

NEWSLETTER

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FORUM FOR TEACHERS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE



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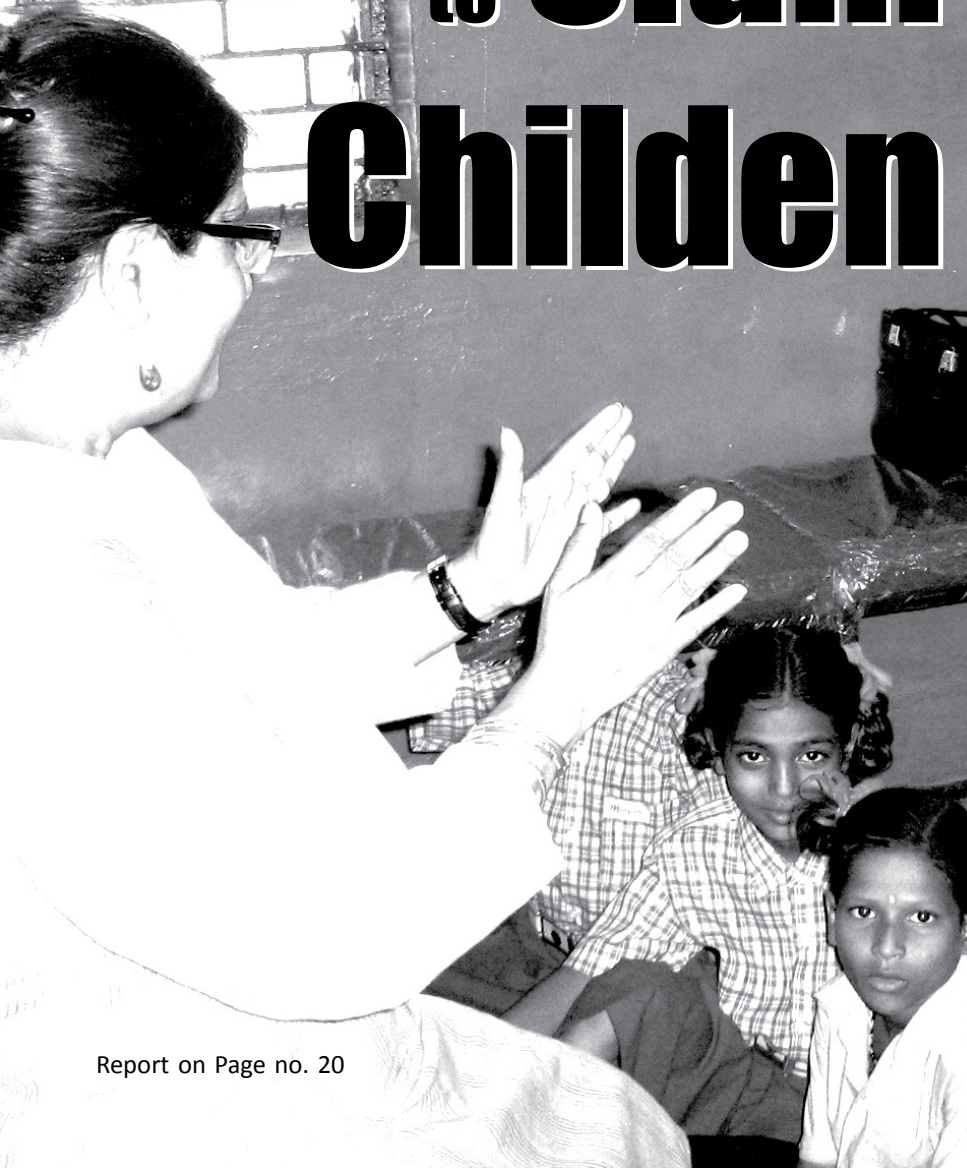


Story Telling



to Slum

Children



Deepawali Greetings
to all members

Two Decades of FORTELL

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Continuous Cumulative Evaluation in CBSE

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Who's who in FORTELL

FORTELL 2009-2010

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EDITORIAL

From the Editors

FORTELL celebrates with great joy twenty years of its existence. It is a matter of pride and accomplishment for an autonomous organization like us when independent bodies wrap up within no time. However we can not sit complacent and bask in our past accomplishments, instead we need to look ahead at the tasks lined up for us in future. Dr. A.L. Khanna in his article Two Decades of FORTELL in the present issue highlights some of these concerns.

We need to remind ourselves of the goals and aims with which FORTELL was established. It is time for introspection and impartially review our position as a body in academia. If we are to maintain and strengthen our image, we need to get active in chalking out and implementing programmes at regular intervals both at school and college levels.

We must mobilize our human resources to organize seminars and workshops that encourage interaction, participation and discussion. Our studies and experiments with students and teachers should be classroom centric so as to facilitate a confluence of teaching and research. As we celebrate **two decades of FORTELL**, all of us need to renew our sense of commitment to it and work

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together as a team towards our aims.

The FORTELL Executive and Editorial Committee express its regret for not being able to bring out the print version of its newsletter in September 2008 and January and May 2009 due to paucity of funds. However, we did succeed in bringing out the e-version of our September 2008 issue. After that, despite the efforts of the editorial committee, there was hardly any response from the members, and it became clear that members were keen to send papers only if they were published in print.

The editorial team has decided to make fresh attempts to find sponsors and advertisers to help us in our mission and revive the newsletter. We have also decided to raise money from the services we provide to schools and other educational institutions. There is a proposal to increase our annual and life membership fee. Since the newsletter is the most visible and circulated form

through which FORTELL marks its presence and attracts new membership, we request all our members to join us in this mission of raising money to bring it out.

Other than keeping the newsletter going, we have been discussing for a long time of bringing out a journal or converting the newsletter into one. Let us pool our resources, material and intellectual, to turn this into a reality. Working together as a **dynamic team** we can concretize this long standing dream of FORTELL. At the same time we must also revive the work that was done on the two monographs. Perhaps the best gift that we can give to our organization on completing two decades is to infuse strength and vibrancy into the publications that come out under the FORTELL banner.

Michelangelo said, "The greatest danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short, but in setting our aim too low, and achieving the mark". So let's make an action plan of what all we need to do, of our unfulfilled goals like preparing modules that can be used for ELT workshops, building up our list of teacher trainers and resource persons for conducting workshops in educational institutions. By evolving reliable and situation-specific materials we can strengthen our image as a professional body of teachers or to use the language of globalization, a "brand" that academia will recognize and welcome.



Rachna Sethi



Shefali Ray



Barun Misra

ARTICLES

Two Decades of FORTELL: past present and future

A.L. Khanna

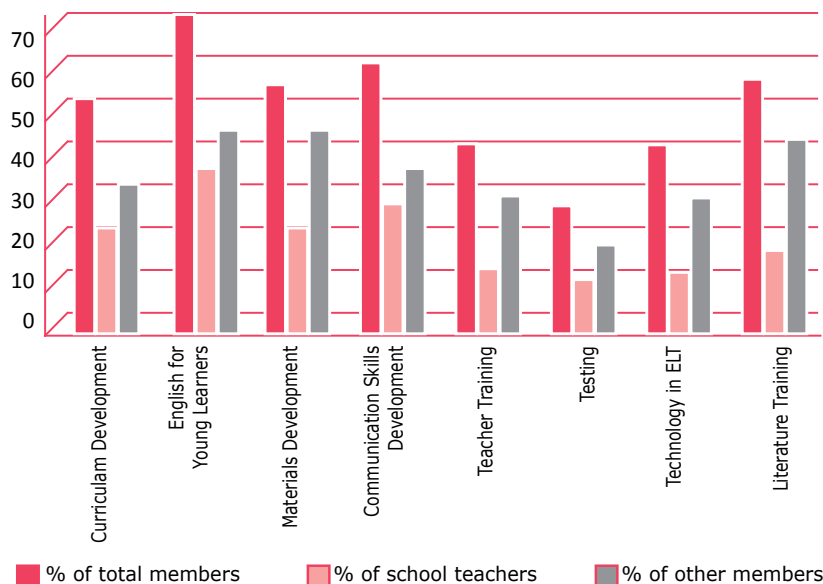
FORTELL has come a long way since September-October 1989 when it was founded at the School of Correspondence Courses and Continuing Education, University of Delhi. The idea of the organization of teachers of English took concrete shape at a seminar on distance education led by Professor John Merritt of the British Open University. On the last day of the seminar the participants decided to call it FORTE INDIA, but subsequently it was rechristened as FORTELL (FORUM FOR TEACHERS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE) to make it explicit that teaching of English included literature as well as language. The specific aims and objectives of the organizations were to

- Revitalize the teaching of English Language and Literature
- Enhance professional skills of teachers
- Provide a forum for collaboration and interaction among the professionals in the field

In order to achieve these aims and objectives the members decided to

- Organize seminars and workshops in the areas of teaching methodology, materials development, curriculum design and evaluation.
- Collaborate with other organizations to develop language curriculum.

Professional Interests of FORTELL Members

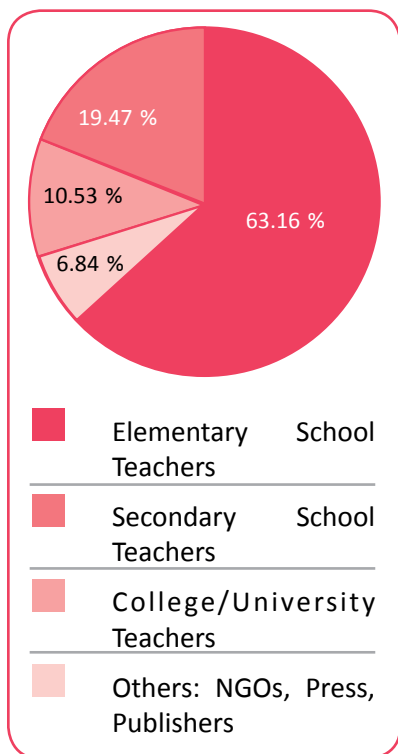


* The views expressed in the articles by the authors in this issue do not reflect the views of the editors.

- Conduct pre-service and in-service programmes.
- Provide consultancy to individuals engaged in ELT programmes.

FORTELL at present has nearly 250 life members from all over the country. Most of the members are from schools, colleges and universities. Some of them are educational institutions, publishers dealing with English language and literature textbooks, NGOs and freelancers working in the field of education.

Profile of the members



Members have a very wide range of professional interests. English for young learners, Developing Communication skills and Literature teaching are their dominant interests.

During the last 20 years FORTELL as a group and its members in their individual capacity have been organizing seminars and

workshops on a variety of topics in schools, colleges and universities. Some of the areas that they have focused on include the following:

Seminars

- The Narrative: Strategies for teaching and evaluation, teaching of literature (poetry, drama and translated texts)
- Teacher development
- Learner independence
- Issues in evaluation/testing of language and literature
- Using newspapers for classroom teaching
- Teaching of writing and speaking skills
- Teaching of grammar in context
- How to be an effective resource person
- Business communication
- The narrative: teaching and evaluation techniques
- Strategies of vocabulary building

Workshops

- Writing skills for upper primary teachers
- Evaluation at the primary and post primary levels
- Worksheets development for upper primary level
- Creative writing for developing language skills
- Capacity building of English teachers at the primary and post primary levels
- Developing pre-literacy activities/games developing oral skills
- Business English
- Text book development

FORTELL has a very large number of scholars who are well known in the field of language, literature and linguistics. The number of their presentations is so large that it would be futile to list them here. A few of FORTELL's members have attended courses to update their knowledge in the field of teacher training and materials production. FORTELL community has benefited from their latest acquisitions in the field of language pedagogy. Here is a list of some of them that are available in the records of FORTELL:

Shefali Ray attended a course in Teaching English to young learners from the University of Baltimore, USA in 2004

Soma Bhattacharjya attended a two week course on material development for language teaching organized by the Leeds Metropolitan University, UK, from July 25- August 5, 2005

Tara Chadha attended a six day HORNBY seminar on Teacher training at Chennai unit of the British Council, from March 20-25, 2006.

Awards

Mukti Sanyal of Bharati College, University of Delhi attended the Educational and Cultural programme in Los Angeles and 41st Annual TESOL Convention in Seattle, USA March 2007. (sponsored by the Regional English Language Office, US Embassy, New Delhi.)

A.L.Khanna was awarded scholarship by the Regional English Language Office, US Embassy, New Delhi to participate in TESOL 2-5 April, 2008 Convention in New York.

Global Advocacy Award

It is very heartening to note that one of FORTELL's nominee Dr K.Lakshminarayana, IAS, Commissioner of Collegiate Education, Andhra Pradesh was selected for TESOL 2008 Global Advocacy Recognition Award for his unique contribution for improving the communication proficiency in English of the undergraduate students of Andhra Pradesh colleges by updating the teaching skills of English lecturers. He was invited to the TESOL Convention in New York in 2008 for receiving the Award.

FORTELL's other Achievements

Affiliations

FORTELL is now internationally known. It is affiliated to IATEFL and TESOL-two of the most widely known International Associations of English language teachers. FORTELL has also been able to get its 15 members the benefit of getting IATEFL's journal VOICES at a highly subsidized rates under IATEFL's Wide Membership Scheme(WMS).

Kolkata Chapter

FORTELL has expanded beyond the territory of Delhi. It has several members in different parts of the country. These members contribute regularly to the newsletter and report the activities that they carry out under the aegis of FORTELL. Now FORTELL has a Chapter in Kolkata which has more than 25 members. The Chapter is very active and has its own Office bearers eg. Programme Coordinator, Finance Coordinator and Newsletter Coordinator. The chapter brings out a newsletter too from time to time.

FORTELL Newsletter

It publishes a 32 pages long newsletter thrice a year, which includes besides reports of the seminars, workshops and other activities organized by it and its members in their individual capacity, articles, interviews, book reviews and profiles of eminent scholars from India who have made significant contribution to the teaching of English language and literature. It also includes activities and games that practicing teachers have tried out in their individual classes and found them highly successful. Some members feel that it is as good as a journal and therefore it should be elevated to the position of a journal.

WEBSITE

FORTELL also has a website that provides profiles of its members, e-versions of Newsletters, and details of the seminar/workshops and other activities. It has a section named Archives that provides details of FORTELL's activities from its very inception. We propose to make it more dynamic by including language teaching resources that will benefit the practising teachers in their day to day teaching. We also propose to include brief reviews of books that all teachers of language and literature need to look at to update their knowledge in the field.

Networking with other Associations in the Region

FORTELL wishes to network with Associations in South Asia. It has already established some contact with SPELT (Society of Pakistan English Language Teachers), NELTA (Nepal English

Language Teachers Association) and SLELTA(Sri Lanka English Language Teachers Association). Madhu Gurtu sponsored by the British council, New Delhi attended the First Conference on South Asia Meeting of Teachers Association was held at Colombo, Sri Lanka from February 10-13, 2004.This meeting was attended among others by representatives from India, Nepal, Pakistan, Maldives and Bangladesh. Soma Bhattacharjya attended the Second South Asia meeting for Teachers Association held at Bournemouth, UK from June 20-25, 2004.It was once again sponsored by the British Council, New Delhi. Tulika Prasad attended a Seminar on Increasing the impact of English Language Teacher Associations from June 20-25, 2004 Bournemouth, UK(sponsored by the British Council, New Delhi)

FORTELL proposes to gradually interact with the other Associations including BELTA (Bangladesh English Language Teachers Association) and ELTAI(English Language Teachers Association in India) in the region and gain an understanding about what they have done towards the professional growth of their members, and also the innovations they may have made in ELT.

Policy Change

In response to the growing importance of English in the job market many states in India have introduced English in schools from class I. But most of the schools, particularly in rural India, do not have even the minimum number of teachers necessary for making teaching of English possible. Some members of FORTELL have

started networking with the organizations that are working in education in the rural sector and have organized some workshops to have a hands-on experience of the situation before anything worthwhile could be proposed and tried out. After our preliminary investigation it is felt that the situation for learning and teaching is fraught with lots of difficulties because the persons who are willing to undertake teaching of English have generally not studied beyond Senior Secondary class and there is hardly any one in their village whom they could consult in times of difficulty. Their speaking and reading skills are minimal. FORTELL needs to intervene in this learning situation and teach English through a multilingual approach to second language teaching, where the home language and learning context are taken into consideration while planning any teaching materials. The emphasis is on using the home language of the learner as a resource for learning English. Learners are made to feel that home language can co-exist with the new language being learnt. It develops English as an alternative tool to enable learners to express their views and feelings and to make them participate in the world around them.

We need to undertake classroom research at all levels, more particularly at the primary level because the expansion of teaching of English at the level has been maximal and therefore the expertise of an organization like FORTELL is needed most here. FORTELL needs to harness all its resources and develop teacher training packages

that can be used to train the teachers at the grass root level. At present there is a complete vacuum at this level. The teachers have no clue about what method to use for teaching effectively to the first generation learners. FORTELL could liaison with the community and bridge the gaps between the state level resources and the resources available within the community. FORTELL should also collaborate with the SCERTs (State Councils of Education Research and Training) of the state in which they may decide to intervene.

FORTELL also needs to cater to the needs of our members in colleges and universities. We need to organize workshops and seminars for faculty enrichment. We could collaborate with college and university departments of English in Delhi and outside Delhi and organize Orientation programmes for teachers of English. We could also publish a journal that will fulfil one of the long cherished needs of the teachers at this level. We could also publish one or two monographs in a year.

Presidents and Secretaries of FORTELL

1. Prof. S.K.Verma President.
Dr. N.K.Jain, Secy. 2 terms.
2. Dr. S.C.Sood President.
Dr. Madhu Gurtu, Secy. 2 terms
3. Dr. N.K.Jain President.
Dr. A.L.Khanna, Secy. 2 terms 2004-2008
4. Dr. D.K.Pabby President,
Dr. Mukti Sanyal/Dr.
Himadri Roy 2008-2009
5. Dr. A.L.Khanna President,
Ms. Rachna Sethi, Secy.
2009 -2010

Funding

It is unfortunate that what we have done during the last twenty years is a very small fraction of what we could have done with so much rich human resource available with us. One of the barriers that we have faced is the finance. We have absolutely no funding from any organization. We have survived on life membership, money from some ads and also sponsorships. We must acknowledge our gratitude to Vidya Bhavan Resource Centre, Udaipur for sponsoring our newsletter from 2004-2008. But for their financial support we would not have been able to bring out the newsletter regularly. After Vidya Bhavan Resource Centre withdrew its financial support in April 2008, we had no one else to bank on for our publication venture. We had to discontinue the publication of our newsletter. We could not print our September 2008 though we did succeed in putting it on the FORTELL website. But the subsequent issues of January and May 2009 were not made possible because of financial reasons. We are gearing up all our efforts again to print the newsletter because we feel that the newsletter is the life line of FORTELL. All those who have read the newsletter are always keen on receiving the next issue.

We have decided to raise funds from various publishers and advertisers to help us bring out our Special issue. We must learn to market our organization by selling our products and services, be it teacher training, organizing workshops and seminars, materials production, curriculum design, and other

related areas. I strongly feel we need to generate funds by holding workshops in schools at a price. I am sure schools will be very happy to pay us for the service that we provide to them by way of training their teachers. FORTELL needs to approach this task professionally; we need to develop teacher training modules that will be need-based and viable in terms of time and money. Another very important source of increasing our finance as well visibility is to enroll more members. We must look for sponsors who would fund some of our activities and projects. We must also rope in more and more private schools, institutions and universities and collaborate with them on their projects for materials production, assessment and evaluation and building teachers' proficiency in English.

Structural changes

In order to be more effective we must organize into small groups working on different interest areas and make presentations of our work in our seminars. This will increase our credentials and we will be sought after. We must build zonal networks and make the organization and its products and services accessible to our clients. We have made some effort in this direction. We have already appointed joint secretaries for various Delhi Zones to cater to the needs of Delhi teachers who are working in far off places. These Zonal joint secretaries propose to provide feedback to us about the needs of the English teachers in their respective zones.



*A.L. Khanna, Formerly
Reader in Rajdhani College,
University of Delhi.*

Teaching English to Young Learners

S.C.Sood

Rama Mathew's article 'Teaching English to Young Learners: Need for Introspection' (Fortell Newsletter 13, Jan. 2008) has come at the right time as this topic has been attracting attention of the academics and the authorities for some time now.

Rama Mathew lists two areas for 'introspection' : Teachers and Syllabus. I agree with her but only to an extent. These two areas need rethinking not so much because everything is wrong with teachers and syllabuses in government schools but because of the nature of learners these teachers face in their schools. Most of the teachers in government schools, particularly the younger lot, barring a few exceptions, are as competent, if not more, as teachers in private schools. Why then do teachers and content-based syllabus prove successful in private schools but fail in government? Surely, there must be other factors that contribute to this failure and hence there is need for closer scrutiny if we are serious about teaching English to young learners in India, particularly those in rural India.

What then are these factors and what implications have these for policy planning, syllabus designing, recruitment and training of teachers, material production, and methods

of teaching English to these young aspirants in government schools?

Of course there is a vast difference in the facilities and infrastructure in private and public schools. But the most important factor is the kind of young learners and the socio-economic background from which they come. They are first generation learners of English mostly from socially and economically backward classes and hence from poor learning environment. At home there is neither proper learning environment nor is there someone who can help them with their studies. Many have very little time to devote to their studies after school hours as they have to help in supplementing the family's income. A vast majority of them do not have any reading material at home in either L1 or the target language (TL).

It is this target group of learners and the task of teaching English language to them that forces us to do 'introspection' not just about our teachers and syllabuses but also about our teacher training, teaching methodology, materials and testing techniques. What must we do to give them the language of empowerment in society?

English may be an L2 for India but, for the vast majority of these learners, English is a 'foreign'

language and so introducing English medium for all would tantamount to feeding chicken and fish to an infant who needs mother's milk. But introducing English as a subject from class I would be a sane suggestion and then we ought to work out pedagogy for bringing them at par with private school students over the years. English ought to be given more weighting and not treated at par with L1 in terms of time given to the subject. Setting up optional pre-school system for 3+ should be considered in collaboration with private partnership seeking to do charity and not business in education. Inequalities are created by our education policy: we have regional medium schools and English medium schools; private expensive schools side by side with ill-equipped state schools; expensive pre-school classes and government model schools; central schools, sarvodaya schools and navodaya schools and what not to cater to the diverse needs of our people. This policy has both advantages and disadvantages. We can only make an effort to reduce inequalities and help those in the lower rung to move upward!

Can teachers with the present system of training such as NTT, B.El.Ed. or B.Ed. be suitable for teaching English to these learners? Rama Mathew's suggestion about recruiting teachers whose own proficiency in English is good is a laudable one and so is her suggestion about holding orientation for them from time to time. But is this not being done presently?

These existing teacher trainings

are heavily loaded in favour of allied theoretical subjects with a comparatively little component of teaching of English. Training of teachers of English language ought to have teaching of English as core with only as much of other disciplines as is necessary for the teaching of English. I think it is necessary to produce teachers dedicated to teaching English language with qualifications like PGDTE, DELTA or similar other certificate/diploma qualifications with the main focus on teaching English to speakers of other languages and equipped with skill for cooperative training and self-development.

I also think that we need to rethink about our methodology and class-room interaction and re-visit some old practices that now stand discredited though these did produce students proficient in English in the past. Even at the risk of being branded outmoded, old-fashioned and obsolete, I would plead for a rethink on some of these old practices like 'read first' focus, use of L1, translation, dictation, structural readers and teaching grammar.

'Speech first' I feel is not compatible with the need for English of an average learner in this group - at least not initially to begin with - and the circumstances in which we have to teach this language to the masses. My aim is not to question or belittle the communicative approach with emphasis on 'spoken skill' but to question the wisdom of applying 'speech first' to these learners.

There are dangers of over-

enthusiastic application of packaged methods originally devised for quite different circumstances. The functional notional approach arose primarily out of the work commissioned by the Council of Europe in 1949 for cultural and educational cooperation among European countries. With the increasing inter-dependence of European countries came the need for greater efforts to teach adults the major languages of the European Common Market and the Council of Europe. Education was one of the Council's major areas of activity and its aim was to enable adults to communicate and interact with speakers of other languages either in a foreign country or in their native land. The adult learner included future workers in foreign countries, tourists, or people engaged in academic, cultural, technical, or economic activities. In their interaction with foreigners, they needed to perform primarily through speech such functions as those proposed by the Council of Europe.

When Functional - Notional Approach was attacked precisely on those grounds on which it had criticised the Structural Approach, others came up with alternatives to functions and notions such as situations, tasks and activities to achieve the same objective, that is, to give learner communicative competence in speech in real life situations. But the emphasis has always been placed on 'speech first' as this was their primary need in teaching English to speakers of other languages.

Is this so in the case of most of

our young learners and should we base our teaching focusing on this skill and on priority basis? I feel that we may not be able to create conditions necessary for giving proficiency in spoken English in our average schools since this requires the performance abilities of the teachers to be of native or near-native standard. This is a condition impossible to fulfil in schools in rural areas where almost 80 per cent of the population reside and also in many government schools meant for the masses in towns and cities. In the words of Howatt (1985:288), the demands made on teachers' socio-linguistic competence can be very heavy and we are short of such good teachers in areas where they are needed the most. Besides, one needs a second party, another interlocutor, to practise language use through communicative activities. Most of our learners cannot, therefore, practise conversation in English outside the classroom for want of a suitable interlocutor in their immediate surroundings in day to day life.

In view of the above, I suggest 'reading first' focus for these young learners with teaching of writing and other skills. In foreign language teaching programmes for older learners the principle of 'reading first' was advocated on grounds of methodology and usefulness by Marcel (1853). If Marcel suggested 'reading first' on ground of methodology, Michael West (1926) proposed it on ground of its 'surrender value' and Coleman Committee Report (1929) on practical considerations. Like Michael

West, the Coleman Committee also felt that the goal of trying to teach conversation skills was impractical in view of the restricted time available for foreign language teaching in schools, the limited skills of teachers, and the perceived irrelevance of conversation skills in a foreign language for the average students (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:11) - factors all true in our case as well. Learners can practise reading skills even when there is no other 'interlocutor' immediately available and helps in self-learning. This does not mean that 'reading first' would not be extended to other skills of the language: writing, listening and speaking.

'Reading first' continued to be practiced in American schools and colleges for foreign language teaching till World War II when it was replaced by 'speech' for army personnel dire need was proficiency in speech. We must not forget that teaching was quite successful when it used insights gained from behaviourist theory of learning and structural linguistics, later dubbed as irrelevant by advocates of communicative approach. So it seems what matters most is the right understanding of the learners, their needs and the prevailing teaching-learning situation to work out our priorities.

Similarly, there is need for a 're-think' on other issues I have mentioned. Though we cannot take up all of these in this short article here, but perhaps we can initiate a debate on them. One important area for debate is the use of L1 and the use of

translation for teaching L2. I have seen foreign languages such as Italian, French, German and others being taught by using English as the medium of instruction and translation as a technique and wonder why English cannot be taught by using our new young learner's L1 at least to begin with in lower primary classes. Of course, research is required to devise materials and methods to find how traditional view of grammar-translation can be modified and adapted in the light of new findings about the nature of language and the nature of language learning to give proficiency in TL.

We have also thrown out from our schools teaching of grammar explicitly and now grammar, if at all it is taught, is taught implicitly through tasks and activities. Is teaching of grammar really 'a waste of time' in L2 teaching-learning situation? Do we not say that there are two ways of learning a language: by focusing on form and by focusing on meaning? Have we proved conclusively that in our L2 learning situation, it is impossible or even difficult and time-consuming to move from focus on form to focus on function? In an L2 situation where learners do not have opportunities to communicate in speech outside the classroom, is it not appropriate to spend time both on form and meaning in the proportion deemed necessary in a given situation?

We must not think in terms of 'either'/'or' when it comes to teaching of English to these disadvantaged learners. Instead of talking of content vs. skills, we

can perhaps think of a judicious combination of both. We used to have such a combination - and private schools still have it - comprising two papers in each class one of which was devoted to English language skills of writing, summarizing, note-taking, and so on and the other to testing of prescribed content again with a component of unseen texts.

Scholars and researchers can take sides and ride the latest band wagon but teachers have to grapple with realities in the classroom. My intention in this short write up is only to suggest that we revisit old practices and see if some of these could be adapted to meet the challenge

of teaching English to our new group of young learners and the circumstances in which we have to teach them. At least we must not throw away a practice without closer scrutiny in our L2 teaching-learning situation and adopt a new one just because it has succeeded in L1 learning situation.

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S.C.Sood was a Reader in English at Dyal Singh College (Even.), D.U.

Generating Classroom Interactions Through Task-Based Materials

A. Joycilin Shermila

While producing materials the teacher/course designer has in mind certain objectives. He expects those materials to generate classroom interaction, which leads to the realization of those objectives. The expectations from the teaching materials in language classroom are multiple and complex as many variables in the form of teacher expectations and learner expectations interact. Therefore, in order to decide on the aims and objectives of the teaching materials one has to look at the target group, i.e., the learners and their needs. In other words,

the nature of the material emerges from the analysis of the learner's needs. As Breen says, "The classroom is the meeting place or point of interaction between the pre designed syllabus and individual learner syllabuses. The interaction will generate the real syllabus-or the syllabus in action-which is jointly constructed by teacher and learners and learners together". (Breen, 1984: 50)

In the present context the target group is a set of linguistically and socially disadvantaged tertiary level L2 learners and the material is prepared in

order to cater to their linguistic needs. The following are certain pedagogic principles followed in the designing of the material.

1. The teaching materials should be relevant, meaningful and interesting so that it attracts and sustains the interest and interaction of the learner.
2. The material should generate classroom interaction, as the process of interaction itself is the real product expected out of the materials.
3. The material should bring about in the classroom a preoccupation with meaning

and an effort to cope with communication.

4. The pedagogic procedure of handling the material in the classroom should develop in learners a grammatical competence which is deployable in the sense that "it comes into play in direct response to a need to communicate.... and, when deployed, capable of achieving grammatical accuracy". (Prabu: 1987:16)
5. The teaching material should offer opportunities not only to promote meaning making capacity but develop meaning conveying skill. The comprehensible input i.e., the reading and listening activities should empower the learner to yield comprehensible output. It should help them produce language.

A task-based material built around the game of cricket was constructed with the above principles aimed at drawing the passive disadvantaged L2 learners into an active and interactive language learning experience. The underlying principle is to set challenging pieces of language works for these learners, who, on completing it, get to use (gradually) the target language and its grammatical systems in meaningful real situations without consciously realizing that the target language is being exercised.

Pre-task

You know children play cricket in the streets, even in the narrow lanes.

They do not have a proper kit

to play yet they manage to play cricket.

How do they imitate cricket in the streets?

Do you have any such experience?

This pre-task was attempted as a whole-class activity, under the teacher's guidance and control. The basic format of this teacher-class interaction was in the form of question and answer, which ensured constant feedbacks from the learners. The class was divided into three groups to work on the following sub divisions.

- The place children choose to play cricket.
- The things children use for bats, stumps, ball, etc.
- The way they decide on runs and dismissals.

Those who volunteered were asked to report, and reporting called for verbal communication. The teacher helped by means of techniques such as offering alternative responses for the learner to choose from, expanding inadequately formulated responses, offering necessary lexical support and thus reducing learners' difficulty in verbalization. Those who were reluctant to speak were encouraged to interact through simple question-answer method and were offered lexical and structural support. Thus a general understanding was given to the learners that they had to meet the challenge and in case of difficulties in verbalizing their thought process they had the right to draw on the teacher's help. In the process the teacher interacted with the learners to

make them aware of certain basic facts and vocabulary about the game:

- the shape of the ground
- the persons (umpire, wicket-keeper, fielder, etc)
- materials used in the game.

Task – Listening

The teacher put on the blackboard the model of a cricket ground with field placements (the position of the fielders were worded). The teacher gave a running commentary of an over. The learners were directed to make a copy of the sketch on the blackboard and mark the direction of all the six balls.

- The ball is driven towards the long on; the batsmen cross for a single.
- It is a beautiful square drive between the third slip and the mid field. The ball races to the boundary.
- It is a slow ball. The batsman plays it defensively along the crease. The bowler collects it.
- A lifted shot; the ball sails over the mid off; a good chase; collected just two yards inside the boundary line; two runs.
- Ohh. It is a big hit. Straight into the long on pavilion.
- The ball is high in the air; the wicket keeper doesn't make a mistake. The third wicket falls.

This is an individual task. At the end of the task the learners were encouraged to speak about the direction of any one of those six balls as marked in the model. It was noticed that the words

and structures the learners used were quite different from those used by the teacher. It made the teacher conclude that the learners were trying to cope with the task of verbalization from their current lexical stock.

Task – Speaking

The students were given the following table of a one day score board.

Bowler	Over	Maiden	Run	Wicket
Zaheer Khan	10	2	42	2
Anil Kumble	10	0	48	2
Harbhajan Singh	10	3	45	1
Ajit Agarkar	10	2	54	2
Irfan Pathan	5	0	22	1
Yuvara Singh	5	1	24	0

The learners were asked to attempt continuous speech through a code shift activity. The non verbal item is converted into a verbal exercise. Naturally the students were interested in continuous speech because there is an element of repetition in it. However it is not a mechanical repetition because the numerals, verbs and other lexical items change according to the place. For example the word “took” or the word “bowled” can be replaced by the word “sent down”. Moreover the learners are advised to use the expressions economical, expensive etc., quiet meaningfully so as to fit into the performance of individual players. This recurrent activity has the following pedagogic values –

- It makes the learner confident in speech.
- As scaffolding is provided the learners are encouraged to speak.

- As there is an element of creation with words learners are thrilled at their own production.
- As structure is repeated meaningfully they get embedded into the LAD (Language Acquisition Device).
- It is a very good way of making the learners deploy the newly acquired vocabulary.

During the experiment the teacher experienced the above mentioned salient features of recurrence activities in a task based situation.

The teacher interacts with the learners to elicit the language chunks needed for describing the ways of losing a wicket. The following language chunks that issued out of the interaction were put on the blackboard in the process of the interaction, which are definitely a source of lexical and structural support needed by the disadvantaged learners for producing language of their own.

- hit the stumps
- collect the ball
- before reaching the crease
- off the bat
- defending the ball
- drives the ball

Though it is a task based material and the methodology is communicative, the teacher expects the learners to acquire both communicative and grammatical competence. This reconciliation necessitates relevant exploitation of the content of the material and use of a suitable methodology.

The learner has to internalize certain structures without being subjected to mere provision of structures through any non-communicative methodology.

Grammatical Consciousness Raising Activity

India lost a crucial one-day match against Sri Lanka. It is attributed to various reasons. *They are given below:*

- They conceded many extra runs through wide and no balls
- They did not select to bat first
- Three catches were dropped
- They did not restrict the flow of runs in the first 15 over
- Tendulkar did not play well
- Indians lost their confidence

Task

You wish India had won the match

According to you what are the three ‘ifs’.

Example

India would have won the match if ...

When the material is presented this way noticing the recurring structure in itself becomes the task for the learners and raises the learner’s grammatical consciousness. Such a presentation facilitates the process of observation and internalizing by the learner without the rigors and weariness of direct grammar teaching and structural drilling. The teacher expected that the learners would internalize a particular structure-‘if’ clause third type-through his teaching material and the

expectation was fulfilled with the willingness of the learners.

In the teaching of grammar, technique - resource combinations are often modified to structure-discourse match and if well developed, they can be used effectively for all phases of grammar lesson. In order to make a grammar lesson effective, beneficial and interesting a teacher should use some well-developed and fascinating techniques in the classroom.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Articles (not exceeding 1500 words), Reports, Language games, activities, Letters to the Editor, Book Reviews etc. are invited for the January 2010 issue. Last date is November 15, 2009.

Please send your contribution along with your photograph and a brief write-up about yourself, in not more than 25 words to Dr A.L.Khanna, Coordinating Editor, Contact address: amrit.l.khanna@gmail.com

Capacity Building of Teachers of English:

An Intervention in Non-formal Education Centres in Rajasthan

Falguni Chakravarty & A.L. Khanna

Introduction

Today, English has become a global language and it is a symbol of people's aspirations for quality in education and a fuller participation in national and international life. The visible impact of this presence of English is that it is being demanded today by everyone, right from the initial stage of schooling.

This aspiration for learning English however is no longer confined to the metros. It is fast spreading to the remotest villages of India where everyone wants to learn English on a top priority basis. Therefore, the NGOs working in these areas have taken the initiative of preparing teachers in their Activity Centres with a level of proficiency in English that would help them impart minimal levels of literacy in English to the children coming to these centres. It is also being used as a bridge to help these children gain admission to the government run primary schools where a minimum literacy level in English is expected of a child seeking admission to Class 1.

The desire for learning a new language notwithstanding, a critical situation confronting the NGOs and government schools today is the non-availability of competent teachers to teach English. It is a well known fact

that a very large number of teachers who are responsible for teaching English, lack proficiency in those very skills of English which they are expected to build among their students. Since States have already decided to introduce English from Class 1 without building the desired infrastructure for its effective implementation, some NGOs have taken it upon themselves to conduct workshops in capacity building of their teachers. One such NGO working in the remote tribal villages of Udaipur and Rajsamand districts in Rajasthan is Sewa Mandir, with its base at Udaipur.

The present paper will carry you through a complete workshop that was conducted to train some teachers working in these Activity Centres. This paper will include the objectives, the profiles of both the teachers as well as the students, the syllabus that was prepared keeping the above profiles in mind, the pedagogy that was envisaged and the material that was developed. It will also discuss the degree of success, feedback of the participants and the follow up.

An Exploratory Visit

In order to have a first hand understanding of the target population, we decided to have an exploratory visit in the area

where these activity centres were located and also have some idea about the potential of the teachers and the learners. During one of our visits, in addition to several things, this is what we experienced:

“We left the National highway leading to Mount Abu at a crossroad and took the narrower road to our first halt, a hamlet in Badgam block. Goats tied to posts and a few cows grazing nearby greeted us. We parked our vehicle right in front of the hut that served as the NFE centre. A few children greeted us at the door with shy namastes, bending down to touch our feet in reverence. With expectant eyes and wide grins, they waited for us to begin.

We did not want to disturb their class, yet we had to complete our task. We made the children sit in a circle and asked them to name all the objects around them. We also showed them pictures that we had carried along, waiting expectantly for that magic English word that we were so eager to hear from them! Sure enough, very soon they named a few words as they had heard them before *firaak* (frock), *boll* (ball), *colour*, *diary*, *capy* (copy), *paper*, *boot*, *chaak* (chalk), etc. Their vocabulary was good, eh!

I then said that I would give a few commands in English which they had to repeat after me and follow. Every word that I said was rendered perfectly by the little ones and the actions done to perfection. I was amazed, for they seemed to enjoy the sounds of the new language and were able to repeat what they heard,

as they heard it! Therefore, if English could be taught well, here we had a bunch of children who would benefit immensely! I was excited at the prospect of being able to prepare activities and modules for them. But how and who would be disseminating the language skills was something that bothered me. For, if we were to rely on the *masterji*, a young man of the same village who was a ‘9th Class pass’, I feared all our effort would be wasted. It was therefore important to first train the *masterji* before proceeding further.....”

This visit gave us a substantial picture of the socio-economic background of the NFE centres, teachers and the learners.

Socio-Economic Background of the target population:

Profile of the Region:

This area is predominantly a tribal belt characterised by extreme deprivation and poverty. The primary occupation of the inhabitants is animal husbandry and wage labour. There is no electricity in most of this belt. Regular water supply is not available and water is obtained through wells, hand pumps and ponds. Drains and sewage systems are not in place. Most of the houses are ‘*kuchha*’ houses. Most of the hamlets are off the highway where narrow, ‘*kuchha*’ roads are to be found. Buses which are very few in number and carts are the only means of public transport in most of the villages. A typical village would consist of a group of huts, a small place of worship, a community centre, and a tea

stall –cum–grocery store near the bus stop. A health centre and education centre may be present in some villages but they are characterised by derelict service providers and low quality. All the educational centres in the tribal areas are single teacher schools.(from Class I to III).The government schools are slightly better equipped in terms of teachers. English newspapers and magazines are not available in these areas. There are no hoardings or advertisements in English and it is encountered only on the National Highway where some signboards and directions are given both in English as well as in Hindi. People of different castes and religious groups do not live together in one locality. Different communities reside in different hamlets. The villages also see seasonal migration of children for work.

Profile of the Teachers:

The average academic qualification of a teacher in the NFE run centres is from Class 8 to Class 12.They have not gone through any formal Teacher Training programmes. However, the teachers in the Government schools are graduates who have undergone some formal Teacher Training. English is not spoken by the teachers. Although many of them can read and write English, they cannot comprehend difficult and complex sentence structures. Their vocabulary is also very limited. In the interior areas there is no scope to encounter English even on wrappers of soaps and biscuits. Due to the lack of basic amenities, even radios are not available. But wherever radios are available, some teachers do

listen to and can comprehend English commentaries of cricket matches.

Profile of the Learners:

Most of the children are from families living below the poverty line where the income is supplemented by wage labour. Houses are 'kuchha' houses; cooking is done on a 'chulha' using wood. Some families keep domestic animals like cows, goats, buffalo and sheep. An average family size would be around 7-8 members.

Both parents are mostly illiterate. While fathers may migrate to nearby towns and cities or even neighbouring states for work, mothers are sometimes involved in wage labour in their villages. Children may also migrate for work. For most children, Hindi is not their mother tongue. A majority of them are first generation learners, not only in English, but also in Hindi. There is little scope for them to encounter both the Hindi and English written scripts.

The NGO Sewa Mandir, wanted us to intervene in the NFE Centres on a long term basis and asked us to prepare a syllabus for teaching English to the students for a year. Keeping the limitations of the teachers and the students and the lack of resources in mind, and also in keeping with the National Curriculum Framework 2005 as desired by the NCERT, a pre-literacy curriculum was envisaged and a one-year syllabus was drawn up so that children could build up a working knowledge of the English language.

Preparation for the Workshop

Since no resources whatsoever were available at the centres or in the nearby villages and markets, all the material had to be created and prepared before the workshop. This, we thought, would go a long way in helping the teachers to develop similar teaching aids subsequently. An artist was engaged to prepare

Flash cards and charts appropriate to the environment of the teachers so that they were not dissuaded by unfamiliar pictures and scenes. All the teaching aids in the form of replicas of actual objects were procured to make the task more authentic. The following materials for games were also developed

- Chinese Checkers using pictures
- Dice with pictures for vocabulary development
- Hopscotch for recollection of vocabulary
- Categories for recollection of vocabulary

Course Content

Based on the syllabus drawn up for one year for the children, it was decided to train the teachers in the following skills:

Vocabulary

Make them learn the names of things in their environment in English with correct and intelligible pronunciation.

Speaking Skills

- Teach them to give commands and instructions in English.
- Focus on pronunciation through intensive drill.
- Practice action songs, rhymes and similar sounding

words.

- Make them read aloud and understand very small texts (including directions, instructions and notices in public places).
- Read aloud short stories with stress on correct pauses, intonation, expression and pronunciation.
- Role play
- Listening Skills

Carry out commands and instructions in English.

Reading Skills

- Reading aloud short texts with comprehension
- Silent reading and comprehension
- Matching pictures to words
- Comprehending texts available in the community or encountered in daily life – texts on wrappers, medicine strips, food cartons, etc.
- Awareness on instructions and signs used in public places like 'Don't spit here', or 'Use Me' etc.

Writing Skills

- Translating encircled Hindi words into English
- Bi-lingual stories
- Describing a place (My NFE Centre) in a few sentences
- Describing an animal (My pet) in a few sentences

Elementary Grammar

- Concept of 'this' and 'that'
- Prepositions
- Verbs
- Nouns
- Adjectives

The Workshop

The Capacity building workshop in ELT was conducted from 23rd October 2007 to 28th October 2007 at Kaya, Udaipur. The workshop was spread over six days from 9.30am to 5.30 pm with a short break for lunch. The environment was unique as the class was situated in the midst of a forest with langoors and other animals for company. All the participants and the resource persons conducted the workshop sitting on 'durries'. In all, 51 NFE teachers from five Blocks of Sewa Mandir participated. In addition to these teachers, there were 11 staff members who also participated. The NFE Instructors (participants in the workshop) were selected on the basis of a very elementary selection test comprising of vocabulary, listening, speaking, and reading skills. All the teachers were males except for six female instructors who were members of the staff. The age group of the teachers varied from 25 years to 45 years. The average academic qualification of the teachers was between Class 8 and Class 12. A handful of them were graduates. The resource persons were Dr. A. L. Khanna and Mrs Falguni Chakravarty.

Methodology :

Most of the sessions were interactive where the teachers learnt everything working in pairs or groups. After a general demonstration, the participants split up into their respective groups and practiced all the language skills within and across groups and also played various games. They also prepared materials for the subsequent

sessions which were displayed in the classroom. In addition to this they also participated very actively in role-play and occasionally they were also made to give individual presentations before the entire class.

Every morning, before commencing on a new session, a feedback of the previous day's activities and other things proved to be very useful to the resource persons.

Feedback

Opinions about the Activities

Based on the participants' responses to the questionnaire which was administered to them to get their feedback, the following activities emerged as the most favoured or the least favoured ones.

From the graphic representation, one can infer that:

- Rhymes and Action Songs were the most popular, easy and interesting, followed by Commands and Sounds of the alphabets.
- Bi-lingual stories and Asking Questions to each other within and across the groups were also favoured by many.
- The activities that require fluency both in the reading as well as written language seemed to be the least favoured.

Comments/Observations of the Participants

The observations at the end of the workshop were very encouraging. All the participants enjoyed the training tremendously. Some of the comments are given below:

1. "I enjoyed the training session and hope it can be conducted at least twice a year. However, I would like the trainers to focus on 'sentence structures' and 'tenses' in the next workshop."
2. "Most of the material taught should be available to us in the form of charts and flashcards with transliteration."
3. "All the activities were simple and easy and we will be able to do them in our respective centres."
4. "The resource persons had new and interesting activities every day. This way, we looked forward eagerly to the activities and participated wholeheartedly."
5. "The activities should be designed in a manner that each and every member of a group participates and is evaluated individually."
6. Initially the handful of teachers who had attended the exploratory workshop in August seemed to tower over the rest of the group, but by the second day, all the participants were brought on an equal platform. This was very encouraging.
7. "The tremendous energy level of both the resource persons at the end of the sixth day was indeed remarkable and needs special mention."
8. "It will be very beneficial if a Handbook of all the activities can be prepared for us so that we can carry them out in the proper way."

Follow Up

A beginning has been made which has helped greatly to break the inhibition with respect to communicating in English. Although it was envisaged to have at least two workshops every year, due to some administrative problems at the other end, a formal follow-up could not be carried out.

However, Dr A L Khanna, one of the resource persons, in one of his visits to three NFE centres after six months, noticed a visible change in the learners in two of three centres. Children were able to recognize pictures, name them and also recite rhymes quite comfortably.

It is hoped that similar training programmes are taken up in

future by NGO's and other organizations but with consistent efforts to take them to their logical end.



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Grammar in context: Exploring listening activities

Kirti Kapur

The statement "You don't teach grammar to very young learners but you can help them discover meanings." (Slattery and Willis, 2001) makes a case for the distinction between "teaching" grammar and encouraging students to "acquire" it. The central premise of this pedagogical approach lies in the fact the grammar is inbuilt in the text. Also, meaningful contexts have components of grammar in them which help better recall and assimilation as opposed to teaching grammar in isolation. Just as children pick up the grammar of their respective mother tongues by being exposed to the whole language, similarly, when exposed to the second language as a whole and its repeated usage, they pick up the grammatical structures and language patterns of the second language.

Knowledge about grammar can be promoted through activities which encourage children to explore the language used in texts, reflect on their

own usage of language, and most importantly apply their learning through using language in meaningful contexts. For example, the teacher can ask simple questions about the learners and the things around them: What are you doing? What is your favourite colour? Where is the bird perched? Why are you laughing? And so on. Initially children listen to grammatically correct sentences and gradually these become part of their language and vocabulary as the teacher helps the learners create questions. Generally, students do not ask questions, they only answer questions asked by the teacher. To make the class learner-centered, the learners should be encouraged to ask questions because asking questions is as important as answering them. Then the children become confident and are able to frame sentences and pose questions to their friends, the teacher and those around them. They understand how questions are framed and the

correct usage of the helping verb at the appropriate place. At later stages grammar can be introduced after basic linguistic proficiency is acquired. Learners will then be able to see how they use different words in a sentence to make it meaningful.

Learners pick up the language when there is meaningful communication between the speaker and the listener. Meaningful communication includes appropriate sentences, correct usage of grammar, pauses, phrases, intonation, vocabulary, stress etc. with relevant information. Listening strategies involve prediction, guessing and recognizing patterns of language. A listening activity should not be taught in isolation and it should be combined with the other three skills as well. Activities should be developed keeping in mind the learner's ages, interest and background, so that they can relate to it and enjoy doing it. Listening activities become meaningful when students respond by doing

something, answering, asking questions or drawing etc.

Listening activities involve different types of talk in meaningful contexts, for example playing listening games such as 'Simon Says' (Slattery and Willis, 2001). For an Indian classroom Simon can be changed to a recognizable and common Indian name, like 'Suman says'. A student can be asked to volunteer and explain the game and this may be in the learners' mother tongue. Before the game starts, the learners should be asked to jot down in their notebooks, four to five simple commands which are easy to perform in the class. Examples of that are cover your face, open your mouth, clap your hands, jump up high, touch your right elbow and so on. Thereafter, the volunteer can lead the class and read out the list of commands, intermittently using or leaving out 'Suman says'. Such an activity is aimed at involving all the students. The important thing for these young learners is that they listen and follow a whole sequence of instructions and do the same (Slattery and Willis, 2001). Using this activity, the learners can be taught two grammar points, namely, using the imperative form and the use of prepositions. They can be taught how the imperative form is used to give an order or advice and with the use of 'please' it becomes a request. Also, out of all the commands, commands with a preposition can then be listed on the blackboard and the learners' attention can be drawn towards the appropriate use of prepositions, such as 'jump up

high', 'sit down', 'pick up your pencil'.

Another possible activity can involve students listening to the description of fruits in a recording and at the end of the audio some questions can be posed: which fruit is your favourite and why? While answering these, students can be encouraged to describe fruits using various adjectives like sweet mangoes, sour grapes, juicy melons etc. In the end the teacher can summarize the descriptions with a focus on the shape, size and taste of the fruits. This becomes a convenient entry point to teaching learners about adjectives and their usage. Thereafter, students can be asked to draw pictures of the fruits and colour them. The students can draw by themselves without instructions but the aim to get them to listen to some descriptions in English will have been accomplished. (Slattery and Willis, 2001) By listening to an input rich meaningful context in such a manner, learners will get an exposure to various adjectives used in the target/ of the target language. And this is very important, as once they develop confidence in comprehending what they hear the children are more likely to pay attention to phrases and sentences in the target language outside the classroom as well.

Similarly, grammar can be explored and taught through speaking, reading and writing activities as well. Through communicative exercises, examples of grammar in context can help the learners derive an understanding of the rules.

Teaching and learning of grammar should focus on practice rather than study of grammar itself. We can neither over emphasize grammar rules nor overlook them. Learning grammar itself is not the ultimate goal of learning English. Grammar in context helps learners find the rules of grammar when they are given a number of appropriate examples. If the structure is not easy for the learners to discover themselves even with a context, then you may teach the rule explicitly. However, what the learners discover by themselves is remembered better by them.

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OBITUARY

Madhu: A Saint Without a Halo

May 7, 09 was a dark day for FORTELL – nay, for the entire ELT fraternity, when the cruel hands of destiny, so stealthily, snatched away our dear friend Madhu Gurtu, a strong pillar of FORTELL. She embarked on her eternal journey in the wee hours of the sad Thursday morning, never, never to return. We, on our part, were certainly not ready to let her go, especially without bidding farewells. Madhu died peacefully, as she lived, like a noble and saintly person. She was, indeed, a saint without a halo.

It is indeed ironical that this tribute should appear in the very newsletter, which she had so caringly nurtured for so many years. Madhu contributed to the FORTELL activities in different capacities right from its inception till the last days of her life. She served on the Executive Committee for more than a decade, carrying out various academic activities furthering the cause of FORTELL. During her two terms as the Secretary, she organized many seminars on a variety of topical themes. She represented FORTELL at the conference at Colombo, Sri Lanka in 2004, bringing it on the global map of ELT. She graced the office of Vice President with dignity befitting that office, when she rendered valuable advice on issues – big or small, to further strengthen the FORTELL.

Madhu's most memorable contribution has been as one of the editors of FORTELL newsletter. She worked diligently and meticulously. Her articles,

book reviews, interviews etc bear testimony to the fact that she had a flair for writing.

As a member of the Editorial Board Madhu had had a dream to bring out a monograph – a dream which alas, remained unfulfilled. I trust her successors in the Editorial team will realize her long cherished dream. This, indeed, would be our most befitting tribute to her.

A dedicated, diligent and conscientious teacher, Madhu was a role model and a perennial source of inspiration to her students and colleagues alike.

Very few of us know that Madhu had been a topper, a Gold Medallist and scholarship holder throughout her academic life, a fact she had never shared even with people close to her. What an epitome of modesty!

She had a brilliant mind and a generous heart, a gentle, calm and a balanced countenance; completely unselfish and caring. Such was Madhu, most unassuming, a charismatic personality, who had endeared herself to one and all. She will continue to inspire us all to rise above the petty issues and work towards harmony and goodwill in different relationships, as she always did.

To the aged she was a lady with a lamp, to children 'Madhu Massi' always with a chocolate in her hand, to her colleagues and friends a sincere and honest companion, a patient listener on whose shoulders one could cry out one's heart.



Madhu leaves behind her aged father, a brother, a sister and a host of friends and fans. The FORTELL family share their grief and sorrow and prays for the peace of the departed soul.

As for me, Madhu's passing away is a loss too personal and profound for words. There was a faith and bond which had grown and strengthened over the decades. I had always turned to her for her advice and emotional support in professional and personal matters never to be disappointed or betrayed. She has left a void – a deep chasm that can never be filled; a part of me seems to have gone with her.

If only I were a Milton, a Gray, a Shelley, many a Lycidas, a Country Churchyard Elegy, an Adonais would adorn the pages of poetry. But that is not to be, I can just shed a quiet tear when I peep into the lonely corner of my heart where my dear dear friend eternally resides.

"Dear Madhu, to live in the hearts of those who love you is not to die!"



*Tara Chadha, Formerly
Reader in English, SPM
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Workshop on Story telling

Tara Chadha

Under the banner of FORTELL a workshop on STORY TELLING was held on September 16, 2009 at a Community Centre run by VIDYA (Vidya Integrated Development for Youth and Adults), an NGO for the socially disadvantaged children in the age group of 6- 8 years.

The workshop was conducted by Ms Shefali Ray, a senior life member of Fortell. It was attended by 20 students and three teachers of the Centre. Three office bearers of FORTELL, President A. L. Khanna, Secretary Rachna Sethi and Treasurer Tara Chadha were also present.

Shefali demonstrated the art of story telling not only for the benefit of the children but also the teachers who were seen taking copious notes through the session.

Since the children happened to be from the Hindi speaking background, Shefali chose to use the bilingual method with a lot of code mixing and code switching. This created an anxiety free environment – conducive to language learning.

With her vibrant personality and melodious and well-modulated voice, she held the participants captive. She used the technique of dramatization, performing the roles of different characters and mimicking the sounds of animals figuring in the story. She also managed to involve the children

in role-playing, thus making it a learner- centered class. The judicious use of the white board and picture slides interspersed with her acting made Shefali achieve the objective of teaching new vocabulary with ease. With a lot of drilling and repetition Shefali ensured that at the end of the session the children were able to use the newly learnt words with proper understanding.

In a nutshell, it was a fun packed session with a lot of



joyful learning in such a short duration.



Tara Chadha, Formerly Reader in English, SPM College, University of Delhi

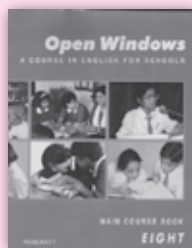
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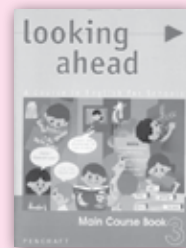
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Workshop on Cumulative and Continuous Evaluation (CCE)

Rachna Sethi



FORTELL conducted a three hour long workshop on Continuous and Cumulative Evaluation(CCE) in Vivekanand Secondary School, Anand Vihar, Delhi on September 18,2009 for their classes IX-X teachers. The workshop was hosted by the Management of the school. It was attended by all the twelve teachers engaged in the secondary classes and the FORTELL representatives Dr A.L.Khanna , Ms.Rachna Sethi and Mr J.K.Gangal.

The workshop was necessitated by the CBSE's decision to change over to the new system of evaluation in all its schools from October 1, 2009. In the absence of any specific guidelines on how the new form of evaluation will be carried out round the year, all the stakeholders including the teachers have had some questions about issues like how

the marks will be replaced by 9-grades and how various forms of formative assessment will be carried out. In order to enlighten their teachers on these issues the Management of Vivekanand school invited FORTELL to hold

the workshop. Using the power point presentation Mr J.K.Gangal, the resource person, explained at length various dimensions of the CBSE's new modes of Cumulative and Continuous Evaluation (CCE). Besides this, he talked of the scales that could measure systematically all the four language skills.

Mr Gangal's presentation was followed by a very interactive session in which the teachers raised very insightful questions relating to the implementation of the new Grading system. Some of them expressed their concern about how day to day evaluation will be converted into grades. Some of the teachers asked questions relating to the CBSE's much touted Question Bank and how it will be made use of in schools for setting their question papers. There were some questions relating to how the classroom could be more interactive, participative and learner centred.



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Three-day English teaching workshop at ISTM, Delhi

Kusum Virmani

Institute of Secretariat Training and Management under Ministry of Personnel, Government of India organized a three-day workshop on "Use of English

for Official purposes" for their group D staff from June 29 to July 1, 2009. The workshop was a part of their twenty-five day orientation programme and was

held at the Institute's premises in old JNU campus. Mr. Herkel Govind Asstt Director coordinated the entire programme.

About twenty participants attended the workshop conducted by Ms. Tara Chadha, a senior life member of FORTTELL. The objective of the workshop was to brush up the speaking, listening and writing capabilities of the participants and to enhance their confidence level mainly in the productive language skills.

The first session started with some ice breaking activities to enable the participants shed their inhibition and feel at ease. This was followed by a light quiz, the objective being to bring home the fact that there was lots of English in and around them and it was only the lack of confidence that deterred them

from being efficient users of the language.

The next session was devoted to developing vocabulary relevant to the participants' day-to-day functions. This was done through various activities like creating a web of vocabulary related to a particular theme and other fun packed language games. This kept the participants fully involved and engrossed in their work.

Correction of common errors was the topic of the next session. Practice in attending telephone calls and taking messages was also given. Some practice was given in writing simple leave applications.

Spoken English, however, remained the focus of attention throughout the various sessions. Role-play and pair work

activities were interspersed with all other activities. Various situations were created and the participants were asked to play different roles. This enabled them to use language spontaneously, which in turn increased their confidence level in handling the language.

At the end of the workshop even the most cynical members who had started with almost the firm belief that it was not possible to learn the efficient use of English at a ripe age, felt themselves to be transformed with lot more confidence and enthusiasm. The success of the workshop was reflected in the fact that they expressed their desire to have more such workshops in future.

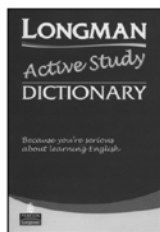
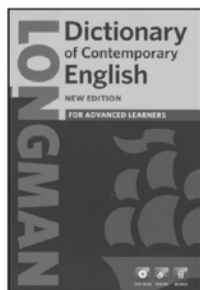


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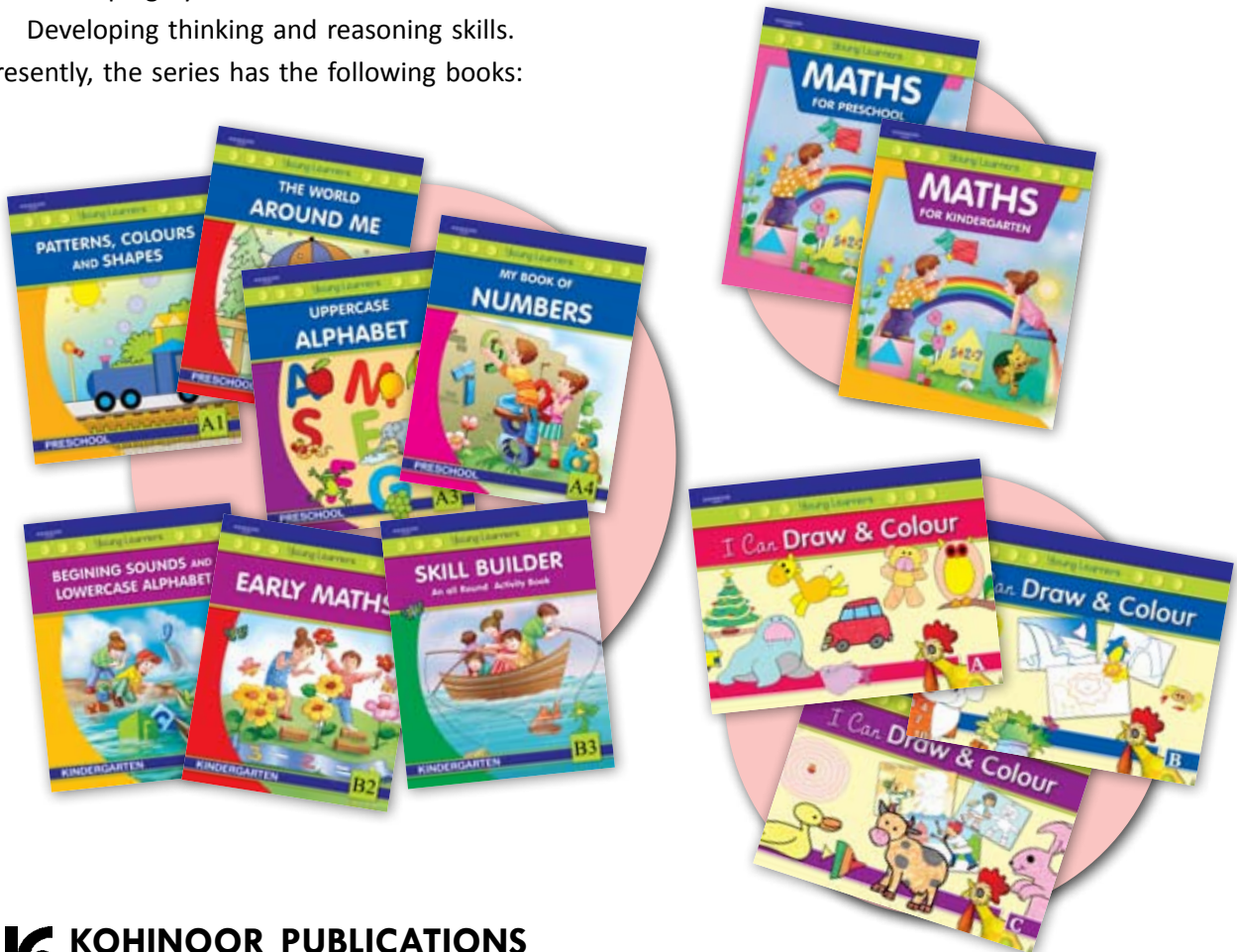
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