICT use in classroom spaces, teachers can take this information one step further in considering their resource capacities for implementing an ICT approach in their local contexts. Where group work is a natural consequence of utilising ICT, what does this say regarding how many computers or what type of ICT resource is needed? Perhaps only one monitor per group of 4 students is required. Perhaps groups of students can be rotated so that only one monitor is required in a classroom, with students strategically working on different parts of their project so that the need for time online is reduced but more efficiently used. Perhaps students can share their mobile phones and teachers can focus on learning that utilises the internet phone technology. With a creative approach, teachers can find interesting and challenging contexts to implement ICT into the classroom even with the most limited resources.

References


Teaching Vocabulary to Advanced Learners: Some Pedagogical Considerations

Abdullah al Mahmud, Sabrina M. Shaila and Amatussalam Kaosar

The Conference

NELTA conferences have always been fascinating to us not only for the beautiful natural setting of Nepal, good foods and other entertainments but also for its academic strength, scholarly gathering and praiseworthy continuation. We got an audience of ELT practitioners with a majority from the Indian subcontinent, those that have to deal with more or less the same level of students and the same kind of problems as the authors of this paper do. The paper has also been able to raise some significant points and stimulate good responses from the audience.

About the paper

The paper is a result of the authors’ teaching experience and study on teaching vocabulary at the tertiary level as it is practised and as it can be developed more and more keeping in mind the needs of advanced learners and learning objectives. We have mingled our study from secondary sources with our first hand experiences in a commonsensical manner. However, it would be stronger if we could include surveys from students and teachers regarding our topic.

Introduction

Since language is a continuous process of combination of words
according to the intended meanings, any type of language teaching must have the component of teaching vocabulary side by side with four universal language skills i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. Vocabulary is a multifaceted phenomenon that has to be taught and learnt, keeping in mind its complex web of relationships. In the present article, we have discussed about teaching vocabulary to advanced learners in the Bangladeshi context, and have also sorted out some ideas that we have found to be useful for English language teachers and learners in an era of information technology.

Summary of the paper

Language consists of purposeful combination of words for conveying intended meanings. The meanings that we have in mind and the words that we use in order to mean them do not have a one-to-one or a monolithic relationship. With the postmodern trend of deconstruction, the essentiality of words having certain referents is more and more challenged. Vocabulary therefore is and should be treated as a multifaceted phenomenon related to diverse linguistic and situational contexts, and dependent on the user’s intention as well as the receiver’s perception. Advanced or tertiary level learners need not only to understand the meaning of words, but also to use them appropriately while taking into account factors such as oral/written use of the language; degree of formality, style and others. Therefore teaching vocabulary to them requires consideration of the following:

a) Varied aspects of lexis like homonymy, homophony, synonymy, affective meaning, style, register, dialect, translation and so on.

b) Memory and storage systems: Strategies like creating mental linkages of words, applying images and sounds, reviewing and employing action may be useful.

c) The problem of forgetting

d) Dealing with multiple meanings through guided discovery and contextual guesswork.
e) **Creating multiple paths with multimedia** by the use of internet, audio-visual materials and vocabulary games.

f) **Working with schema** for simultaneous semantic and syntactic processing of words.

g) **Focus on discipline based word collections** by using specially designed activities.

The ultimate focus of teaching vocabulary has to be on recognizing words in context, dealing with multiple aspects of meanings, finding the best possible way of teaching-learning and building a sustainable and useful mental word stock to be readily used not only in receptive skills but also in productive ones i.e. writing and speaking.

**References**


Developing Speaking Skills Through Community Service: EFL/ESL Perspective

Sanjoy Banerje

Introduction

Developing language skills through community service has become a recognized approach in the field of English language teaching and learning since the beginning of the 21st century. The approach, known as service learning, ensures students’ engagement in the planning, action and reflection on the teaching-learning process. It also empowers learners with the duties and responsibilities about their communities. As the belief is that most of traditional classrooms deal with some structured curriculum with set rubrics for evaluation, English language students do not get context-rich situations to share and debate with. Despite the objections of service learning based on expenses, curriculum design and grading, the scopes are many. If we want to educate our children for their lives, not merely for the materialistic world, we should teach them in a way where they could make a link between their course contents and real life situations.

Problem area

English, being the only language to communicate across national borders, has become an inevitable part of education system in the countries where English is taught as second or foreign language. Previously, it was thought that competence in the English language would mean power and prestige of a few; now, it has become the necessity of the common mass. Among the two productive skills (writing and speaking), speaking is
given priority in evaluating a learner’s proficiency in the target language. However, the reality of EFL/ESL situations says that ELLs (English Language Learners) may perform better in demonstrating their written skills, not the spoken. The main reason behind that is the narrowed scope of practising English in a mono-lingual situation. It is also important to mention that our students come to schools to fulfill their materialistic needs raised from the instances of the modern civilization. They are being indifferent to the well and woe of members in communities. The university students also do not get any good opportunities to develop their civic responsibilities.

Background literature

Researchers around the world, particularly in the USA, have been raising their voice since the late 1990s to incorporate community service in the curriculum. Meyer, Hofshire and Billing (2004) argued that “Service learning is a proven technique that facilitates a student’s growth in academics, social maturity, critical thinking, communication, collaboration and leadership skills.” From time immemorial, assignment topics have been given to students on hypothetical or virtual topics, e.g., impact on climate change on poor countries, food security and poverty alleviation. Service learning gives floor to students to explore the reality in person. Mikolchack (2006) says “While English composition has often been criticized for working in unreal situations, service learning creates a very real situation with a very real audience and very real needs.”

Probable outcomes: At the end of service learning project, students are expected to

- develop fluency in English
- organize thoughts maintaining unity and coherence
- develop concern about civic responsibility
- have respect from members of the community
A group of BRAC University students shared their acquired knowledge with the graduating school children who work for their food and living. The performance they staged after the community service was better than before. The shy students became fluent and motivated to help the helpless grow well.
Objections
Some educationists believe that service learning as an incorporated part in the university curriculum would deviate students and teachers from the goals of learning. They argue that it is very expensive and time-consuming. They also say it is very difficult to schedule the project and grade students.

Conclusion
To educate students for a life as responsible citizens (Bringle and Hatcher, 1996), not merely for a career, service learning should be incorporated in the curriculum. It would also help develop speaking skill university students since universities have required resources (students, faculty, libraries and research expertise). Though service learning needs more attention than classroom teaching, the results are positive. Besides, students can be motivated by talking about the fun and adventure they would have during service learning. It is also expected that learners will be engaging in a community service which will be enhancing the classroom experience. The sooner the authorities take the initiatives to practice service-learning to develop speaking skills in English, the better we will be able to make a difference in our society.

References


A Humanistic Approach to Teaching Academic Writing: Learning from BRAC University

Md. Golam Jamil

Introduction

This paper, which was presented in the 15th NELTA International Conference, is an attempt to raise the ideas of the assimilation of personal attachment and the cultural familiarity in an academic writing scheme. The paper tries to show how a university academic course accommodates an individual’s intentions and interests, as mentioned by Kurtz (2000), to humanise academic activities. The paper claims that ‘ENG 103’, an academic writing course of BRAC University, Bangladesh, promotes learner autonomy, acknowledges the affective system or cognition, directs learners to be more curious and independent (Gage and Berliner 1991) and helps them internalise the learning process through ‘personalisation’. Additionally, it provides some recommendations about designing a university academic writing course following a humanistic approach.

Problem area

It is observed that the objectives of academic writing courses at universities are generally to produce accurate, clear and concise papers by the students (Summers, 2001). The entire process is mainly designed with some strict guidelines where the students are instructed to choose a focused title, do some research activities to collect relevant data and write the paper following appropriate academic writing styles. Although the stylistics and the technical features are given priorities, the
humanistic aspects such as the ‘personal connection’ of the topic with the writer and the synthesis between ‘self reflections’ and ‘external inputs’ are rarely taken into considerations. As a result, the written academic paper often becomes synthetic where writer’s emotional involvement remains almost absent. Therefore, I argue that academic writing courses need to be more humanistic where the students will get a chance to ‘personalise’ and ‘reflect’ on selected issues in their papers.

**Humanising an academic writing course:**

**Scopes**

There might be no denial that the basis of a language is ‘human communication’ which is mainly for the ‘formation and interaction of all social groups, from family to community to nation’ (Lehmann and Jones, 1987). Therefore, the incorporation of the culture and social contexts is vital in language teaching/learning as it might not be possible to communicate effectively if a language learner perceives and produces a language from a different cultural background. Teaching/learning of academic writing at university is not an exception to this. As in an academic writing course learners have to analyze and synthesize different ideas and perspectives, it seems important to indulge the personal attachment and the relevant culture with the topic they are dealing with.

**ENG-103: Humanistic features**

Besides the discussion on the ideas of humanising an academic writing course the paper tries to cover two broad areas: (a) the problems of traditional academic writing courses for university students and (b) an analytical description of the course ‘ENG-103’ with its humanistic features. To examine the humanistic characters of ‘ENG-103’ course a qualitative study is done with a continuous observation on students’ involvement, achievements and reflections to gauze their motivation and inputs. A pre-designed questionnaire is also used in this regard.
Moreover, a literature review is included for constructing a theoretical framework.

The study and findings

This study is based on the realization that in Bangladesh academic writing courses at universities are generally ‘controlled’ and ‘over structured’. Therefore, they do not encourage learners to be involved emotionally and practically. Consequently, the written papers often do not reflect real research activities and, thus, the writing process becomes an uninteresting scheme for the learners. The assumption before the study was that a Humanistic Academic Writing course might solve this problem.

After conducting the research it is found that in ‘ENG-103’ course students experience an academic writing process that involves synthesis of ideas, data collection and the formatting procedures. Therefore, the learners can focus on ‘critical thinking’ and ‘shared learning’, and can incorporate guidelines to ensure the ‘technicality’ and the ‘quality’, required at university level, for writing academic papers.

Another finding is that because of the ‘personal attachment with the topic’, the relevance with the known culture, for following a specially designed ‘sequenced writing scheme’, peer interactions, learner centeredness and a customised assessment policy the course has become more productive. By analyzing the reflections of the former students it is realised that the learners are eager to incorporate their cultural knowledge and personal ideas in academic writing. Although there are some common ‘imperatives’ to follow in academic papers, it is observed that the humanistic features of ‘ENG-103’ do not obstruct them at all. In fact, the course successfully follows the rules of academic writing.
References


Configuring Interface in Large Classrooms: The UG Class (General English) in Kerala

Deepa Prasad L.

The Under Graduate (UG) class for General English in colleges in Kerala, India, consists of combination of batches. Very often students opting for Arts and those opting for science are brought together in General English classes. The number of students in these classes thus often spill over to more than one hundred.

The setting

Sree Narayana College, Varkala, is situated away from the town of Varkala. It is a college meant for the rural students, and the majority of students come from a rural, often lower class economic class background. The classrooms are rather technologically challenged, which means that the teaching aids easily available are the blackboard and the teacher herself. The use of computers, LCD projectors and other technical aids would require special arrangements, albeit possible.

The participants

The first and second year degree students who come for the General English are the participants of the study. The training that these students have got is not very exceptional. The majority have no chance of exposure to English outside the classroom. Many do not even have a television at home.

The teacher stands on the other side of the classroom facing these students, with a totally different background and training than that of the students, but armed with a lot of theories about teaching English.
The problem

The teacher and the students come together for an hour a day for five days a week to learn English so that the students can pass the University exams. The portions to be covered include drama (Shakespeare and Shaw), collection of essays, poetry, grammar and communication skills.

The real problem here is that the motivation level of the students is rather low. Lack of proper training on language leads to a strong negative attitude and inhibition to the language which in turn pulls down the level of interest in learning language. In a large class it is impossible to give individual attention to each student.

How can a teacher overcome these obstacles and create an interface in large classrooms – this is the key question addressed by this paper.

Possible solutions

From my experience, I found that the crux of the issue is in sustaining the interest level of the students. This is not easy because the range of competence level of the students is quite varied. About fifty percent of them do not follow the rules of capitalization, for example, while writing. The teacher has to gently lead the students to the richness of the language, by carefully avoiding pressurizing and making them feel inadequate. Once they feel comfortable with English, they relax and start enjoying the sessions.

For creating an interface in large classrooms, the teacher has to mix and match various theories of ELT. Initially the teacher has to carefully gather the reins of the classroom proceedings into her hands before introducing any student-centered activity in the class. Unless the ground is properly set, any interaction-oriented activity can go off-track. It was found that students enjoyed group activities for grammar and communication
skills, but not for drama and poetry. Perhaps because of their limited training in literary appreciation, they preferred the teacher to explain the nuances of drama or poetry rather than go for activities. Another interesting reason cited by them was that only if the teacher explains the passages they can do the university exams well.

At the next stage, the teacher can proceed to involving the students in the classroom proceedings. Prompting them to come up with possible explanations of a passage, for example, or encouraging them to come up with original ideas while practicing the communication skills. The limited time-frame does not allow each student to utilize the opportunity, but at least the properly motivated students will get a chance to participate in the classroom procedures.

By the third term, I found that students could successfully participate in discussions with minimum prompts from the teacher. It is a truly successful moment when the students sometimes argue with each other in support of Shakespeare’s method of characterization or describe the steps of a recipe in the class.

**Conclusion**

Large classes and demotivated students are the nightmare of an English teacher. But it is a real challenge to overcome these and to successfully create an interface in the classroom with large number of students and to train them to be better users of English.
Filming Projects: Towards Personal and Linguistic Development in an EFL Context

Veneti Foteini

“The soul cannot think without a picture”
(Aristotle, 384-332 B.C)

This paper is trying—to on the one hand—to shed light on teachers’ double life: human and school one and on the other hand, to disseminate filming projects as an essential factor for both teachers’ and students’ personal and linguistic development. Being more specific, filming projects can be the core of a needs-, project-, or task-based and learner-centered methodology, offers motives for all the students, ‘bridges the gaps’ among mixed-ability learners, enhances pair and group work and converts the existing syllabus into a challenging one. According to Woodward (1996), projects ‘weave more variety into lessons for the benefit of students’ and gradually of teachers because teachers’ efficiency is linked to students’ achievement and students with a positive attitude towards what they do, usually learn better. In addition, ‘in performing… the performers {have} the benefit of some kind of learning—not necessarily linguistic’ (Dendrinos, 1992 p.138). Moreover, Stern (1983 p.367) claims that ‘young children respond more readily and intuitively to language acquisition in social and communicative situations’. Thus, what can be more communicative than the making of a film or the shooting of a TV commercial where the teacher plays the role of the facilitator especially when simplifying L2 for students’ ‘lines’? What can be more social than a ‘sharing shooting’ where students do their best to perform their role and be helpful to the whole procedure?
To crown it all, filming projects can eliminate ‘Learning or Physical disabilities’ and make all students feel safe in their learning environment. Simultaneously, filming projects can help EFL teachers and students develop their social skills, enlarge interpersonal relations, combine English and Art, enhance holistic learning, create a challenging and communicative class environment and get acquainted with multiculturalism, a social phenomenon in most countries. The means are a digital camera, some accessories, a topic and a setting while stimulation, innovation, pair/group work, development of positive group dynamics, defining the nature and the extent of the project, humour and imagination, possible collaboration with other teachers (Cross-Curricular dimension), creation of the appropriate setting, guidance, supervision, direction and facilitation are the prerequisites. The result may be an amateur work but with professional spirit and language, because ‘Filming is not about the tiny details. It is about the Big Picture!’(in the “Ed Wood”:1994), the big picture of our students, the future citizens of our ever-changing world!

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Learning English with Life-Skills

Chandika Prosad Ghosal

Command of English pays to a learner’s knowledge and linguistic skill. It does not necessarily ensure his/her psycho-social competence because the textbooks on language do not accommodate such practices necessary to that end. To cope with the challenges of the changing times, a learner has to acquire certain mental abilities that are known as ‘life- skills’, as World Health Organization puts it. Without these, a learner feels vulnerable against pressures from guardians, teachers and peers and fellow-citizens in the long run. The result is mental depression, loss of confidence, and various other ailments that take a heavy toll of the learner’s overall progress. It affects him both mentally and academically. Life-skills education is an effective method that can help develop a learner’s mental faculty towards shaping him/her up into an able and responsible social being. It has recently been taken up as a separate subject of study in schools. The subject can be more effective if it could be taught combined with various subjects in classroom study. The process of learning the English language can be functionally yoked together with life skills education to achieve the goal. If the English textbooks upto the Higher Secondary level can be prescribed in this format, the learning of English may take the learners a long way towards becoming psycho-socially competent individuals.

The objective of language study for school children has so far been confined to learning reading, speaking and writing skills. In order to achieve psycho-social competence, that education basically aims at, these three skills do not suffice in the present
age. Texts have to be prescribed in such a way that they address life skills too. As teachers we have to keep in mind that the learners are children and adolescents and their behavioral patterns take shape early in life.

According to WHO, there are 10 basic life-skills. These have to be practised by students to achieve self-awareness, self-assertion, self-esteem, confidence, decision making, coping with stress, creative and critical thinking, problem solving, emotion management, and interpersonal relationship. These are skills that need to be developed along with academic skills. Life skills are participatory and process-oriented practices that could well be accommodated in the prescribed texts for language study. Since the present mode of education stresses a student-oriented classroom study, the learning of life skills fits with it finely. Students will be divided into groups and take part in activity-based learning. The teacher’s role will be that of a facilitator. After the reading of a text, there will be a question hour. Students themselves will raise open-ended questions from the text and they themselves will have to answer. The teacher too will frame some facilitative questions to elicit answers from the learners. This practice will help them to acquire reading, speaking, writing as well as life-skills simultaneously.

The paper, based on my experience, aims at demonstrating how a learner-centered English class can fruitfully be devoted to learning the English language along with life-skills so that learners may acquire language and life-skills simultaneously to face the everyday life that lies ahead. The process can enrich the learner both academically and psychologically. He/She can learn the language and, at the same time, turn out to be a psycho-socially able person equipped enough to brave the challenges on the path of life with ease.
Rhetorical Blog for Composition Classes

Hem Raj Kafle

Rhetoric
Rhetoric is a referent for efficient communication. Aristotle defined it as “the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion” (1952, p. 595). A contemporary definition of rhetoric involves takes more than persuasion. Price (2005) calls it the ‘craft of communicating through one or more media with a particular set of audiences for specific purposes,’ a mode of communication that includes ‘informing, entertaining, attacking, or reassuring – far more than just persuading’ (‘Chunking content’). Selzer (2004) terms it as ‘an effort to understand how people within specific social situations attempt to influence others through languages’ (pp.280-1).

Traditionally, rhetoric is taken as a product of five interrelated constituents of discourse referred to as rhetorical canons: invention, arrangement, style, memory and delivery. The function of each canon can be simplified as follows:

- invention: coming up with something to say
- arrangement: organizing the materials in a logical sequence
- style: use of structures and figures of speech
- memory: remembering the ideas that are to be delivered
- delivery: presenting ideas

Blog
A blog is an internet journal which can be maintained ‘without the need of any programming experience or knowledge’ (Johnson, 2004). It is a free platform for writing and publishing.
If used as an educational tool, it can work as ‘an extension of the classroom, where discussions and collaborations continue long after … students have left for home’ (Weiler, 2003 p.74). Student bloggers can exercise creativity through regular publication and subsequent interaction with readers.

A rhetorical blog

To publish in a blog is to do rhetorical communication. A blog functions as a rhetorical space for what Price (2005) calls ‘informing, entertaining, attacking, or reassuring.’ In the following sections I describe how a blog is structured with rhetorical canons. I present a sample blog entitled Rhetorical Ventures (http://prenglish.wordpress.com) created in www.wordpress.com. However, because my focus is on applicability, I skip the technical process of constructing a blog.

Invention

Invention is a continuous process of managing resources such as texts, multimedia, links and the interactive and instructional features. This refers assuring first-hand usability and convenient navigation to related platforms. Invention can be seen in three levels. In the first level are the posts of the teacher/moderator – writing guidelines, sample texts and assignments – put in a separate list of navigable links as shown in the sample image below (Figure 1). The second level consists of students’ contributions published in the front page in a reverse chronology, and arranged in a separate list of links named “Recent Posts” (Figure 2). The third level has the texts, the main contents of the blog – subjects, themes, arguments, and the audience-focused features of the individual posts.

A rhetorical blog must have the teacher’s guidelines on the issue of plagiarism. The teacher may also post outline notes specifying the purpose of writing, modes of text organization and patterns of arguments. Also, the major aspect of invention might be to pose challenges as well as to excite students to take up writing.
Rhetorical Ventures

Nabila. Are Nepali newspapers insensitive to minorities?

Any group that is affiliated with respect to a dominant group in terms of social status, education, employment, wealth and political power is minority group. In socio-economic context, the term ‘minority’ typically refers to a socially subordinate ethnic group (by terms of language, nationality, religion or culture). Other minority groups include people with disabilities, economic minorities (working poor or unemployed), age minorities (who are younger or older than a typical working age) and rural minorities.

In Nepal, minorities is considered in terms of religion (Hindu, Christian, Buddhist), in terms of ethnicity (Kasthuri, Khas, Magar, Chepang, etc.).

Print media or Nepali newspapers are not insensitive to minorities according to me. Newspapers are one of the strongest media institutions has been playing a major role in the upliftment of minorities present in Nepal.

If any newspaper takes as example we can find that the information, happenings, issues are disseminated equally everywhere without any biases. Newspapers try to inform the situation of minorities related to their education, economic development, health status and mostly about their sufferings of being minorities.

Several newspapers have been covering different issues of minority groups.

Example:

There was a news report in The Himalaya Times in Jan 2004 about a Kumauni girl who could not study Sandeep showing that minorities are welcomed in the so-called majority society.

Were magazine of July, 2009 had a cover story titled ‘The Minority Report’ where it had clearly mentioned that “Despite the constitutional backing on equality and our government refining the ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights’, the Kumauni community is still considered unaccountable”.

The news of Chepang bus in booking was published in ‘The Kathmandu Post on March 15, 2009.

Having such examples about minorities, it is sure that minorities in Nepal are not excluded or underrepresented in the Nepalese newspapers, and we have continuously been covering the agenda related to them.

[Figure 1: First level of invention in a blog]

[Figure 2: Second Level of Invention in the blog]
Arrangement

Arrangement has three main dimensions in a blog. The first entails the sequencing of publications in the front page. The second is the organization of the widgets like pages, categories, links, and lists of posts (Figure 3). This makes the site look comprehensive, logical, explanatory and easy to use. The third dimension relates to the internal organization of individual publications.

![Figure 3: Arranging widgets]

Style

Style in a blog takes both linguistic and extra-linguistic features. The linguistic features can be the conventional figures of speech used in the posts. The extra-linguistic components are the graphics and images, layout colours, font and size of the texts. A formal class blog, however, should save itself from being overtly colourful and fashionable. As its primary usage lies in the cycle of writing, publishing and reading, the design should ensure that the users stay within the blog. I emphasize putting only limited and crucial components like Teacher’s Pages, post Categories, Recent Posts, Archives and Links. Nevertheless, students can be allowed to experiment diversity of styles in their own blogs.
Memory

Memory refers to archiving contents to ensure repeated use, and making the features of the blog easy to remember. A blog primarily has an inherent storage system like the Archive, but the teacher may be required to ensure memorability of names, titles, and categories using striking and appealing terms.

Memory also relates to not forgetting the blog having been carried away through a labyrinth of links to unfamiliar sites. Besides, the inclusion of reminders, guidelines, assignment topics, older drafts, and comments symbolically maintain that the site has a fair storage of resources in its memory system.

Delivery

Delivery is the final phase of rhetorical act, the presentation of a text after the materials are invented, arranged in a desirable format, embellished with impressive style, and memorized to the level of confidence. Delivery is a continuous activity, which comes from and leads to multiple directions. To ensure such continuity, a class blog needs updating contents regularly, modifying the designs, adding useful links, maintaining interactivity among users, and monitoring user participation in the writing process. Besides, it requires the moderator to learn new skills when circumstances demand variety and additional facility.

Some fundamentals

A blog requires its owner to know some basic technical skills. Apart from the knack in Microsoft office and the Internet, teacher should have the knowledge of the blog’s administrative functions: creating multiple pages and links, publishing multiple media, categorizing student contributions, and moderating comments. A class blog must meet at least four requirements. First, blogging should be the part of the syllabus and student contributions should be graded. Second, the blog should
contain adequate resources and guidelines. Third, it should ensure continuous interaction among students, and allow informal, personalized expressions. Fourth, it should be linked with students’ own blogs from where the teacher can also select publishable writings and notify the writer about the selection.

Conclusion

At the core of rhetoric is the spirit of innovation. Blogging follows the same spirit. A blog maintained with the features of rhetoric is innovative, inclusive and influential. The teacher-moderator should work across at least two platforms: a class blog with constant updating and moderation; individual student blogs with regular supervision and sharing of resources. The teacher here is both a role model and a collaborator. A blog, however, should be taken as a supplement to classroom teaching, but not its substitute.

References


Teaching English to Multilevel EFL Learners in a Large Classroom: A Pedagogical Discussion

Janak Singh Negi

Multilevel class includes students who differ in their abilities, language proficiency, learning strategies, aims, expectations and motivation. By large classroom I mean the classroom about 40-45 students. If a classroom has more than 45 students it is overcrowded. Advantages of multi-level large classroom are as follows:

- Students can use their skill to help each other and it enhances co-operative learning.
- Students can learn to work well in a group.
- Students develop strong relationship with their peers and they become partner in learning thus it enhances the peer support strategy in the classroom.
- Teachers can learn to provide more teaching activities and improve their teaching skills.

At the same time, the problems in a multi-level large classroom can also be noted as follows;

- Difficult to find appropriate teaching techniques and materials.
- Difficult to group students in the classroom and select the task for them.
- Not easy to determine individual needs of students.
- Students of low level may feel threatened, left out and frustrated as a result they may loose their self esteem.
• Students of high level may feel bored.
• Students may make noise in the classroom.

Causes of the problems

Some students are more successful at learning than others. They also differ in their abilities, language proficiency, learning strategies, aims expectations and motivation.

How can we cope with multilevel large classroom? This issue has been discussed below:

Classroom management

Learn the students’ name (For classroom control ) calling a particular student by his/her name in the classroom is more effective than calling by ‘you.’ It is also a sign of closeness and makes the personal attachment tight.

Don’t speak too much in the classroom. Let your student talk a lot and praise/encourage them to talk in English. But give them simple and clear instructions. For example;

• Open your book on page....
• Look at exercise No....
• Listen to the conversation.
• Listen and fill in the gaps on exercise no....
• Now let's listen again and check....
• Check with your partner.
• Read the passage on exercise no....
• Find out the difficult words
• Discuss with your partner.
• Ram and Phalana play the role of doctor and patient as in the text book etc.

Divide the class into various groups/pairs. In multilevel large classroom students can be grouped as either ‘Like ability’
or ‘Cross-ability’. Like ability is where students of the same proficiency level sit together. The advantage of like ability grouping is that similar needs of the students can be addressed and students of the same level feel comfortable working together. Cross ability is where students of different proficiency level sit together. The advantage of cross ability grouping is that the higher level students can help the lower level students. But grouping students into various groups depends on the teacher. S/he can decide based on the task, aims, students’ interest and situation.

Whole class mingle. Mingle activity involves students talking, interacting and working with different members of the classroom in order to perform certain tasks. The advantage of whole class mingle activity is that all the students can share their ideas, answers etc and learn from each other with whom they feel comfortable at the same time.

Set time limit for each activity. It is also very important to think about the task for the fast finishers in the class

Do not give the learner pressure to be correct because if students feel being forced or threatened, they tend to withdraw and refuse to participate in the task.

Monitor the whole class. While the students are doing the task given and help them if they need any. When the students finish the assigned task let them check and correct their answers with their friends.

Using white / black board and other teaching materials are also equally important for the effective teaching and motivating the learners.

For the effective teaching it is also better to follow the following seven principles of communicative teaching methodology.

- Don't try to be a master in the language classroom, try to be a friend of your students.
Don't speak too much in the classroom; let your students speak much.

Don't do teach everything yourself in the classroom, let your students do the work because you have already learnt but your students are learning.

Don't put your students into chaos, give clear instructions.

Don't answer the questions of your students directly, elicit answer from them first.

Don't leave your students in a confusion, ask concept checking questions at the end.

Don't hate your students for their poor language; love them because they are learning well. (Negi, 2008)

References


Teaching English in Large Multilevel Classrooms

Ashok Raj Khati

What is a large multilevel class?

‘Large is of course a relative term and what a ‘large class’ is will vary place to place ’ (Ur, 2005). A large class has many students. She further states that a ‘heterogeneous’ class is one that has different kinds of learners in it, as opposed to a ‘homogeneous’ class, where the learners are similar. In a nutshell, a large multilevel class has many students including those who communicate in English at a variety of different levels.

Some facts

No two humans are the same in the world and there is no point in teaching everybody in the same way, instead learners should be helped to become independent and creative. There is no such thing as a ‘homogeneous’ class. By nature, large classes are heterogeneous.

Challenges and benefits

Teachers working in large multilevel classroom encountere many problems such as excessive ‘check’ work, low student interaction and participation, different learning styles, and excessive use of mother tongue. At the same time, there are more comments, experiences, more opinions and ideas shared and these classes provide more chances to enhance mutual learning. The large multilevel classroom itself is an opportunity for interaction furthermore; it increases the knowledge of others, and their values and personalities. Thus, a large multilevel classroom could be a greater opportunity for creativity.
Possible strategies

*Classroom management*

1. Establish class rules from the beginning.
2. Be fair and consistent
3. Learn names- We can learn names by:
   - Association- see if something strikes you.
   - Visual- notice their faces, body posture.
   - Aural- listen to the students' voice.

*Open ending questions*: Closed-ended cues are by nature homogeneous. Thus, open-ended cues provide opportunities for response at various levels.

*Enhance collaboration*: Get learners to work cooperatively and promote group work, pair work, and collaborative writing to maximize students’ participation.

*Range of tasks*: Create or provide different tasks for different levels of students. We can give different students different homework too.

*Getting and giving feedback*: We can use a) class book- Place the class book for students to comments, suggest and write their thoughts. and b) suggestion box- Teacher can place a suggestion box near the door.

*Assign home tasks regularly but not too lengthy.*

*Use students*. Take support from some students to perform certain activities like collecting homework, and distributing worksheets. Harmer (2008) suggests that more able students may be asked to teach others.

*Vary your topics, methods and texts*: It may sound challenging for teachers in our context, but one material may not be suitable for all students. Mix a lesson with various techniques and activities.
Some activities

- Describing a picture: Invite students to say anything they like about a famous picture. He or she can take 10 to 20 utterances or one idea from every student or set time limit.
- Sharing experiences: Sharing teachers' experience has strong motivational drive on the part of students. Select a topic and share your own experience first. Then ask students to share from each group.
- News reading: Using worksheets and other self-access materials promote individualization. Distribute the copies of a news story, ask or write questions, what happened, when, how, where, and why it happened.
- Memorizing spelling: Divide the class into groups, write 10 -15 words on the board correctly, tell them to read, then erase and ask them to write, check each group's work.
- Five minutes of writing: tell students to write a paragraph of their own on a topic.
- Chain writing: A topic is given, each student writes a sentence at the top of the paper. Then he/she passes it to another. Another will add one sentence by the first idea and association. Then again passes to another, and so on.
- How many things can you find: ask to write as many names as they can think of 'fruits' or things that are 'made of wood' or appliances which use 'electricity'.

Conclusion

The key strategies for teaching in a large multilevel class are most likely to develop a collaborative working atmosphere, provide a variety of work and make all students involved in diverse activities appropriate for different levels.

References


Writng a Five-Paragraph Essay

Kashi Raj Pandey and Eak Prasad Duwadi

The idea behind the five-paragraph essay is that it helps to organize one’s thoughts rationally and leads to the production of a well-organised composition. There are some steps in this format. First, teacher gives a topic. All essays consist of three major parts: introduction, body and conclusion (Gardner, 2005 p. 104). A five-paragraph essay is not an exception. It obviously has them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIRST SUBTOPIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECOND SUBTOPIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THIRD SUBTOPIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the workshop we began to show participants slides starting with a topic sentence. “The topic sentence contains the main idea of a paragraph” (Dietsch, 2003 p. 78). It gives the reader an idea of what the paragraph is going to be about. Then, supporting sentences explain the main idea of the topic sentence (Dietsch, 2003 p. 79). After that, write three “things” about the topic sentence. Besides the two basic parts—the topic sentence and subtopic sentences, “each paragraph has a third part: a
concluding sentence” (Dietsch, 2003 p. 79).

We completed “topic sentence”, written our first subtopic, our second subtopic and our third subtopic. Finally, we concluded our introductory paragraph. Then, we used each subtopic sentence to form next paragraphs. Next, we simply filled in detailed examples to prove each of our topic sentences. Finally, we added a conclusion with the fifth and last paragraph that was surprisingly the easiest as it was simply to restate our reasons/arguments by rewriting the introduction. Hence, we wrote an introduction with three subtopics, three detailed body paragraphs, and a conclusion. We also used vivid examples and tied everything back to the topic sentence. Finally, the audience could see complete essay that was a composed following each step:

Ice cream is my favorite dish. It comes in many flavors. It cools me off on hot days. It always reminds me of my school life. These are the reasons why ice cream is my favorite dish.

Ice cream comes in many different flavors. Chocolate is one of my favorites because it is very sweet, and I love sweet things. LOVE22 is yet another great flavor. The nuts add a crunch to the sweet chocolate. A third great flavor is Neapolitan that comes in three colors – chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry together into a colorful mixture that looks as great as it tastes. These are some wonderful flavors I like in ice cream.

Ice cream cools me off on hot days. Once, when the temperature was 40 degrees in Nepalgunj, I had a vanilla shake and felt very cool. Another time, it was so hot that my friends and I got relieved even after standing around the ice cream parlor and enjoying the cool breeze that came from the refrigerator. Interestingly, while walking along the highway one summer day, I even got some ice cream and put a little on my feet to soothe and cool them off. Whenever I have needed cooling down, I could always turn to ice cream.

Ice cream reminds me of my school life. Every time I have an ice cream cone, I remember the fun I had when I was 16, and my friend spilled her cone down on my uniform. That day, everybody laughed when she ran screaming down the road. Chocolate Ice cream reminds me of the many great times I had at ND’s when I was young, ordering for different mixtures each time I went inside. Just hearing the sound of an ice cream vendor brings back good memories of sitting under a tree on my lawn waiting for my friends. Ice cream today always brings back great memories for me.

I always enjoy thinking about ice cream, one of my favorite dishes. It comes in many great flavors. It cools me off when I am feeling hot. It is still a tasty way to remember being young. Ice cream is great.
Lastly, we gave them a topic. They brainstormed their ideas firstly. Then, they clustered them and composed a wonderful essay. Few of them also recited their essays. Finding more supports and huge presence from the audience in the hall we felt replete. Before we began our workshop, the reporter had to display ‘House Full’ notice. There were all levels of audience. We found that essay writing can be made easy if the model we presented is followed.

References


The Role of Features in English Phonology

Laxmi Bahadur Maharjan

The idea that segments are made up of phonological features has a long tradition, and received its first comprehensive formalisation in Jakobson et al. (1951). The most widely known system is that proposed by Chomsky and Halle (1968). The later differs from the former in a number of respects, most notably the features are based entirely on articulatory parameters in Chomsky and Halle, whereas those of Jakobson et al. were defined primarily in terms of acoustic properties. In the linear model of Chomsky and Halle, segments were viewed as consisting simply of an unordered list of binary features. The features characterising a segment were organised into a feature-matrix in which the features were simply listed along with their value (either + or −) for the segment in question.

Features are one of the core building blocks of linguistic representations; segments (sounds) consist of a series of features, a feature matrix each; thus the feature-matrix for the each segment of the English word e.g. cab /kæb/ contains the following features:

/k/ = [-syllabic -sonorant + consonantal -continuant -voice -nasal -coronal -anterior + dorsal -strident]

/æ/ = [-syllabic -sonorant + consonantal -continuant + voice -nasal -coronal + anterior -dorsal -strident]

/b/ = [+ syllabic + sonorant - consonantal + continuant + voice - nasal + dorsal - tense - high + low - back - round]
The central idea behind features is that each segment (i.e. phoneme) is actually definable in terms of a set of properties. These properties of a segment which can be viewed as a bundle of features are, of course, the phonological features. Thus words, which we often think of as a string of segments, can actually be represented as a string of feature bundles.

It has been obvious that the phonetic properties of sounds are relevant for their phonological behaviour. We have also determined that phonetic properties of sounds are useful and important for understanding phonological patterns. The task of our theory of phonology is then to determine which phonetic properties are relevant for phonology and which are not. As regards this, we assume that phonological features model includes phonologically relevant sound properties. These features are binary, meaning that they have a [+] value (for sounds that have a certain property) and a [–] value (for sounds that do not).

A segment of sound is either a consonant or a vowel. There are many features specified for consonants and vowels in this respect. The English vowels exhibit the vowel features; simultaneously consonants, despite their own consonant features, exhibit vowel features as well.

The features associated with vowels are [high], [low], [back], [round], and [tense]. Likewise, the features associated with consonants are [syllabic], [consonantal], [sonorant], [continuant], [voice], [nasal], [strident], [lateral], [labial], [coronal], [anterior], [dorsal], and [glottal].

**Consonants that have vowel features.** Many features are specified for consonants and vowels both. The consonants which are articulated after alveolar ridge are usually specified for the vowel features such as [high], [low], [back], [round]. Specifically, the [+high] consonants are (palato-alveolar), palatal, retroflex, velar, and uvular consonants; [+low] are pharyngeal and glottal consonants; [+back] are velar, uvular, and pharyngeal, (glottal) consonants; and the consonants with
lip rounding are [+round], e.g. /kW/ is [+dorsal, +round], /pW/ is [+labial, +round], and /tW/ is [+coronal, +round].

**Vowels that have consonant features.** Vowels articulated by raising the tongue body are specified for the consonant features [dorsal]. The major features classes also associated with vowels are [sonorant], [continuant], [consonantal] and [syllabic].

Finally, it is expected that the readers know the following:

i) Features distinguishing vowels & consonants: [±syllabic] and [±consonantal]

ii) Manner features: The features specified for consonants and vowels in particular are four namely [±syllabic], [±consonantal], [±sonorant], [±continuant] which are used to divide up speech sounds into major classes. Some, however, view that [±sonorant], [continuant] and [consonantal] are major classes. The other manner features are [±voice], [±nasal], [±strident], and [±lateral].

iii) Place features: The features specified for consonants are [±labial], [±coronal], [±anterior], [±dorsal], [±glottal]. Dorsal sounds are articulated by raising the dorsum of the tongue. All vowels are DORSAL sounds.

iv) Laryngeal features: [±voiced], [±spread glottis], [±constricted glottis]

v) Vowel features: The features specified for vowels namely [±high], [±low], [±back], [±round], [±tense] are, however, specified for some consonants as well.

**References**


Teaching English for Sustainability (EfS)

Rachel Bowden

English Language Teaching has evolved alongside the emergence as English as a world language; the medium for a system of western thought which has dominated global politics of the last 50 years. As environmental and cultural destruction reach a scale impossible to ignore the truism of that system is now up for debate. In this essay I will suggest why, as a result of its evolution, ELT can and should be a medium for critically evaluating and reforming global ways of knowing.

Connections between EfS and ELT theory and practice

What we teach

Within ELT the English language was traditionally what was taught. However, over the past 50 years, views on language teaching and learning have shifted. Previously accepted teaching methods saw language as objective, for example grammar translation where learners memorised and translated written texts (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). In contrast current approaches, such as the communicative approach, see language as inherently subjective in both production and interpretation, functional (both interactional and transactional (Brown and Yule, 1987 p.22), and part of a system of interacting ‘messages’ operating within a specific context (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). In my view this evolution of understanding mirrors the move from a mechanistic to an ecological educational paradigm (Sterling, 2001pp.58-59).

Furthermore shifts in methodology have echoed shifts in
thinking about language itself. For example in the now widely practised Lexical Approach (Lewis, 1993) vocabulary is taught in contextualised chunks, rather than isolated words, and the emphasis is on learners noticing patterns of use in context rather than learning fixed rules connected to single words. From this view demarcations such as grammar and vocabulary are increasingly obsolete as language is seen as systemic, and words gain meaning through relationships with other words and the surrounding context.

**How we teach**

Current ELT practice, called the eclectic or sometimes simply the communicative approach is in fact a mixture of many different methodologies, or ‘tools’. Within a set of emergent beliefs about the nature of teaching, learning and language, teachers select from a range of methodologies to suit each learning context (Hedge, 2000).

EFL teaching has come to embrace a humanistic approach, seeing the learner as centre of their own learning process and considering issues such as the motivation, principles and commitment of the learner to be crucial (Stevick, 1980). Methodologies such as community based learning recognise the value of a learning community which I think reflects a systems view where the whole is considered greater than the sum of its parts (CEL; 2009, Overfield; 1997). This can be seen in the layout of ELT classrooms where tables are arranged to promote various dynamics of collaborative working for example ‘islands’, ‘horse shoe’ or ‘circles’ (Overfield, 1997, Hedge, 2000).

**Where/who we teach**

In my view the scale of the EfS project demands global participation in debates about society and sustainability and resultant changes in behaviour. This participation must happen at all levels, within dialogue between the personal, local and
social. This vision of EfS calls for local negotiation of meaning, and so argues for decentralised planning. At the same time, EfS demands leaning from all sectors of society, civil, state and business, indeed cross sectoral learning gives us the biggest chance of societal change.

The use of English by speakers of other languages is widespread, with learners extending far beyond the realm of formal education (Crystal, 2003).

Moreover, English language teaching often surpasses the boundaries of language instruction. In the British Council worldwide a significant proportion of all courses are run off site in state, NGO or corporate sectors. Courses such as communication skills, report writing, team building, leadership, creativity, and critical thinking reflect the now widely held understanding that language and communication skills are interconnected. As beliefs and values are implicit in any process of communication I feel the classroom can be an ideal site for their exploration.

Conclusion

In this essay, I outlined the concept of sustainability, showing how rather than being a fixed idea it is a complex emerging concept to which education and learning are central. I have illustrated the connections between EFL theory and practise and societal change/transformation paradigms. Moreover I hope that I have shown how English, itself a site of ambiguity, can be used as a medium for identifying assumptions and reformulating knowledge (Rushdie, 1991).

To strengthen the impact of ELT on sustainability it is important to open the vision, image and design of sustainable education to discussion. I believe that empowering ELT teachers and learners to engage with the wider society in exploring, developing and manifesting sustainability values will enable them to act as agents for change.
References


