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THE JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

(INDIA)

(A Peer-Reviewed Journal)

The Origin and Growth of ELTAI – Interaction Oriented English Language Curriculum in the Schools of Telangana – Culture and History of Critical Reading of Textbooks of Telangana State – Portraits of Human Value in Shakespeare: The Sterling and the Sublime – Shakespeare's Love and Betrayal – Question Formation, Question Tags and Short Answers – One on One: Interview with Nicky Hockly – Learning English is FUNtastic – Using Tablet PCs to Develop Engineering Graduates' Employability Skills – Book Review: Academic Research & Writing

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

Periodicity

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

Contributions

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

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

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

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

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

eltai_india@yahoo.co.in

CDs and hard copies will not be accepted.

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

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

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

Objectives of the Association

- To provide a forum for teachers of English to meet periodically and discuss problems relating to the teaching of English in India.
- To help teachers interact with educational administrators on matters relating to the teaching of English.
- To disseminate information in the ELT field among teachers of English.
- To undertake innovative projects aimed at the improvement of learners' proficiency in English.
- To promote professional solidarity among teachers of English at primary, secondary and university levels and
- To promote professional excellence among its members in all possible ways.

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

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

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



Founder Editor and Publisher
Padmashri S. Natarajan (1899-1974)



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Editorial

We are happy to place in your hands one more issue of the Journal of English Language Teaching (India). This is the last issue for the year 2016 and we wish all of our Readers a Happy New Year (2017). We are sure, there will be more readers in the coming years and the thin volume that this journal is will grow in its size. For this to happen you are the people to provide it with necessary sustenance by contributing your articles, reviews and reports. Perhaps your experiences as a classroom teacher which can be recounted in the form of anecdotes are also welcome.

This issue, as in the past is a mix of literature and language teaching. There are two articles on Shakespeare, and rightly so. This year marked the 400th death anniversary of the Bard and in his honour several seminars and conferences were organized across the country. Several chapters of ELTAI in different parts of the country also came forward to organize special events and hence write ups on Shakespeare are common. Joshua John and Meena Prasad analyse his plays in their articles and bring to us the richness of literature he has left behind for us.

The language section has four papers. The first paper by Latha & Minhaj discusses the new textbooks of English that have been introduced in the state of Telangana and provides a rationale for the change in introducing the new curriculum. Venkanna in the second paper continues the argument and delineates the historical development of changes that have taken place in the production of textbooks in Telangana, a young state carved out of the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh. The other two papers which appear towards the end of the issue have a focus on grammar and employability skills respectively. Sheelam Jain focuses on using ICT for teaching not only English but also help students become job ready by helping them develop employability skills. The paper on grammar is written by Srilatha who is teaching in an Engineering college and gives some practical suggestions on teaching question tags and responses. There is a very interesting paper on teaching English to marginalized children using play way techniques. This paper by Padmasini Kannan is the result of project undertaken by the author and describes an innovative way of language teaching to many a practising teacher.

Besides these articles we have our regular columns. Alber P'Ryan has interviewed Nicky Hockly who is an expert Education Technologist. Through the interview we realize that the fear of the equipment is common to most of us till we begin to use them. Nicky who was herself a hesitant starter has now been an internationally recognized scholar and an authority in the field of ICT and language teaching – she describes herself as a technophobe converted into a technophile.

Towards the end of the journal we have presented a book review. It is our endeavour to introduce to our readers books in the field that are relevant and useful in their jobs. Publishing book reviews is one way of achieving this. We have been carrying this column for the last three issues and we request our readers to send brief reviews of the books they have read recently. This is likely to be very useful in helping us sustain the column.

Once again let us wish you all a very Happy New Year. Ring out the old year, but do not discard it completely in favour of the New Year. Let the two years merge into a common stream and continue the thought processes. Let the New Year build on the benefits we have reaped in the present year.

Take time to express your views, these are helpful in making the journal more useful to all of us.

S Mohanraj, Editor
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The Origin and Growth of ELTAI

Dr S Rajagopalan

Patron, ELT@I

INTRODUCTION

Our Association had a humble beginning and has grown into a one of the largest professional associations of teachers in the world just like a tiny seed becoming in course of time a big Banyan tree—started with just six members, all belonging to just one city, Chennai, grown into fairly a big organization with 3864 members and 40 chapters in different parts of our country. You may wonder how it had happened. Well, it is quite an interesting saga.

Journal first, Association later!

It is interesting to note that our Journal was started first and our Association much later. Why and how did it happen? As early as 1974, The Journal of English Language Teaching (JELT) —the first of its kind in our country— was published, thanks to one of the well-known educationists of that time, the late Padmashree S. Natarajan. He really wanted to start a professional association of teachers of English but he knew that teachers would not join it paying some subscription without some incentive. So he decided to tell teachers they would get a free copy of the Journal if they joined the English Language Teachers' Association once it was started.

The Journal of English Language Teaching

The Journal of English Language Teaching (India) LVIII/6, 2016

was thus first started and it provided an opportunity for the teachers to get themselves acquainted with recent research findings in the teaching of English and also share their experiences with others. He priced it just a rupee per copy and almost single-handedly promoted its sale. He visited schools and colleges and requested them to subscribe for it. Out of pure regard for him only some subscribed but he didn't give up. He wrote letters to the heads of a few well-known educational institutions in the State requesting them to subscribe for the journal. He did not have a typewriter nor anyone to assist him and he was in fact poor health with failing eyesight but with missionary zeal he wrote letters with his own hand and did thus the canvassing. Then there was also paucity of articles for publication. He requested his close friends—one or two—to write almost for every issue. The point is the journal saw the light of the day only due to the persistent efforts of this old man. At the beginning only a hundred copies were printed and in fact some remained unsold. But he didn't give up and soon the circulation went up. But unfortunately it never went beyond 400 copies or so.

ELTAI is born!

Eleven years later—in 1985—Mr. Natarajan

started the English Language Teachers' Association of India (ELTAI). A small group of teachers including the writer—just six of us met at his residence. We had a discussion on the importance of professional development of teachers as a key factor in enhancing the standards of education in our country. At that time there were only trade unions of teachers concerned with working for the improvement of their service conditions. At our meeting he mooted the idea of starting an Association of teachers concerned with organizing teacher development programmes—seminars and workshops—for them. We all agreed and assured him of our help in his great venture. He said enrolment of members of the new association would be easier if we said all members of the Association would get a free copy of Journal. Thus our Association came into being and we were able to enrol about 256 members only.

Promoting ELTAI.—New strategies

After passing away of our Founder in 1974, a new team of office-bearers took charge of the Association and decided to carry forward the good work initiated by him adopting certain new strategies.

For enrolling members it was decided to conduct a number of workshops, seminars and refresher courses for teachers of English. Schools and colleges were contacted and they were told no fees would be charged from their teachers attending these staff development programmes.

At the programmes we organized teachers were told about the benefits of joining ELTAI

—a free copy of our bimonthly, The Journal of English Language Teaching (Impact factor-4.756), opportunities provided for the improvement of their teaching competence, interacting with ELT professionals and also for getting their papers published in our Journal. This strategy is working well and we have teachers coming forward to join ELTAI.

Another strategy adopted was to provide cash awards for teachers undertaking action research and also for using ICT tools in teaching English. The allotment of some subsidised memberships offered by IATEFL to our members has also helped to enrol new members, besides familiarizing them with the great work done by IATEFL.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

There are two Special Interest Groups—English Literature SIG and Computer Technology SIG—both quite active. The former has been running an E journal—Journal of Teaching and Research in English Literature for the past five years and the other SIG has been publishing its own E Journal—Journal of Computer Technology for ELT. These two open access journals may easily be accessed on the web by clicking on the direct links given to them on the Home page of our website www.eltai.in

IATEFL and Hornby Trust Projects

ELTAI was the first recipient of the IATEFL Project grant along with another country in Europe. We received a handsome grant of GPB3000 for our innovative project on

Training the Trainers in Virtual Learning. A group of 17 teachers were selected from over the country and were trained in using Web tools in ELT and they were then required to train teachers in their area. Image 2)

Another project undertaken by our Association with support from the Hornby Trust, UK, was on training teachers in using smart phones for the teaching and learning of English. The project now in progress relates to our 'Shakespeare lives - 2016' celebrations undertaken in collaboration with the British Council in six different cities in India. Competitions for students in soliloquy, quiz and enacting a scene from one of Shakespeare's plays are being held. Seminars are being organized for teachers for discussing the relevance of the playwright's works for all ages and cultures.

Annual conferences

We hold our annual conferences regularly and they are international too. They are attended by not less than 600 teachers every year.

ELTAI. An Associate of IATEFL

As an Associate of IATEFL, we are able to provide a fixed number of subsidized memberships of the world organization to our members. Almost every year a member is sent to attend the IATEFL conference with some financial assistance from us. A few have won IATEFL scholarships too to attend the international event. There

have been a few contributions too from our members during the recent years for publication in 'Voices'. We have had a few speakers too at our annual conferences—Peter Grundy when he was the President, Jeremy Halmer, Eric Babar and George Pickering.

Online Discussion Forums

Opportunities for our members to interact with one another and also to give them updates about our association are provided by our Google group discussion Forum, Members of the Computer Technology for ELT SIG too have got a separate online forum.

Collaboration with the British Council

The British Council has been collaborating with us in a range of our activities for a number of years now, It provides a plenary speaker for our annual conferences. Along with the IATEFL and Hornby Trust it has provided support to us carrying out successfully our projects on Virtual learning and Mobile learning. It has also sponsored an ELTAI member to attend the IATEFL annual conference in some years.

Looking ahead

Our target for the current year is to enrol at least another 500 members. We hope to start a separate website for providing the e version of our Journal. At present members may access it only on our present website.

Interaction Oriented English Language Curriculum: In the Schools of Telangana

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ABSTRACT

The traditional method of teaching English was teacher centric whereas the revised English curriculum in the CCE pattern being followed in the schools of Telangana is learner centric and completely interaction based which enables the students to think and caters to the development of all the four skills of English language. Previously the teachers used to frame a few motivating questions and elicit the topic but in the new method pictures followed by a few questions are given in face sheet and teachers must interact on the basis of it. Then discourses like report writing, debate, play, interview, choreography facilitate the students to become independent learners and users of language.. There is a drastic change in the students who put in efforts to use the language appropriately. This not only helps them in classroom but also in real life.

Keywords: CCE, face sheet, interaction, learner centric, discourses.

Curriculum is a systematic plan that provides learning experiences for the children. It aims at achieving the intended outcomes in the teaching-learning process. Curriculum is based on a set of philosophies or ideologies that help us decide what our learners should learn over a period of time. Therefore it is a “comprehensive design or “an overall plan.”

The S.C.E.R.T of the Government of erstwhile Andhra Pradesh in consultation with different agencies like National Council

of Educational Training and Research (NCERT), New Delhi, Regional Institute of English South India, (RIESI), Bangalore, The English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU) Hyderabad reviewed the English Language curriculum for secondary schools and found that the teaching of English Language in secondary schools is more examination oriented rather than equipping the students with the necessary competencies in language skills. The emphasis was on transferring information but not on providing experiences in the use

of language effectively in the everyday life.

The process of evaluation adopted in school curriculum is also defective. The different skills of language learning are not properly weighted while testing the pupil's comprehension or expression in the target language. In contrast to the established practices of ELT, evaluation remains discrete and does not take into account the objectives and learning experiences while administering a test.

The curriculum of English language at secondary school level should be in the tune with the co-ordination of these components. It should also take into its purview the development of communication skills and effective use of English language in our daily life.

Keeping in view above suggestions and shortcomings, the Telangana state Government has made the changes in the English curriculum of Secondary School Education Board in the year 2015.. The state curriculum framework 2011 has defined the academic standards for each level which covers areas such as listening & responding, reading, comprehension, vocabulary and grammar and oral and written discourses. Telangana state has progressed with the curriculum change with a drastically different conceptualization of language and language learning. SCERT has developed the text books in tune with NCF 2005, RTE 2009 and SCF 2011. As the textbook is the one of the tools that helps the teacher to achieve the targeted academic standards, the concern of every

teacher remains on completion of the textbook as the ultimate goal of teaching English and not achieving the targeted academic standards.

So, if we concentrate only on the content of the textbook, we will not be able to achieve the goal, which is making the learners use language on their own both orally and in writing. It is important to notice that the main objective is not only to help the learners procure a pass on the examination but also to help them acquire knowledge which they can use in their life. In order to achieve this goal a meticulous transaction process has been worked out under the Telangana Government in tune with the current understanding of language and language learning.

Knowledge construction is not conceived as an individual activity alone. The history of mankind reveals that the knowledge construction is a collective process where the individuals collaborate and build knowledge base of the society which becomes the shared knowledge of the whole society. In this process both the individual and society are benefited. Implicitly this means that the teaching and learning process is not something that takes place between the teacher and individual learners only. There is a process of "Collaboration" where the learners share their ideas and language experiences with their peers exploring new ideas and come to consensus. The classroom process envisioned in the new curriculum provides space for the learners to collaborate whether it is in reading, producing discourses or

writing. The present classroom is neither teacher centred nor learner centred; it is knowledge centred.

The new English textbooks contains selections from different genres and discourses such as short stories, biographical sketches, essays, interviews, plays, poems etc. These are organised into different units, each unit dealing with a certain theme. Each theme deals with some value that every citizen in our country should acquire.

The issue that is treated as theme provides necessary context, involvement, inputs and experiences. This contextual relevance helps the teachers and the children as it provides a sound background for language learning and teaching. Learners are ushered into this theme with the help of theme pictures given as the style sheet for introducing the theme and the face sheet at the beginning of each unit. Sufficient brainstorming takes place in the class and the students get an opportunity to perceive the theme from multiple perspectives and assimilate it.

The Study:

The paper proposes to find out the impact of interaction based curriculum in the students from the parent. So a questionnaire was prepared and administered to 25 parents who have more than one child. One of them had studied through the traditional method and another in this new interaction based curriculum. The researchers wanted to find out the effectiveness of the revised curriculum.

The Findings:

- 90% of the parents are of the opinion that the revised curriculum is helpful to their child in triggering thinking as compared to the previous curriculum. i
- Most of the parents expressed an opinion that the revised curriculum facilitates the use of English language in daily life.
- 95% of the parents are of opinion that the previous curriculum was only examination oriented whereas the revised curriculum focusses on all around development of the child.
- 89% of the parents expressed opinion that the revised curriculum focusses more on reading not only the lesson but also other books; whereas the previous curriculum was focused just on rote learning.
- All parents agree that the revised curriculum is sensitizesg the children on important issues so that they become responsible citizens of India.

Conclusion:

We conclude this paper with the statement that the interaction based curriculum is the need of the hour and it is training the students in essential skills required in the 21st century. It is indeed helping the students to become independent users of language. It is teaching them the life skills which will help them to fare well in their lives. It helps them to face the challenges of the life and become confident. No doubt that the internal marks introduced as

part of this curriculum causes stress, nevertheless the students have already been trained to combat the stress and not succumb to it.

A List of Some Source Books Used:

- 1) Coyle,Do (2010) ; CLIL Paperback: content and language integrated learning
- 2) Dalton-Puffer, Christiane (2007); Discourse in content and language

integrated learning classrooms.

- 3) Penny Ur (2012) ; A course in English Language Teaching
- 4) Paul Lennon (2012); Learner autonomy in English Classroom.
- 5) English Teacher's Hand book; SCERT, Hyderabad
- 6) Teacher's Hand book Social Studies class 10, SCERT, Hyderabad

Why join IATEFL ?

The International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language, UK. (IATEFL) is world wide organisational having its Associates, including ELTAI, all over the world. Visit its website www.iatefl.org to know more about it. IATEFL membership gives you access to a worldwide network of English language teachers, plus a host of exclusive benefits: Reduced conference rates Up to 25% off on our Annual Conference which attracts over 2,500 international delegates every year plus reduced rates for a wide range of additional ELT events, seminars and conferences around the world. Apply to be a presenter The opportunity to apply to be a speaker at IATEFL conferences, seminars and events SIG subscriptions Take up individual membership and join any one of our 16 Special Interest Groups as part of your subscription fee. You will receive newsletters and resources from the SIG to which you have subscribed. You can also sign up for additional groups for a minimal cost. Reduced rates on IATEFL publications Purchase our publications for reduced costs plus receive a free copy of our annual Conference Selections publication; a collection of papers presented at the last IATEFL annual conference. Special offers on periodicals Reduced rates and discounts on a range of leading ELT publications Newsletter Six issues of IATEFL Voices, our bi-monthly magazine – and you can contribute articles too! Access to scholarships Nearly 30 Scholarship schemes - many exclusive for members - that offer assistance to attend and present at our main conferences. IATEFL Webinars Invitations to take part in the monthly IATEFL Webinars from leading ELT professionals to support your Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Culture and History: A Critical Reading of ESL Textbooks of Telangana State

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ABSTRACT

One of the major themes of post-colonial literature is aiming for identity which can be linguistic, religious, cultural, social, national, gender identity, etc. Furthermore, the NCF-2005 and RTE-2009 specified that the concerns of the marginal classes, regions, cultural and historical aspects would be taken into consideration while preparing curriculum of respective states and subsequently while designing textbooks. After the formation of Telangana as a new state, the people of the state exhibited a pressing need for Local, Global and Global Identity. As a result, the State Higher Education and TS-SCERT (2014) recommended that school subjects should be designed and developed from the perspectives of the cultural and historical issues in order to have a regional identity. To achieve this, a curriculum renewal process was carried out and the textbooks of mother tongue (L1) and social studies were given distinctive changes at the school level. While the concerns of most of the reviews are very general and minimal, only a fewer number of reviews and changes have been brought in the ESL textbooks after the formation of the state. At this juncture, it becomes pertinent to revisit and study how the issues of culture and history of the new state have been dealt in the textbooks. This write-up, is an attempt to reinvestigate the cultural and historical representations of various facets through a critical analysis of the textbooks of the state in the light of the birth of a new state in 2014.

Keywords: Culture, History, Telangana, and ESL Textbooks

Introduction:

The present study attempts to understand the role of culture within the classroom of Telangana state. In Telangana state, a system of English Education is in place from the academic year 2012-13 in which students from multi-cultures and linguistic backgrounds are expected to study together English language with the help of a single textbook for all learners. It is expected that this common system and multiculturalism

help 'to have parity among students of English and Non-English Medium students and would greatly enhance the child's learning'. It is this diversity that prompted me to study the role of history and culture and how it affects teaching and learning processes within the classroom.

The current practices in the actual classrooms have shifted from classroom-centered to teacher-centered to learner-centered. The role of the teacher, who is co-

learner with students instead of instructor or an agent of transforming of information and knowledge, in this context is more complex in nature. Considering this, all practice needs to be culturally responsive. In order to this into practice which will help the teachers need to make connections with their students as individuals. When teachers make attempts to understand the underlying social, cultural and language networks of their learners, it is more likely that there will be congruence between what content is taught and how it is taught. *Holliday* (1994:29) argues that the typical teacher in that context will be involved in a variety of cultures: those of nation, of the specific academic discipline, of national and international education, of the host institution, of the classroom, and of the students themselves. Teachers' beliefs 'related to teaching and learning' (Calderhead, 1996) and these beliefs assist students in 'negotiating the nature of their learning activities' (Taylor, 1990) or beliefs about curriculum (Prawat, 1992).

Review of Literature:

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o in his essay *Decolonising the Mind: the Politics of Language in African Literature* emphasizes about language and its constructive role in national, cultural and historical identities. Besides he advocates for linguistic decolonization by theorizing the "language debate" in post-colonial studies and he offers a distinctly anti-imperialist perspective on the "continuing language's role in both combating and perpetrating imperialism and the conditions of neocolonialism in

African nations. Ngũgĩ', in it, addresses the "language problem" for African authors. Ngũgĩ focuses on questions about the African writer's linguistic medium the writer's intended audience, and the writer's purpose in writing. Hence, from the essay, it can be interpreted that the indigenous culture and history are very important for the development of a society or a nation.

Rita Mae Brown (2003) explores that language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going. Language is best used and preserved in the works of literature. Literature may be defined as "mirror of life" or "criticism of life" and literature like a mirror reflects all aspects of life (*Abrams, M.H.*, 2015). Furthermore, it is the expression of life in words of truth and beauty, it is the written record of man's spirit, of his thoughts, emotions, aspirations, it is the history, and the only history of the human soul. Reading literary works broadens our imagination and empowers us with the preparedness' to face life's most difficult situations boldly. Literature represents a language or a society, culture, or tradition. And it has wider impact beyond the individual level. It can be a vehicle for public discussions, understanding social issues, building social connections, and fostering community development. It is said that the disregard for literature is a main component of ignorance and constituents like stereotypes, judgments and preconceived notions about different people and cultures. Studying literature helps human kind-hearted, loving, positive,

and understanding both cultural and social issues of a state or a nation.

The encounter between Igbo tradition and Christian doctrine in *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe returns to the themes of his earlier stories, which grew from his own background. Achebe spoke from the interiors of the African character, rather than portraying the African as an exotic, as the white man would see him. Apart from this, Margaret Atwood in her essay *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature*, postulates that Canadian literature, and by extension Canadian identity, is characterized by the symbol of survival. This symbol is expressed in the omnipresent use of “victim positions” in Canadian literature. These positions represent a scale of self-consciousness and self-actualization for the victim in the “victor/victim” relationship. The “victor” in these scenarios may be other humans, nature, the wilderness or other external and internal factors which oppress the victim. Atwood considers (Canadian) literature as the expression of (Canadian) identity which has been defined by a fear of nature, by settler history and by unquestioned adherence to the community.

In the same way, if there is no specific identity to Telangana State within 10/15 years of age, there would be some danger of portraying the identity of the people of Telangana out of India. As in *The Location of Culture* (1994), the theoretician Homi K. Bhabha argued that so long as the way of viewing the human world, as composed of

separate and unequal cultures, rather than as an integral human world, perpetuates the belief in the existence of imaginary peoples and places. Questions of Identity— social , cultural, national identity, etc. — usually caused by experiencing the psychological conflicts inherent to cultural assimilation, to living between the old, native world and the dominant hegemony of the invasive social and cultural institutions of the colonial imperialism of a Mother Country.

Methodology- Sample

The main type of research analysis used in the present study with respect to the data generated from the two questionnaires and the checklist from the sample is descriptive analysis. And the researcher analyzes the data which will be collected using questionnaires based on the Descriptive Analyses and provides the interpretations on that (Burns & Bush, 1995). The stakeholders of this study are the teachers working and secondary students of the secondary schools of Telangana. From different sampling techniques, random sampling technique is adopted in the present study for drawing out the sample.

Research Questions:

1. What are the beliefs of teachers about the cultural content given in the textbooks?
2. What are the beliefs of teachers about the historical content given in the textbooks?
3. Do the ESL textbooks represent the minimal identity of Telangana?

Tools

- Questionnaires to the teachers
- Questionnaires to the students
- Checklists for Evaluation of the textbooks (class VI to X)
- Informal Interviews with the teachers and students

Textbook analysis:

Through the poem *In the Bazaars of Hyderabad*, the poet Sarojini Naidu exposes the culture of Hyderabad, how people roam, mate, have business transactions in the streets of the city before getting independence. The story *Teanali Paints The Horse* provides a humorous account of portraying the culture of the state. In the lesson *The Story Of Ikat*, the culture of Telangana state has been exemplified through the exposure to the handlooms and the fabrics of Nalgonda district through the characters such as Ms. Janaki, the social studies teacher, and her thought provoking interaction with the learners in a classroom and creating a consciousness among them about the process of tie and dye, plight of the weavers, and arousing awareness among them. Through the story *VVS Laxman, Very Very Special*, the places like Hyderabad, Telangana, Zymkhana, etc have been used and exposed to learners so that they talk about the diversity, culture, and nature of people in which they have been living in apart from being aware of the sports that are popular in Hyderabad. Through the discussion of the stories such

as *Maya Bazaar & A Tribute*, the concept of Telugu cinema and its history, language, tradition, etc could be discussed if the teachers are creative in the classrooms. These stories also expose learners to understand various cultural and historical issues of Telugu people.

Findings: General

1. The concepts of culture and history of the state have got somewhat sympathetic treatment in the new ESL Textbooks of the state.
2. In the textbooks from VI to IX classes, the discussion of History & Culture was absolutely absent and this absence of discussion on History & Culture exposes the outlook and negligence of the material designers.
3. When compared to the earlier Textbooks, these books are far ahead on the themes and subthemes taught at the secondary level.
4. The new textbooks of the state, after the formation of TS are oriented towards enhancing the cultural and historical identity through the school curriculum.
5. The discussion on culture and history of Telangana related aspects is wide and study of various events through the culture and history lens is fine but needs further elaboration.
6. To improve the abilities of students, there needs to be congruence between the nature of the content and its teaching practices.

7. The current concerns of common system, multiculturalism and linguistics provide opportunities to the teachers to investigate their own biases and beliefs, reflect on their own classroom experiences and enhance the professional development of the teacher.

I would term this as a very good beginning. However, there are some grey areas which I hope would be taken care off in future. In the end, I must say,

Findings about Cultural & Historical concepts:

1. There is no *significant amount* of discussion on culture and history of Telangana in ESL textbooks.
2. Cultural and identity issues will enhance learning, including learners' everyday experiences with reading, writing and literacy.
3. The content of textbooks plays an important role in language teaching and learning English.
4. Though the textbooks meet the current and future needs of the learners, the language both in terms of lexical and syntactical aspects (idioms, collocations, phrases, etc) are difficult to most of the regional medium learners. Hence they lack interest and motivation to learn these.
5. The culturally and historically alienated contents do not encourage learners and there will be no facilitation of learning through the textbooks. Hence, these

contents are to be replaced with the local and indigenous cultures and historical aspects of the learners.

Recommendations:

1. Appropriate training modules are to be provided to the teachers of English for effective transaction of the cultural and historical concepts of the state.
2. Appropriate measures are to be taken by the pre and in-service teacher organizations for developing effective strategies of teaching culture and historical aspects through English language teaching.
3. There should be an incorporation of cultural and historical content in the textbooks in order to motivate learners to learn English well at the secondary level easily.
4. Themes and subthemes related to the culture and history of Telangana have to be incorporated in the textbooks
5. A lot of discourses in the form of incidents, activities, lessons, short stories are to be translated and adopted from the indigenous and local cultural and historical concepts.
6. The curriculum designers and material producers should include the contents that are culturally and historically familiar to the local learners to facilitate an easy and smooth process of the language learning.
7. The practicing teachers of English in the local culture and the experts and

other translators of the culture and history are to be encouraged to design to contribute stories, poems, plays, etc in their local culture and heritage,

Conclusion:

One possible alternative is to create critical cultural and historical consciousness among our learners. Creating critical cultural and historical consciousness in the L2 classroom offers immense possibilities for teachers as well as learners to explore the nuances of cultural and historical and their sub-practices in a meaningful way. It involves constant and continual self-reflection guided by one's own value system regimented from one's own cultural and historical heritage. And this critical self-reflection eventually leads to meaningful cultural and historical growth, which has to be constructed consciously and systematically through a meaningful negotiation of differences between the culture and history individuals inherited by birth and the culture and history they learned through experience. The inherited culture and history should be allowed to interact freely with the learned culture and history so that there is mutual enrichment. The key to this enrichment is the lived experiences of individuals, along with their capacity to develop critical cultural and historical consciousness. Hence, in the fast-emerging world of economic, cultural, and communicational globalization,

creating critical cultural and historical consciousness in the L2 classroom is not an option but an obligation.

Limitations:

In this paper I have focussed only ESL Textbooks to show case the representation of culture and history at the school curriculum. And it is confined to only the textbooks from class-VI to X.

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Portraits of Human Virtue in Shakespeare: The Sterling and the Sublime

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ABSTRACT

Shakespeare stands poet par excellence and remains unparalleled in the literary history of poetry. Continual suffering had made him say the prayer of saints. Had not Shakespeare suffered like that such poetry would not have been produced. The generative, creative gifted poet had left no stones unturned in order to record the human drama of life. The bright, the colourful, the fashionable, the passing and the fleeting, the pleasure and the pain, the unknown to the known, the familiar and the vague, a collection of the historical and prediction of the futuristic still to happen, a wisdom unfathomed to the simple and foolish. It is a storehouse of the nuggets of gold, a treasure chest of a pristine chamber of the noble and the sublime which portrays the impeccable virtues.

Keywords: *virtues- fortitude- forgiveness- humility- love – compassion- courage – endurance – divine – mercy- the meek- the pardoning – wisdom sterling- sublime.*

Introduction :

Virtue means moral excellence. Integrity and righteousness are synonymous with virtue. The character and the personality of a person flowers best in their possession of virtue and realistic attitude towards life. Virtue is an inner beauty which has a gem like glow and radiates outside the flame of steadfastness and fortitude. Fortitude is the strength of mind to bear pain and suffering with courage. The inner beauty gives one, more strength and courage. Courage is the ladder on which all other virtues mount. In a broader sense, virtue is the embodiment of the highest morality. Sterling qualities are true virtues and great virtues are sublime and unmatched in their state.

Hunger and disease, poverty and ingratitude, loss of dear ones, disappointment in love, frustration in one's ambition or aspiration – all these form part of a thousand ills that flesh is heir to. It is only the brave and virtuous who can fight these evils without submitting to them. Fortitude is the virtue of adversity, makes a Man master of his fate and makes his life sublime. Poetry is language at its most exuberant and at its most disciplined, and that one could not attempt to have the one without the other. This Paper focuses on the great human virtues expressed by way of employing the right characters and by providing the right themes. .

Man's power of endurance and fortitude are virtues which are called into action

only when he is in a perilous situation. Poets have taken fancy about personifying good things and great virtues as if they were living and having life and feelings. An ancient writer had personified wisdom like: "You are the wise people and wisdom shall die with you". Talking about the quality of mercy, Shakespeare, in a sonnet, states that the quality of mercy is not stained. Mercy is thus a divine quality and a virtue which belongs to God Himself. It is the quality of the all-compassionate Almighty Himself. Those who possess such divine quality is partaking in the Divine by reaching out to the divine. Blake had said that pity has a human face and mercy has a human heart.

Poets surpass age and years it is inspiring to find that extraordinary wealth of writers, artists and poets have contributed their best to Mankind. To live among such philosophers and poets, one must feel privileged and honoured. It is a great thing to have the company of the noble souls. It is one thing to live in the same era of such great people and it is an amazing thing that their works live through the years and centuries. His poetry, sure enough, surpasses beyond comparison to any of the writings. Poetry was overflowing with Shakespeare in most of the touching and sentimental areas and as such influenced many hundreds of writers and stirred up the awe and inspiration of a million reading audience. He lived among men portraying their characters and his poetry now lives in the hearts of the people. His poetry provided the necessary comfort and relief for the souls distressed. The poems readily

offered knowledge and wisdom needed for all people as he had dealt with many a character including the King to the common Man. There were also an alarm of alert sounded through his poems to awaken the hearts and minds of the ignorant and the innocent. It is by this act that the eyes and ears of such host of people get opened to the stark realities of life. It gives the reader an eminently enjoyable reading experience. The poet- craftsman had given an exquisite shape for the feelings and emotions to the poetry's heroes and heroines. For any lover of poetry and, for anyone interested in further sensitizing their response to language, the poems are like honey in a dry land, quenching their thirst for the aesthetic and the intellect.

Characters representing the melancholic and the remorse, apologetic and the repentant, the rueful and the diffident, the morose and the cheerful, the meek and the furious, the pardoning and the vengeful, the merry and the joyful – all have found a place in the poetry of the great bard. In sharp contrast to the great virtues and the highest morality, there appears the mean and vile, the depraved and despicable, the hateful and the disgusting, the evil and the wicked, the Vicious or the Ungenerous. It does not matter, whether it is the joyous positive or the despairing negative - whichever is running at the moment dominates the mood of the reader. Conversely, the closing of a door can be a sad and final thing - the opening a wonderfully joyous moment: this applies to all the tragedies, comedies and the tragic-comedies.

Shakespeare's works have made a lasting impression on literature and on later theatre. Feelings can never be fettered by shackles the chains can never hold the innate overflowing powerful desires of the poet. The poet goes on to probe into the deepest regions and realms where normal people could never tread upon. The poets reach out to the unknown territories that ever could be not imagined nor could be conceived by the human mind by running wild their imagination. In 'Macbeth', the shortest and most compressed of Shakespeare's tragedies, uncontrollable ambition incites Macbeth and his wife, Lady Macbeth, to murder the rightful king and usurp the throne, until their own guilt destroys them in turn. We see the emphatic pronouncement by Lady Macbeth after the murder of King Duncan stating,

"All the perfumes of Arabia cannot sweeten this little hand:

"All great Neptune's ocean cannot wash clean this hand."

Aspiring for greatness is no wrong but the means to achieve it is all the more important. Here the Macbeths fail miserably by not upholding the sublime virtues.

Pity by William Blake, 1795, is an illustration of two similes in *Macbeth*:

"And pity, like a naked new-born babe,

Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim,
hors'd

Upon the sightless couriers of the air."

[de Sélincourt 1909, 174]

Alexander Pope, in his 'Dunciad' says, "lispings the numbers came" [l.125-128] to him; That describes the extraordinary talent and unparalleled gifts of the poet. This poem, taking the form of a verse letter from Pope to his friend and physician John Arbuthnot, spells out Pope's satirical principles and declares how he would like them to be interpreted. Such is the powerful overflow of thoughts of the imagination of the poet which are at once spontaneous and indigenous. Shakespeare is one such fine example who when he lisp'd, the numbers flowed freely and fairly and forcefully uninterrupted. He envisioned everyman living on this earth to be part of the great human drama called 'Life'.

"All the world's a stage,

and all the men and women merely players:

they have their exits and their entrances;

and one man in his time plays many parts ..."

—As *You Like It*, Act II, Scene 7, 139–42

Adversity is the best discoverer of virtue in Man. And virtue is like a precious odour and a sweet aroma of fragrance when they are incensed and crushed. In *Othello*, the villain Iago stokes Othello's sexual jealousy to the point where he murders his innocent wife who loves him.^[107] In *King Lear*, the old king commits the tragic error of giving up his powers, initiating the events which lead to the torture and blinding of the Earl of Gloucester and the murder of Lear's youngest daughter Cordelia. Evil passions have an overpowering impact over

human heart. It is wrong to lose control or allow evil passions mastery over us. A sheltered and cloistered virtue is not a real virtue. Virtue deserves to be called virtue only when it can resist and overcome temptation. 'Forgiveness' is a sublime virtue which could be found in quite a few plays of Shakespeare. 'The Winter's Tale' is one such soft expression for exhibiting the sublime virtues.

The Noble, The Righteous And The Virtuous:

The poet's careful technique has led to a wild surprise as he seeks to employ those sterling values in his poetry. The plots of Shakespeare's tragedies often hinge on such fatal errors or flaws, which overturn order and destroy the hero and those he loves. Catholic Beliefs and Teachings define the cardinal virtues are the four principal moral virtues. All other virtues hinge on these four: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. Characters bright and winning persuade us towards virtue and virtue alone makes our lives sublime.

Few immortal lines from his poems substantiate the fact that the virtues mentioned in his poems are sterling and sublime, whether it is cardinal or sublime.

Conclusion:

Shakespeare's works have proved to be timeless and enduring as they have withstood the test of time. Centuries have gone by but the works of the poet have remained enduring. "That King Shakespeare," the essayist Thomas Carlyle

wrote in 1840, "does not he shine, in crowned sovereignty, over us all, as the noblest, gentlest, yet strongest of rallying signs; indestructible". [Carlyle 1907, 161]. Shakespeare combined poetic genius with a practical sense of theology and philosophy. Aging vexes and debilitates a very jubilant personality. The writer's euphoria and exhilaration knows no bounds when he treads upon the final point of the pinnacle of his successful writing. When there is a loud acclamation of appreciation and a wide spread welcome for his own writings the poet enters into an arena where normal human beings do not dare to tread upon. That is where poetry turns to be the music of the soul which helps to overcome the anguish and despair of the dejected soul. Age could not wither the beauty of the poems of Shakespeare. It's a delightful realm when read, a timeless treasure of joy and beauty. They are undeniably excellent and exquisitely magnificent. There is not a shadow of any doubt that these are virtues which are sterling and the sublime.

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Shakespeare's Love and Betrayal

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ABSTRACT

Love is something we all share no matter where we live and it disregards social status or age. Shakespeare has captured the spirit of love, its highs and lows, the beauty of falling in love in some of the most poetical lines ever written. He wrote 38 plays and the word love is mentioned in each one of them.

The theme of betrayal appears in Shakespeare's writings that betraying and feeling betrayed are ubiquitous to the scenarios of trauma and yet surprisingly neglected, while the experience of betrayal might be ubiquitous in childhood, its lack of recognition by the parents is what leads to fixation upon it.

Theme of Love in Shakespeare

Love is a most warming, happy, inspirational human feeling. It surrounds us throughout our lives and takes many shapes and forms. You will find it in the softness of your mother's hands, the passions of youth or mature understanding with age. Since the story of mankind began, it has inspired some of the most beautiful images in poetry or painting.

Love is something we all share no matter where we live and it disregards social status or age. Shakespeare has captured the spirit of it, its highs and lows, and the beauty of falling in love in some of the most poetical lines ever written. He wrote 38 plays and the word love is mentioned in each one of them. In some, it is very frequent:

The Two gentleman of Verona – 162 times
Romeo and Juliet – 120

As you like it – 104

A Midsummer Night's Dream – 103

Much Ado About Nothing – 89

(Richard Gill, Mastering Shakespeare, 1998)

One cannot talk about love without immediately recalling the story of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, a story unsurpassed in world literature as a celebration of young love – innocent and pure, love at first sight, strong and passionate. Although Shakespeare rarely invents the plots of his plays, he has created here an exceptionally powerful image of young love.

Love is a smoke rais'd with the fume of sighs;

Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lover's eyes;

Being vex'd, a sea raging with lover's tears;

What is it else? A madness most discreet,

A choking gall and a preserving sweet.

Romeo's love is pure emotion, thoughtless and driven by the spirit of feud and revenge. Juliet is the younger one, more practical and determined that they should be joined in marriage;

*My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.*

The beauty of Shakespeare's language and understanding of the young lovers emotions is what makes the play timeless. However, the destiny of Romeo and Juliet's love is doomed due to a conflict between their families – Montague's and Capulets. The lover's sacrifice brings the reconciliation of the two families and the healing of the social wound. However, the question lingers as to whether pure love is possible in society bound by norms and rules of behaviour that suppress true feelings. It is not surprising that Shakespeare sees love as only possible in a dream (A Midsummer Night's Dream).

But love in Shakespeare is not always tragic, unrequited or hurtful. In three of his early romantic comedies (A Midsummer Night's Dream, Twelfth Night and Much Ado About Nothing) love is a source of pleasantries and amusement, sporting and playfulness. Familiar comic features are present in all three plays – mistaken identity (TN), match-making (MAAN) and intervening magic (AMND). Everything falls into its right place and there is no serious damage done to anybody.

There isn't a more delicate or imaginative portrait of love than in **A Midsummer Night's Dream**. In this play Shakespeare

draws on many fairy tales and nursery legends he had heard as a young boy, as well as the established tradition of midsummer celebrations. There was a notion in his time that love is introduced and taken away by magic, hence the play of fairies at midnight and the magical setting of the play:

*I know a bank whereon the wild thyme
blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine
With sweet musk-rose, and with eglantine;
There sleeps Titania some time of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and
delight;*

A Midsummer Night's Dream was probably written to celebrate a wedding. The play starts with the announcement of a wedding and ends with a marriage ceremony for three couples – Theseus and Hippolyta, Hermia and Lysander, Helena and Demetrius. What happens in between is much the making of Puck, fairy king Oberon's servant who is using the juice of a herb 'love-in-idleness' to spin everybody into action, to confuse lovers and create fun in the enchanted forest where they all find themselves. Love appears to be a dream, kind of madness, introduced by the summer heat, a feeling governed not by reason but by fairy interventions:

The course of true love never did run smooth.

However irrational love is recognised by the characters as a transformational force. Because of its blindness and lack of judgement, love helps to bring out the best in each one of them as Helena admits:

*Love can transpose to form and dignity.
Love looks not with the eyes but with the
mind;*

The forest is a place of freedom and at night the lovers are free to be themselves. But Shakespeare reminds us that this is a bit of a dream and true love, however beautiful, is not always possible.

In Shakespeare's time there was a view that youth, beauty and love are short lived so they should be enjoyed while they last. And this is what the clown's song suggests in **Twelfth Night**:

*What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty;
Them come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.*

Just like in the other comedies, love in *Twelfth Night* is a game. It is never constant, is subject to suggestions, works its magic and not always results in a marriage. It makes characters love-sick and carries them through a labyrinth of confusing circumstances. Shakespeare pokes gentle fun around them and their attitude to love. Viola falls in love with Orsino at first sight, as well as Olivia with Cesario, Sebastian with Olivia. Only Sir Toby and Maria really get to know each other. Viola's love is genuine. But like most women:

*She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm I'the' bud,
Feed on her damask cheek: she pin'd in
thought;*

In contrast, Duke Orsino is in love with the idea of love. It was fashionable at the time that noble men should admire women's beauty from a distance and without really getting to know the objects of their desires (*'If music be the food of love, play on....'*), making them appear sick and melancholic.

Love in Shakespeare's plays, just like in real life, makes sometimes a fool of us. Malvolio develops a 'very strange manner' in his belief that Olivia has fallen for him. Servant Maria reports that he has been seen in yellow stockings cross gartered with a silly smile. Life enhancing qualities of love are captured by Shakespeare in another of the clown's song:

*When that I was and a little tiny boy,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain*

The playful theme is continued in **Much Ado About Nothing** where a clever jest tricks Benedick and Beatrice into loving each other by making them hear planted conversations. Their relationship doesn't start well, each one of them being a sober, down to earth person. Beatrice is not in a romantic mood:

*For, hear me, Hero, wooing, wedding, and
repenting is as a Scotch jig
A measure, and a cinque-pace; the first suit
is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig
And then comes repentance, and, with his
bad legs, falls into the cinque-pace
Faster and faster, till he sinks into his grave.*

Benedick is not far behind Beatrice establishing himself as a firm bachelor and 'professed tyrant' to women. Even when

they are tricked to believe the other is in love with them, they stay apprehensive and love is 'no more than reason'. Beatrice takes him 'in friendly recompense' and 'consumption', he takes her 'in pity'. Shakespeare's take on love in the play is modern and fresh.

Beatrice and Benedick's love has been developed as part of the complex plot of the broken and then restored romance of Claudio and Hero which causes a lot of 'do about nothing' in the play. Although in Shakespeare's times it was usual to suspect women of dishonesty and deceit, Shakespeare takes it a step further and writes about men's infidelity:

*Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more;
Men were deceivers ever;
One foot in sea and one on shore,
To one thing constant never.*

Love between a woman and a man in Shakespeare reaches its culmination in marriage, seen as a natural state of happiness – 'Prince, thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife' - Benedick advises his patron Don Pedro in Twelfth Night.

Shakespeare is very realistic in his view of love in Romeo and Juliet and the three early comedies. He has sensed its grand power and transformational force, but he has not yet given its right place in the grand scheme of things in life. This is what he does in one of his later tragedies. In King Lear Shakespeare mixes love and affection with the even bigger passions for property and power and sadly, it is not the love that triumphs.

'The Tragedy of King Lear' has become a symbol of family disintegration and the pain of losing the affection of close relations at old age. The depth of expression of tragic loss of love is striking in its comparison with the natural storm:

*Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage!
blow!
You cataracts and hurricanes, spout till you
have drench'd
Our steeples, drown'd the cocks!*

The themes of love and power are set on the background of the medieval patriarchal society where men are the rulers and the women follow – 'O, let not women's weapons, water-drops, Stain my man's cheeks'. However, society is captured in the process of change and Shakespeare's women are becoming more independent and free to express their true identity. Cordelia, the youngest of king's daughters, refuses to measure her love for her father in words:

True love cannot be put into fine words.

It could be argued that words are important when it comes to reassuring the old father of respect and understanding. Ultimately, however, it is through each of the daughters actions that true feeling is distinguished from hypocrisy.

On another level, the theme of tragic filial love is enriched with the lines devoted to the troubled relationship of Duke of Gloucester, his son Edgar and his illegitimate son Edmund.

The suffering, at times unbearable, of all the characters in King Lear takes on the proportions of a Greek tragedy, leaving the spectator with feeling of sorrow for the old king, and understanding the power of material temptations and the beauty of filial love. Just as in real life, Shakespeare mixes these feelings with thoughts on hypocritical love, unfaithful nature of women and the ugliness of false marriages

Theme of betrayal in Shakespeare

“To be or not to be” is a question that rose from the gut of the wavering prince of Denmark whose trust in mankind was betrayed by none other than his mother. There was poison in that mother’s heart. When she smiled serpents writhed in their mating pits. “Die, die,” hissed the serpents to the wavering intellectual. Death is the noblest consummation in the world of betrayals. If your mother betrays you, if she betrays her husband your father, what more is left in the world to be trusted? How many heartaches should we suffer before we can shuffle off our mortal coil? How many thousand natural shocks is our flesh heir to?

Shakespeare’s Hamlet asked those and umpteen other questions. In those days, before the god men and their women came with their poisonous smiles and marauding bulldozers.

I began with Hamlet simply because the other day I stumbled upon a website which provoked me to play a game named ‘Which Shakespearean character are you?’ and Hamlet was my lot. Okay. To be or not

to be is a question that only my death will answer. Betrayals are nothing new to me or Shakespeare.

Wasn’t Julius Caesar stabbed again and again? By his most trusted people? Was there ever a more agonised cry than *Et tu Brutus!* in the whole cosmos of literature? The cry of a man betrayed by his trusted friend. Stabbed in the back. *For the sake of righteousness! What is right, what is wrong, except in your thinking?* Hamlet would have asked Brutus.

Antony loved Cleopatra with his whole heart. Dick, with his whole heart corrects Hamlet standing in the graveyard holding up Yorick’s skull. If a man goes into the water and drowns himself, he’s the one doing it, like it or not. But if the water comes to him and drowns him, then he doesn’t drown himself. Therefore, he who is innocent of his own death does not shorten his own life. That’s Hamlet’s logic [Act 5, Scene 1 – paraphrased in modern English]. Did Antony drown himself or did Cleopatra’s variegated Nile swallow him? What is right, what is wrong, except in your thinking? Hamlet might ask. Yet betrayal was the cause of the deaths- both of Antony and his queen of lust. Betrayal is a denial of what holds the cosmos together. Betrayal is the negation of the gravitational force between you and me.

Lady Macbeth will go and wash her hands again and again. Gallons of perfumes brought from Arabia will not sweeten her hands. She betrayed human trust. She betrayed humanity with the confidence of

today's bulldozer. "Fair is foul, and foul is fair." She didn't listen to the warnings. And she is the only major character in Shakespearean tragedy to make a last appearance denied the dignity of verse. Such was her greed. Such was her lust for power. Such was her betrayal of humanity.

The genius of Shakespeare bid farewell to the world's stage on a positive note. His last play, *Tempest*, is not only about betrayal but also about redemption. It is about the brave new world of love that the young protagonists had supposedly discovered.

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ELTAI

The Annual General meeting of our Association will be held at 5.00. p.m on Thursday the 22nd December, 2016 in the Platinum Hall of the Presidency Club (opposite to Ethiraj College) Chennai.

Dr. K. Elango
National Secretary. ELTAI

Question Formation, Question Tags and Short Answers: A constructive way to Enhance Communicative Competence

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ABSTRACT

The present paper has a focus on some of the common errors our students make while using English, particularly in their speech. The major error is seen in the use of question forms and tag questions. The reason for this can be seen in their transferring the ideas from their mother tongue and translating it ad verbatim into English. This causes a genuine problem for the teacher and the paper introduces a few activities that can help us remedy this situation in our classrooms.

Keywords : *question forms, tag questions*

Introduction:

When the learners are asked to participate in any discussion or to take part in any role in English, they are unable to ask a question that is properly structured. They frame questions without making use of the subject-verb inversion rule for example, they say: “why you are late?” instead of “why are you late?” They often fail to use “Do-forms” or “Have-forms” to frame question. They say “anyone has two pens?” instead of asking “has anyone two pens?” or “does anyone have two pens?” Similarly instead of asking “do you have two pens?” they say “you have two pens?” comfortably by using a rising tone. The researcher has also observed that the invigilators asking the students, “anyone want additional?” It is just because of the influence of the mother tongue.

Such conversations continue due to lack of guidance. The teacher has to pick such sentences and write on the board in the classroom and discuss each one of them. Students may not tacitly be interested in improving their language proficiency in their early schooling years. According to research conducted by Gardner and Lambert, motivation was considered to be more important in a formal learning environment (Ellis 1997). M.J Benson says, learners’ “interest, aptitude and motivation for learning English and the chances of success in foreign language [...] depend to a large extent on the favourable attitude towards English language” (202). Learners should be encouraged to participate in different roles where they can use proper questions, short answers and question tags. “Motivation [...] plays an effective role in academic achievement among

students especially with learning English” (Abdelrahim, I 2012). Motivation and classroom interaction help the learners to acquire language skills. The present article focuses on the teaching of question tags, short answers and framing of questions in particular through group activity and quiz.

Background of the Study:

The researcher feels that the purpose of teaching question tags has become meaningless as it is confined to classroom only. S/he hesitates to say, but reveals that even some of the well-experienced teachers of English who have prolific knowledge use “right?” or “no?” as question tags in their general conversation. So, how do they train rather correct their learners’ English? The researcher knows that the usage of “no” as question tag is due to the influence of one’s mother tongue and has experimented with the learners from their conversation by asking them which “no?” Is it “No” or “Know” and the meaning of their sentence; and has made them practice using the right question tags. It is difficult, but possible.

Objectives of the Study:

- The first objective is to make the learners understand the difference between statements and questions and how to ask various questions using helping verbs, do-forms and have-forms.
- The second objective is to train them how to give short answers.
- The third objective is to get rid of the influence of the mother tongue and use appropriate question tags.

Methodology and Design of the Study:

The present research was designed to help the learners to improve their efficiency in using structures through group activity and quiz. During the activity the learners were given set of instructions to teach question tags or short answers or framing questions. The teacher had to decide to teach any of the two topics or all the three topics based on the availability of time and the competence of the learners. One of the factors influencing the learners in learning L2 depends on one’s motivation (Tuan, L. 2012). The researcher has experimented this, in the classes of Computer Science Engineering (CSE), Electronics and Electrical Engineering (EEE) and Information Technology (IT) branches in an Engineering college, Hyderabad and has succeeded in enhancing their competence in English.

The teacher has to choose the topic to be taught. If s/he has to teach framing of questions, the learner has to give appropriate questions to the given statements. For example, to the statement “I finished my homework” the question should be “Did you finish your homework?” taking care of the tense and verb. If s/he has to teach short answers, the learner has to give two short answers; positive and negative. For example, to the question “Do you like ice-cream,” the answers should be, “yes I do” or “no I do not” similarly, if s/he has to teach question tags, the learner has to give the right question tag for the given statement.

Participants and Duration:

A class of thirty learners for a one-hour-forty-minute period (lab) is ideal and if there are sixty learners, the number of chances given to each learner will be reduced. Here the researcher has taken an extra hour to make the learners better in a slow learners' classroom.

Materials used:

The study requires chalkboard; audio player and cassette; and handouts. The cassette should have the recorded conversation of the topic to be taught and the handouts with print versions of the conversation.

Procedure:

The learners are given a set of instructions on the topic to be taught. They are divided into four or five groups and care is taken so that there are advanced learners in each group.

Trial quiz:

The teacher should give instructions and ask first group to give a short answer or add a question tag. Each question is weighted and points scored are written on the board. If the first group answers, they get points or the question passes to the second group and so on. The weight of the question decreases gradually, as the question passes from one group to the next.

Real quiz:

After two rounds of trial quiz, a set of instructions are given to the learners for the real quiz. There are two stages in the

quiz. Stage-I focuses on the group when the learners can discuss and can give their answer within a specified time limit. Stage-II focuses on the individual learner, where there is no chance to discuss the answer. The learner identified has to give the right answer within the time limit. Once the instructions are given, the learners should be given five minutes of time between the stages, this procedure makes the slow learners involve in the game and better learning takes place with peer group discussion.

Stage-I:

One of the learners from first group asks a question to the second group and if they give correct answer they get the points or the question passes to the third group and so on similar to the trial quiz. If the last group fails to answer, the question should be answered by the first group and they get bonus points. If they fail to give correct answer they get negative points. The second question starts with the second group and the cycle continues.

Stage-II:

In this stage the first group should select a learner from the second group to answer their question if the learner answers correctly, the group gets the points. If s/he fails to give correct answer, the first group should select a learner from the next group every time to get the answer. If s/he answers, the group gets points or the question passes to the next group. If the learner from the last group fails to give the correct answer, the first group has to

give the answer with explanation to get points. If the first group also fails to give the correct answer they get negative points. Here the teacher should help the learners to make them understand in a better way. The second question starts with the second group, where they select a learner from every group to get answer and the cycle continues.

Evaluation:

Handouts are given to the learners with the instructions. They will listen to the audio text played back and underline the wrong questions and correct them; or circle the wrong question tags and correct them in the handouts. Most of the learners give appropriate response, which shows enhancement in their learning. The audio text helps them to listen and frame the questions correctly and also utter them with proper intonation. Thus the activity improves their pronunciation as well as knowledge of the structure of a question.

Result:

The learners were able to grasp the learning point very quickly and learnt to use appropriate question tags in their conversation. They also have enjoyed the activity and learnt to give correct short answers and frame questions properly.

Limitations:

- Time may not be enough to evaluate all the learners.
- All the three topics may not be taught in a slow learners' classroom. In such case topics should be split into two classes.

Conclusion:

Effective learning takes place and learners enjoy learning by participating actively in the quizzes, when the teacher plans his/her class as per the competence of the learners and the availability of time.

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One on One: Interview with Nicky Hockly

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*Is it possible for a technophobe to become a technophile? **Nicky Hockly**, a well-known educational technologies expert, English language teaching professional and Director of Pedagogy of The Consultants-E, shares her experience of how she has become not just a technophile but a techno expert and also answers various questions related to the need for integrating technology into language teaching in this interview with **Albert P'Rayan**.*

Nicky, many thanks for this great opportunity. You describe yourself as this: "I'm a reformed technophobe, now technophile!" You are not just a technophile but a well known expert in educational technologies. How has been your journey from being a technophobe to becoming a technophile and techno expert?

I've always loved teaching and training, and after about 10 years of being a face-to-face teacher, I started work as the Academic Director of one of the first fully online MA in TEFL programs. I suddenly found myself running this full MA program online, with real students, and no technical training whatsoever. So, I learned about technology the hard way. But I soon discovered that you can also teach effectively online, despite the technical challenges, and I started to really enjoy it! I don't think I'm a

'techno-expert' though. Everything I know about technology, I've taught myself, and I don't think I'm a particularly 'techy' type of person. I simply learn what I need to know about technology as I go along. I think the most important part is the *teaching*, not the technology. But in my experience, technology can enhance one's teaching, and more importantly, students' learning.

As an educational technology consultant, resource person, ELT materials writer, teacher trainer and plenary speaker for over two decades, you must have tasted successes. Would you like to share one important success story that you think will be useful to the readers of the Journal of ELT (India)?

I attended a teacher training conference in Hyderabad a few years ago, and just before that, I spent a week in Rajasthan with my husband. We visited a rural school that had no technology whatsoever, and when the headmaster discovered I was an English teacher, he asked me to teach a class of 12-year-old students on the spot! I couldn't refuse, so I taught the students a few useful English phrases, and got them asking me and each other questions to give them some practice with speaking English. It was clear to me that expecting to have access to technology in a context like this, where many students only come to school

because they are given a midday meal, is totally unrealistic. It reminded me that you don't need to have access to technology to teach effectively. Overall, it was a humbling experience – and I thought the students were wonderful, so keen and engaged!

Do you believe that technology can accelerate learning?

Actually, I've just written a book about this (*Focus on Learning Technologies*, Oxford University Press, 2016). I looked at a lot of the research that has been carried out using learning technologies with primary and secondary school students, particularly in the USA, but also around the world. Essentially, the answer to your question is – it depends. Some technologies (such as blogs), when used judiciously, do seem to improve learning outcomes. However, others (such as interactive whiteboards) don't automatically improve learning.

What impact do educational technologies have on English Language Teaching (ELT) in the twenty-first century?

Although more and more teachers are familiar with educational technologies, they are still not mainstream in many language classrooms around the world. There are teachers who think that it is necessary to have the latest, fanciest gadgets in class to teach effectively, but this is not the case. There is more awareness that things like digital literacies need to form part of the curriculum in primary and secondary schools, and not just in the English language curriculum. So there is more awareness of the opportunities that

educational technologies can provide, but teachers often receive little or no training in how to actually use them effectively in the classroom – and that's assuming they have access to educational technologies in the first place.

Do you think ICT will change the way we teach ESL and EFL in the future?

I think technologies can support communicative language teaching quite well. What I do think needs to change is the 'teacher standing at the front lecturing the students about the language' approach. But we've known that since the early 1970s and the advent of communicative language teaching. I think the most effective use of ICT is integrated into a strong communicative approach, with the teacher acting as facilitator and guide. This does happen in some schools, but is still far from widespread.

How important is digital competence for ESL/EFL teachers?

Digital literacies appear in primary, secondary and tertiary curricula the world over now, so it's important for everyone – teachers and students. Not just for English language teachers, but for everyone to be able to take part fully in our increasingly digital world.

As an educational trainer, how do you motivate teachers who are reluctant to integrate technology into language teaching?

When I run training sessions, I always first try to find out what the teachers'

attitudes to technology are. I've been doing tech training for almost two decades now, and originally many teachers felt very threatened by technology. Many still do, and this is something that needs to be listened to, accepted and respected, if you are to make any progress whatsoever with teachers. So, the first step is for teachers to feel listened to, and then the second step is to start to show them very simple technology tools that they can very easily integrate into what they already do in class. They soon start to see the potential of technology, in my experience. But the important thing is to start small, and to go slowly.

It is said that “if Facebook were a country, it would be the third most populous country in the world”, but it is still considered a taboo by many educationists. Can Facebook be used as a tool to enhance learners’ English language skills?

I always suggest to my students that they ‘like’ public English language sites that they find interesting, so that they are exposed to English outside of class in their own Facebook feeds. I also used Facebook a few years ago with a group of adult elementary level students in which we shared very simple homework assignments, links, and they carried out short language tasks out of class. It worked well with these adults who were already Facebook users, but with younger learners, issues such as privacy, and e-safety need to be addressed if you want to use social networking tools.

How effectively can social media tools

such as Twitter and YouTube be used to help ESL/EFL learners to develop their language skills?

It can be effective for some students, especially those who are already users of the social media tools. For example, watching YouTube videos can provide extra exposure to English, as can following English-speaking celebrities or news feeds on Twitter. But I don't think it's necessarily something for everyone; it depends on the students, their ages, and their interests.

Digital literacy is considered one of the 21st century competencies but still many educators have not realized the potential of digital literacies. Should educators be educated on the importance of digital literacies and on how they can bring digital literacies into the classroom?

Well, having written a book called *Digital Literacies* (with Gavin Dudeney and Mark pegrum), of course, my answer to this question is yes! That's exactly what our book tries to do.

As an EdTech professional, what challenges do you face?

Hmmm, none that I can think of! Except perhaps occasional resistance from teachers – but I find that once they start using simple technologies with their students, they soon come around.

What is your role as a technology consultant with the Cambridge University Press?

I'm part of a group of Consultants for the

Cambridge English Teacher platform. I have some videos and articles about integrating educational technologies into teaching on their website, and I also run webinars for them a couple of times a year.

You cofounded the company Consultants-E with Gavin Dudeney in 2003. Tell us about the company and its work.

We do three main things at The Consultants-E. We run fully online teacher training courses for language teachers interested in learning about how to use educational technologies more effectively. Some of our courses are aimed at classroom teachers, and others are for teachers who want to learn to teach English online. We offer a couple of scholarships each year, that your readers may be interested in (see <http://www.theconsultants-e.com/trainingonline/scholarshipsintroduction.php>).

We also offer face-to-face training, and virtual training for institutions (see <http://www.theconsultants-e.com/trainingf2f/>).

And finally, we offer consultancy services to educational institutions such as universities, language schools, publishers, and organisations like the British Council. Our focus is on helping these institutions integrate technologies and to develop strategic plans that ensure long-term and effective deployment of technologies. We've worked with quite a few well-known institutions over the years! (see our portfolio <http://www.theconsultants-e.com/consultancy/clientsandprojects.php>).

About your long association and collaboration with Gavin Dudeney, a well known educational technology consultant and a past coordinator of the IATEFL Learning Technologies Special Interest Group.

Gavin and I met while we were both working at Netlanguages, one of the first online English language schools, which was set up in 1996. Gavin was on the technical development team, and I was on the online materials writing team. We became friends, and realised that we had a good range of skills between us, with his more 'techie' background, and my more 'teachy' background, so we set up The Consultants-E together in 2003. And we've both been involved in the IATEFL Learning Technologies Special Interest Group – Gavin was the coordinator about 10 years before I was!

How important is the Society of Authors ELT Writing Award that you won for the book Digital Literacies in 2014?

We were of course delighted to get the award. Digital literacies is an often neglected area in English language teaching, so we were very happy that people's attention was being drawn to this important aspect of teaching and learning.

Nicky, your books Teaching Online (co-authored with Lindsay Clandfield) and Digital Literacies (co-authored with Gavin Dudeney and Mark Pegrum), were nominated for a British Council ELTON award in 2010 and 2013 respectively. Were you disappointed that you didn't

get an ELTON award?

Of course it's nice to win, but simply being nominated for something like the ELTON is a huge honour. Also, not winning means you don't need to make an acceptance speech, so that's the upside. Gavin and I actually won an Elton in 2007 for our online CertICT course, so we have at least tasted glory once!

Though over 80 per cent of today's world population own mobile technology and smartphone penetration in remote places is on the rise, m-learning is not so popular in many countries including India. What should be done to make m-learning more popular among teachers and learners in such countries?

Low-end mobile devices are probably the most pervasive technology in low resource contexts like India and elsewhere, so they are in fact a relatively 'easy' technology for teachers to use, because they are already there. However, a lack of training, and resistance by teachers, school directors, and even parents, can mean that implementation is not straightforward. If teachers are provided with good training, and schools are made aware of the benefits that a *judicious and effective* use of mobile devices in the classroom can bring, that's a good first step.

According to a recent report by Zenith (www.zenithmedia.com), mobile devices will account for 75% of global internet use next year. Do you think that the mobile technology will make learners less dependent on teachers in the

future? What impact will it have on ESL/EFL teaching?

Self-study English language learning mobile apps like busuu and Duolingo are popular, and can in theory help students learn English without a teacher. But a certain amount of self-discipline and sticking power is needed, and the dropout rates for users of these self-study apps is extremely high. So although these options are available to learners, many still like going to class, having a teacher, and socialising with other students.

It was believed that Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) would revolutionize higher education but MOOCs haven't gained as much popularity as expected. What could be the reasons for the waning popularity of MOOCs? What will be the future of online learning?

That's a big question! The British Council offered one of the first English language MOOCs a couple of years ago, and although thousands enrolled, dropout was high (as typically happens with MOOCs). Main reasons are the copious amounts of self-discipline and self-motivation required to take part in a MOOC. There are plenty of online language learning options for the learner to choose from though, from more formal language learning courses to informal self-study options like MOOCs and apps. I don't see the teacher being completely replaced by any of these online options though.

What is your message to the Indian teachers who are quite passionate about

integrating technology into English language teaching?

There are many free or low-cost opportunities for professional development available online these days. Join online teachers' groups such as the Webheads, or follow the IATEFL Learning Technologies SIG social media feeds (e.g. Facebook and Twitter), attend free webinars and online

conferences, take part in a teacher training MOOC... The most important thing is to make contact with like-minded teachers, both in India and beyond, and to try things out with students. There are so many opportunities for professional development and training available online these days – my main message would be to take advantage of them!

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Learning English is FUNtastic

Padmasini Kannan

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ABSTRACT

Globalisation of English has given a good impetus to the Indians to learn this language. However, the teaching/learning situation is far from satisfactory. The disadvantaged children face their own hardships as it taught in a rarefied atmosphere. The present paper provides details about a project undertaken to strengthen their spoken English in a crash 20 hours programme to equip the children with necessary speaking skills. As a pilot attempt, this project conducted in 'Home for Hope' through an interactive method and was found to be successful. The whole programme was divided into two parts and the present paper focuses on the first part and briefly explains the methodology that was applied.

Keywords : *language skills, L₂, fun-filled activities,*

Introduction:

Globalization of English has created a demand for learning the language professionally. This has in turn created a demand for L2 learning in all fields. However the lacunae between students from English medium schools and regional medium schools; urban students and rural students is widening by the day. This has created a significant societal barrier between students of different categories. Understanding this aspect, the Literary Seminary of the Department of English of Dr. M.G.R Educational and Research Institute University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, decided to extend a helping hand to the less privileged students. A minor project was taken up by the Convener and the members of the faculty to eradicate this gap through an outreach program.

Aim:

To strengthen the skills of students of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing through fun-filled activities.

Methodology:

The Children's Home of Hope near the University was selected for the study. The student population of this home was 87 students. The whole program was conducted for 71 students. The medium of instruction was both in English and Tamil.

Population:

All the inmates of Children's Home of Hope were divided in two groups based on their age. a. Group No 1:- 6-11; b. Group No 2:- 12- 18. All the inmates were girls.

The duration of the programme was for

a total of 20 hours spread across 5 days. Each day the students were engaged for about 4 hours.

The present paper reports the activities carried out for the first group in three days. These activities had a focus on helping the students get rid of their shyness and to promote their inquisitiveness to learn English with interest. A few students of the convener were selected to act as volunteers to teach and guide the students with the activities.

Activities- Group 1

a. Breaking the ice:

This was an interactive group activity which enabled the students to get to know the volunteers who were teaching them.

The rhyme “Jack and Jill” was selected. The students were made to recite a rhyme and notice the pronunciation and the rhythmic pattern in which it is recited. The children joined hands with the trainer to sing the song with action. Then they were asked to repeat the song by clapping their hands instead of saying the word “and”. This activity was done to test their observation and listen to the instruction. Though some of them failed in the first attempt, they managed to be successful during repeat programme and the joy was boundless when they became successful. So they understood their learning will be filled with fun. They got the idea about how further learning would take place.

The whole activity took 45 minutes though it was planned only for 30 minutes.

b. The Big Picture:

The big picture is an immersion activity for students. Students were divided into groups of three. The volunteers gave instructions and were present to guide them if they went wrong or even if one was inactive, the volunteers were very careful to use simple English while giving instructions. The children responded in their own language. Each team was handed over a piece of paper with a picture on it, this picture was a part of a bigger picture. The students had to reproduce the picture on a bigger scale on A3 paper. The objective of this activity was to involve them as a team and build in them team spirit thereby increasing their involvement in the programme. A healthy competition ensued that helped them complete the picture in less than 45 minutes.

c. Direct-translation technique:

The schools in India especially in Tamil Nadu introduce English in the first standard and they learn the language till they complete higher secondary course. However, English at all levels is taught as another content subject and not as a tool of oral and written communication. The L2 learners are not competent in syntax and semantics, and hence face problems of comprehension which is detrimental to producing conducive environment for acquiring language. It was therefore decided to adopt direct translation method in oral English and point out the errors of learning a language in this way. The following table highlights some of the problems faced in direct translation without adequate knowledge of the target language.

S.No	Tamil	English
1.	Ni ena seigirai	You what doing
2	Nain pa:dam ezhudigirein	I lesson writing
3	Pesadei keizh	No talk,listen
4	Potu pa:dugirargal	The sound making sing

As the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) method was one of the good old methods adopted by the linguists to teach L2, the same method was tried here also.

Students were asked to translate the mother tongue terms directly and replace them with words in English and rearrange them to form meaningful sentences. The goal of this activity was to reduce the time taken by them to think, translate and arrive at proper sentences in English and form sentences. It aimed to point out the structural differences in their mother tongue and English. Though many were happy that they could translate, a few understood that this was wrong. Three students could say that the sentence did not have verbs.

The whole activity took place in **30 minutes**.

After a break of 30 minutes children were re-assembled to go further into learning sentence structure and vocabulary

After a brief recapitulation they were asked to write on the blackboard the translate sentences with original mother tongue sentences. Surprisingly they could discuss and recollect in groups and write the sentences. Based on this further teaching took place.

d. Sentence structure and formation:

This led to the next activity of forming correct sentences. The objective of this activity was to help students form meaningful sentences by teaching them the structure and formation of sentences which are grammatically correct.

The following sentences were formed:

1. What are you doing?
2. I am writing a lesson
3. Don't talk, listen
4. They talk loudly

After writing these sentences on the blackboard, they were asked to compare the previous sentences with the present ones.

1. They understood the pattern of a question
2. The need for SVO pattern
3. Imperative sentence
4. The use of proper vocabulary

The whole activity took **60 minutes**.

e. Four Balloons:

The whole programme made them serious

and they started to wonder whether they would be able to master it. To ease their doubt, a playful activity was conducted to make them learn vocabulary. The volunteers did not go to the dictionary to cite the words but they were given a packet of 4 balloons per team of four. Each balloon had a letter which was revealed on blowing air inside it. Students had to stand inline to form words with the letters on their balloons. This activity helped them increase their word power. After forming a word one from each group would explain the word either through a sentence or miming its meaning.

The play-way learning took place for 40 minutes as it was very difficult to gauge their enthusiastic participation. They were eager to find out what scores others had achieved.

Feed back:

The feed back was collected by the convener

1. They liked the volunteers who taught and guided them.

2. Sentence structure was difficult for them
3. They wanted to improve their vocabulary
4. Some of them really wanted to come out of translation method
5. The new interactive methodology was preferred by them
6. They wanted to know when they would once again get a similar opportunity to learn.

Conclusion

This experiment which was conducted on a small group can be replicated in similar contexts on a wider scale. It can also be statistically established that the play-way method yields better results. The limitation of this study lies in not paying much attention to the control group. Efforts are on to expand the experiment in a more conventional research set up to reach out to challenged learners at large.

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Using Tablet PCs to Develop Engineering Graduates' Employability Skills

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ABSTRACT

Technology and learning shares a symbiotic relationship and their right integration improves students' overall performance. Although academic brilliance plays a significant role in an individual's holistic development, the role of various life skills cannot be ignored in their overall employability. One of the most common technology tools, Tablet PC offers a powerful way to enhance student's employability by improving various essential skills. While poor employability imposes difficulties for functioning in all areas of life and represents a problem in the modern working world, developing these skills through technology integration is likely to be an important solution to the risk of employability. The present paper offers strategies to enhance graduates' employability through the use of tablets PCs in technology education.

Keywords : *Employability skills, Communication skills, Tablet Education, Engineering graduates*

Introduction

In the age of digital literacy, there is tremendous usage potential of new touch interface-driven devices, such as tablets, with a new pedagogical approach to support students to use the technology as learning tools. Academic institutions have started to identify tablet education as having the power to really transform the performance, knowledge and skills landscape. A recent study in India revealed that the employability outcome of Indian engineers sees no massive progress as over 80% engineers continue to be unemployable (National Employability Report, 2015-16). Although the very basis of such surveys are questionable but it is an eye-opener for us and calls for a need to bridge the gap between a rather academic education system and the

realistic demands of the modern workplace by developing 'employability skills' among Gen 'Y' graduates. Employability includes both hard and soft skills, including formal and actual competence, communication and interpersonal skills, and personal characteristics that employers are looking for in any employee. Classroom activities can be greatly productive in an environment where all the students have a tablet PC and receive the teacher's instructions, quizzes, assignments and feedback electronically. Tablet education empowers students to know more and learn faster. It provides information from a large variety of sources and increases access to knowledge. In view of the various benefits of tablet education and mobile learning possibilities, this paper proposes to show how essential skills such

as communication skills, critical thinking, analytical skills, behaviours and technical skills can be developed to enhance employability opportunities of technology graduates' and make them industry-ready.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

a. Communication Skills

The survey 'The National Spoken English Skills of Engineers Report - 2015' finds that poor English speaking skills are limiting the employment and earning prospects of India's Engineering graduates. Most students are not 'industry ready' because they lack communication skills (Infosys, 2008). Employers who took part in NACE's Job Outlook 2013 survey, ranked communication skills at the top of the skills they seek in potential employees. Integrating digital technologies into literacy education will equip students with the new language skills needed for reading, writing, and communicating in digital environments. Tablets may provide potentially useful opportunities for literacy classrooms through digital, interactive books. For example, downloadable books allow students to read text with audio support, word-by-word tracking, and picture animation, highlight text, take notes in the margin and access a dictionary directly within the book itself thereby improving their reading and listening comprehension skills as well as note making and reference skills. Also, the use of text to speech software will help to practice language, and translator software helps to find certain words when speaking in classes. Showing them videos of selected speeches, group discussions, debates etc. followed by a classroom discussion

on observations and analysis will help the students to learn various features of public speaking. Additionally student's performances in the classrooms can be video recorded and shown to them later. Similarly, with options for the reader to further interact by recording and replaying their own voice with the text will improve speaking skills in the form of diction, pronunciation and accent.

b. Critical thinking and Analytical Skills

Tablets can be downloaded with case – studies and scenarios through which language teachers can help technical students to develop their analytical skills. Students can view, observe and analyse these cases at their own pace and discuss analysis in the class rooms in Think-Pair-Share mode. Each case study may have an attached study guide, where students will be asked a series of questions to guide their thought processes and decision-making. The study guide may also include a possible solution, where student can compare their solution with that of the authors of the case. Such scenario- based learning emphasize not only on active learning and problem solving but also foster team work among students.

c. Personal Attributes

Although the possibility of developing soft skills through tablet education is not yet explored, but the use of tablets in the class room certainly improves various individual attributes. The tablet computer will make the students pay more attention in the classroom and concentrate better on learning aspects. The tablet computer will prevent boredom in learning and

improve the student's skills in either playing brain games or solving puzzles and simple problems. These are termed as higher order thinking skills in the parlance of today's education. It will help the students become familiar with new technology which will encourage creativity. Tablet PCs effectively increase interaction between students working in pairs, and promote positive interdependence for the students. Surveys conducted at one university revealed that students report an increase in their attention with the Tablet PC (Brophy and Walker, 2005) and their confidence related to applying concepts learned in class when using the relatively easy notes sharing capabilities associated with the Tablet PC (Cunningham, Sexton, and Williams, 2009). In a study of engineering students, Amelink, Scales and Tront (2012) found that high users of the Tablets were significantly more likely to indicate that they employed self-regulated learning behaviors including: Organization, Metacognitive Self-Regulation, Critical Thinking, Rehearsal, and Peer Learning.

d. Conceptual Skills

Tablets are effective devices in engineering education since they allow digital note taking and sharing of handwritten notes, development of eLearning applications incorporating handwritten examples, classroom presentations which can integrate handwritten notes and most importantly in-class collaboration between faculty and students with portable PCs. Students can write freeform symbols, structures and equations and work through problems, take notes, organize class materials, and store these materials electronically for

future use or for submission to the faculty. With the use of tablets, students can study at their own pace, discuss the meaning of concepts that are being taught, access the online resources and develop a deeper understanding of the material than if they had "crammed" the material on their own from private publishers' study guides. Earlier researches (Frolik and Zurn, 2004; Moore and Hayes, 2008) reported that capabilities associated with the Tablet can assist engineering undergraduates who are enrolled in courses that cover material that is often mathematically and graphically intensive. A pilot study was conducted by Clemson university (2009) between the two groups of engineering students, one group working on paper and the other on tablet PCs. Frequency of actions such as talking, writing, reading and listening as well as scores on relevant test questions and in-class assignments were not significantly different between the two groups. However, significant differences were observed between students working on paper and tablet PCs in terms of how often students were actually focused on each other rather than working alone (36% for Paper vs. 50% for Tablet). Students in the tablet group agreed more strongly with the statements, "Collaborating with a partner on problems helps me understand concepts in this class," and "I paid attention most of the time," compared to students in the paper group. In a study by Department of Electrical Engineering at Virginia Tech (Tront, 2005), ninety percent of the respondents indicated that the digital exercises helped to clarify and solidify the demonstrated concepts.

e. Numeracy Skills

Numeracy or quantitative skill is not just

about competency in manipulating basic number skills. Numeracy is the knowledge and skills required to effectively manage and respond to the mathematical demands of diverse situations (Ginsberg, 2006). It involves developing confidence and competence with logic and reasoning, and requires an understanding of how data are gathered and presented in diagrams, graphs, tables and charts (Graphic organizers). These skills which employers value from any technology graduate are the part of many employee selection processes. Apps with study material covering ample number of numerical problems along with discussion of their solution may be installed on tablets. Here, clicker software may offer great opportunities in resolving quizzes, puzzles related to mathematics and such assignments in the classroom. Such interventions will boost up competitiveness among the students to do better and will prepare them for written tests conducted by the companies during campus placements and enhances the possibility of their placements.

Conclusion

At workplaces, different employability skills are often used in conjunction with one another. The required skills often overlap and are necessary for any task, for example, completing a job might entail gathering and analysing information; using number or mathematical skills; reporting; using computers; working within a team setting; and possibly demonstrating some initiative (Townsend, 2008). The 2010 Horizon Report highlighted that, with mobile computing on the near horizon, “sense-making and the ability to assess the

credibility of information are paramount ... digital media literacy continues its rise in importance as a key skill in every discipline and profession” (Johnson et al., 2010). Here incorporating tablet education gives a clear employability advantage to be gained from better engagement and collaboration, more confidence, decreased ‘time to learn’ and enhanced skills and knowledge retention. Bringing devices such as tablets into the classroom and everyday life of students will in itself be a great learning experience. This coupled with the resources a tablet computer can deliver, such as text and reference books, audio and video resources, internet research, document preparation and review, and specific eLearning applications and activities may offer better educational value. With the use of tablets, m-learning is possible everywhere and anywhere, dependent only on battery life and wi-fi access, but although the technology may aid learning, “the way a technology is used cannot be determined until it is actually used by real people in real settings” (Sharples, 2007). Moreover, in order for tablet education to make a positive change, it is equally important the faculty must revise the way they teach so that their students get the best learning. Using tablets in less typical scenarios, such as developing employability skills offers opportunities for research, evidence gathering and presentation.

Suggestions for future research

The present paper provides way to integrate Tablet education in order to improve employability of technical graduates; however, there is further need for empirical results to substantiate

the same. A focused study to develop and assess employability skills may be conducted on two different groups of students; one with-using and second group without-using Tablet PCs and comparing the ratio of campus placements and selections among the two groups may pave the way to innovative learning strategies and practices in this field.

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BOOK REVIEW

Samantray, K (2015). *Academic and Research Writing*. Hyderabad. Orient Blackswan. ISBN 9788125060253 (pp 146: price Rs 115/-)

Writing has been a topic of concern at all levels of language teaching. There has been adequate research to find reasons for inherent reluctance to take to writing readily. We spend less than 10% of our communication time for writing and this is abysmally low. Given this situation, the teacher's concern to help learners with good writing skills becomes a daunting one. A teacher not being proficient in writing needs as much help in writing as the learner.

The book under review has a focus on teaching writing at the tertiary level and is appropriately titled *Academic and Research Writing*. However, the subtitle declares that this is a course book for undergraduates and research students. When one reads through this book, one finds that it is better suited to research students than the undergraduates. Though undergraduates are involved in project work and creating reports, the actual research in all its seriousness happens only at the postgraduate level. At this level, what is discussed in the first few chapters may help the learners revise their knowledge and serve as a remedial course before launching on research writing?

The book is well organized in nine chapters. The first chapter which is an introduction provides a panoramic view of the book and helps the learner become familiar with different parts of the book and their uses.

The next two chapters of the book are

devoted to mechanics of writing where the author discusses grammar and vocabulary. A chapter on mechanics could include some aspects of graphology which is unique to English, especially so when compared with Indian languages. For example, Indian languages do not use capital letters; most of the letters have a uniform size; Indian languages have different types of strokes, the spacing between words and compounding of words follow different conventions in Indian languages; traditionally Indian languages had only two punctuation marks the full stop and the comma represented by two vertical lines and a single vertical line respectively. The wide variety of punctuation marks we use have been adopted from the western literature more recently. A word about this would be well in place.

Chapters four to six focus on different aspects of academic writing. What needs to be appreciated here is that the author has paid more attention to aspects of discourse rather than form of writing. She discusses in detail the concept of 'text structure' and 'paragraphs'. The order could have been reversed from point of view of gradation and logic. Focus on discourse is a very happy departure in the days of the computer when templates are readily available for writing letters, reports etc. The form has less importance in comparison with the content. Therefore the author rightly devotes her attention to the content development without harping on the need for a fixed proforma.

The last three chapters are devoted to research writing and cover a wide range of topics. In my considered opinion, this is an important part of the book and the author could have devoted more space for this. The topics covered include form of the research report (here form is essential), the writing style, different sections of writing a research article, formalities to be observed while submitting a paper for publication, reviewing research, quoting from other sources (primary, secondary and tertiary) and providing a bibliography. Each of these topics has been discussed properly with good examples and this needs to be commended.

More than the contents of the book, the manner in which the book is written and organized conveys more than what is intended. The author has put across her ideas in a very lucid style. The language is simple and direct and there are no hurdles in understanding the content. She advocates the advantages of using a simple language without preaching about it. The concepts about writing which are introduced are not simple. Concepts like use of appropriate sentence structure (formal language employed for academic writing as opposed to personal writing - see pp 28-29) in academic writing, paying attention to coherence while developing a paragraph (the basic unit of writing) (see chapter 6), referencing and citation (see pp 79 -84) are not only well explained but are adequately supported by good tasks. Throughout the book there are 47 task types with good rubrics and properly graded items. Each task type has a number of activities and

each one has been well thought of. This makes the book totally self-instructional and learner-friendly. With the help of a teacher the learners get better guidance.

Though the author has provided a number of tasks in the book, the author has chosen not to provide a key to these tasks. I consider this as a minor weakness. As one can see many of the tasks are open-ended and cannot have a definite answer. But there are tasks e.g. Activity 3.3 (pp24-25); Activity 4.4 (pp30-31); Activity 5.1 (pp39-40); Activity 7.2 (pp 70-71); Activity 7.7 (p 86); Activity 9.3 (pp114-115) (these are just a chosen few, there are more activities like these) which have specific answers. A key to such activities will help the learners and also the teachers in a big way. A key is an essential source of verification and has a right of place in any good course book.

The book carries two appendices. The first of the two appendices is highly relevant as it provides a blue print of a dissertation. A word of caution could have been provided here suggesting that the blue print is recommendatory and not mandatory. This is to avoid duplication of the same format dissertation after dissertation. The second of the appendices is a compendium of common errors and is generally helpful to students.

The book is a good addition to the student bookshelf.

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READING ACTIVITY

READING MAGAZINES (skimming*)

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- Objective** : Enabling readers to read fast employing strategy such as skimming.
Participation : Individual
Material : Any magazine (weekly, biweekly, fortnightly, monthly such as The Week, Frontline, India Today, Outlook, Business India...so on published in India)
Preparation : Attempting to read any article in a magazine as quickly as possible to get a general idea of it, ignoring the details.

Procedure :

- Choose a magazine of your interest, (e.g. India Today*), and look at the number of pages and the articles it carries in an issue.
Most adult readers spend only about 30 minutes, either at one go or at different points in time. Within that time limit it is not humanly possible to read the entire magazine in detail. Yet, to get a sense of reading the whole magazine, seasoned readers resort to the technique of skimming.
- Skimming generally follows the steps mentioned below: (as fast as possible)
 - Reading the title of an article,
 - Reading the first paragraph completely and continuing to read only the first sentence of each paragraph and ending with reading the entire last paragraph,
 - Reading the boxed items, highlighted parts, headings and sub-headings, and
 - Looking at the pictures, tables, graphs, if any.
- After skimming an article, read the same article again as one would normally do to check whether one has got all the significant details. If yes, one has the ability to skim and if not, one has to keep practicing this technique till acquiring it.
Skimming can usually be accomplished at about 1000 words per minute (WPM) and it is about 3 to 4 times faster than the normal reading speed.
- Move on to the next article you intend to read and follow the skimming technique. If you got all the important details and a sense of having gone through the entire article, keep resorting to the same method of reading to cover the whole magazine.

Learning outcomes:

- 1) Learners realize that most of the articles in a magazine can be read only by skimming and not by reading word-by-word due to lack of time.
- 2) Learners recognize that they can acquire this reading strategy only by employing it as frequently as possible.

Further activity: One should consciously adopt this strategy not only for reading magazines but also for other texts depending on the purpose of their reading.

***Skimming:** It is an effective reading strategy employed when one is faced with reading lots of materials in a limited time. Skimming is reading to get a general idea of a text, ignoring the details.

***India Today** is the largest selling English magazine in India with a circulation of more than 1 million copies. A weekly of 66 pages, costing Rs 40/- carries about 10 features, each running into about 3/4 pages with big colour pictures spanning about 4 columns and other highlights. Each feature is about 1000 to 1500 words. It also has its regular features such as the editorial on the first page, contents page, mail, upfront, glass house and advertisements. Besides, it carries excerpts from books, book reviews, glossary and eye catchers to cater to diverse interests of readers.

To read the entire magazine one would require about 150 minutes, keeping 250 WPM as the normal reading speed. But, on an average as a reader spends about 30 minutes only skimming can give a sense having gone through the entire magazine.

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