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**A Journal of Teaching English
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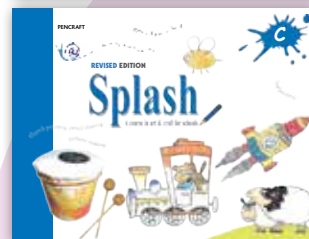
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'Change is the only constant in life.'

As we embarked on the editorial pursuit of this edition of FORTELL, the above saying continuously reminded us of the dynamism involved in teaching. Even as our energies are directed towards shaping the mindscape of our students, we face the constant fear of stagnation in our growth as teachers especially in the face of flashing technology, readily available knowledge and virtual classrooms, the role of a teacher is changing too quickly to even grasp. Yet the human element of teaching remains vital to learning in the end. Language learning is still the most basic and dynamic area touching everyone's life wherein we need to adjust the sails every now and then.

FORTELL continues to grapple with innovative and indigenous practices to enhance the teaching learning process of the English Language. New pedagogies are tried and tested as we tackle issues of heterogeneous structures in classrooms wherein more often than not, what works for one may not for another. Yet as teachers and learners we are constantly engaged in negotiating with the needs of the learners and the Language that they believe will empower them for the Job market.

It is imperative as, Sabina Pillai writes, to put teaching first and to reclaim pedagogy in the English Classroom. Santosh Mahapatra, too brings a vital but hitherto marginalized area to the fore-Assessment Learning, which if worked upon can raise pedagogical standards significantly. Both authors call for a proactive intervention from policy makers, implementers and practitioners. The next step is to refresh teaching methodologies. Kirti Kapur and Saumya Sharma provide innovative frameworks and techniques to enhance language skills and Anindita Dutta illustrates how films can be used innovatively as texts in the classroom. M.R.Vishwanath renegotiates with using L1 to

enhance the teaching of English and gives a comparative analysis to show the untenability of the insistence on monolingualism while teaching L2. Amit Singh and Rajesh Kumar likewise foreground the practice of using indigenous material particularly in a multilingual and multicultural environment. Book Reviews and Language Activities are our standard features. In keeping with past practice, we bring reviews of recent books on the subject along with reports of conferences and workshops for the benefit of those who could not attend them. Iqbal Judge's interview of Dee Broughton brings to the fore an area oft neglected in the teaching of English i.e Academic Writing. Their conversation engages with the problems in Indian classrooms and works out strategies to deal with the lacunae.

The Editors would like to place on record that worthwhile contributions far outnumber the requisite figure that can be published in a single volume and some desirable articles may not have found their rightful space in this current issue. FORTELL is committed to the cause of quality publication and will endeavor to publish them in the next issue. We look forward to your submissions and appreciate your support in making this issue a pleasurable experience.



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The need to put teaching first and reclaim pedagogy in the English classroom - A perspective

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Given the perceived 'transformative powers' of English in India as 'a symbol of a better life, a pathway out of poverty and oppression' making it aspirational, as convincingly documented by Graddol (2010), it is surprising that we continue to teach it with nary a thought for pedagogical inputs. As a result learning objectives do not mesh with desired learning outcomes. On ground, we find that teachers are not pedagogically equipped to deal with the challenge, and yet there is no move on the part of policy makers to address the situation. Let alone the vernacular schools, why is it that the vast majority of students, being taught English in English medium schools still flounder in the language and continue with poor proficiency through college and career? Where is the lacuna and why are we not worried about it even though the fault lines seem obvious enough.

One of the telling examples of this hunger for English in India is that of the building of a temple to an 'English Devi' in the Lakhim Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh in October 2010. The organizers had taken note of the awe for the English language by the 'have-nots' and felt it would be worthwhile to attribute divinity to it and have people seek her 'benevolence'. It seemed easier to revere a make-believe goddess and mystify the language than address the serious issue of why it had become so difficult to acquire. Though the installation of the idol was eventually stalled by the district authorities, it did set off serious reflection about the state of teaching of English here and the desired but elusive teaching and learning outcomes.

The present situation

Let us take a look at the prevailing scenario. School teaching mandates a pedagogical qualification along with proven content knowledge. However it is a generic graduate degree in Education, a B.Ed., with little inputs on language teaching and focus on the theoretical moorings of education with some practice teaching. As Pillai (2012) posits, 'most language teachers go into class equipped more to teach content than to transfer skills of the language to

their learners. The praxis of ELT is something that most of them are not conversant with.' To make matters worse they also have to contend with the challenges of large, heterogeneous classes, unsuitable curriculum and assessment practices and the lack of any diagnostic profiling, making it a recipe doomed to fail.

The malaise runs deeper at the tertiary level as there is no mandatory requirement of any pedagogical qualification. A college teacher boasts of academic excellence and perhaps some serious research but scant or nonexistent skills in teaching pedagogy. It appears that she banks largely on what Lortie (1975, 2002) calls the 13000 hours of 'apprenticeship of observation' of her own days as a student, observing her teachers. So much so that it is ironic, that a college teacher would not qualify for a teaching job in a school today as she has no proven pedagogical base. As Blackmore and Blackwell (2003) posit, most higher education systems 'have a very low entry requirement for teaching expertise'.

Scholars have also established how tertiary level teaching is fraught with competing priorities, for example, the emphasis seems to be on the teaching of content over any attention to the craft of teaching or the complexity of the learning process. More significantly, the system glorifies even low quality research over brilliant teaching where the teacher is seen more as a scholar and professor. As Stenberg and Lee (2002) state, 'it appears that the professor's primary relationship is with the discipline, not students, it is assumed that a professor's development should be grounded almost entirely in the mastery of a subject matter'. Slevin (1996) calls this the 'hegemonic conceptions of disciplinarity' where bodies of knowledge take precedence over activities of engaging knowledge with others. The sum total of which results in the espousal of knowledge without engagement, giving the lie, as it were, to Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of learning domains where higher order thinking skills to be inculcated in learners should have been the ability to apply, evaluate and synthesize knowledge.

There is clearly a parity of esteem issue here between scholarly development and pedagogical development, which is leading to the detriment of the profession. Defining the different kinds of professions, Glazer (1974) posits, that the 'major' professions like medicine, law and business are 'disciplined by an unambiguous end- health, success in litigation, profit - which settles men's minds' as against the minor professions like education, social work and divinity, which Schon (1983) states, 'suffer from shifting, ambiguous ends and from unstable institutional contexts of practice'. It is this lack of accountability that raises questions. Instead of focusing on what we teach, should we not be looking at what our students have learnt?

Scholarship of teaching and learning

So how do we address this problem and stabilize our 'contexts of practice' to get to the question of how we teach? Going further, how do we develop a community of practice so that we share information and experiences and learn from them? It is heartening to know that there is a move to make pedagogy an important part of English studies in other parts of the world. This clearly validates the growing scholarship in teacher learning as an intellectual and continuing process and understanding pedagogy, as Stenberg and Lee (2002) posit 'a more complex and extensive term than "teaching," referring to the integration in practice of particular curriculum content and design, classroom strategies and techniques, a time and space for the practice of those strategies and techniques, and evaluation purposes and methods ...'

The first step towards building a community of practice would be to dismantle what Phelps (1991) calls the 'ethic of radical individualism' that privileges the classroom as 'a private space of autonomy, intimacy and power' and valorizes teachers working as 'autonomous, self-developing individuals'. Further as Stenberg and Lee (2002) state, teachers need to realize that both language and knowledge are 'socially produced' and hence they are involved in 'social activities' that need to be shared and reviewed. Such a move away from 'individualism' would lead them to be 'intellectually equipped to read their own practices, their institutions, and the world as text ... in the same careful way they have learned to engage with scholarly and literary texts in English studies'. They further exhort teachers to be objective and 'develop ways of studying their teaching, of reading their pedagogical interactions and their pedagogical development (exploration, critique, revision) as texts.' Such scholarship of

teaching and learning would in turn provide them with a theoretical framework to integrate their practice with and enable them to move towards collaborative work, peer reviews, maintaining journals and what Haring-Smith (1985) describes 'effective self-reflection and self-evaluation'.

Conclusion

Once such a 'reflective practitioner' as posited by Schon (1983) is in play in our English classrooms, the dismaying mismatch between learning objectives and outcomes would remain as an aberration. At the same time, there is an urgent need for practitioners of this community to be supported and encouraged to correct course on the one hand and for prospective college teachers to be initiated into a more wholesome understanding of their roles and responsibilities on the other. As Phelps (1991) points out, there is 'a lack of attentiveness' towards practitioner development in our system vis-à-vis the elaborate and entrenched support systems and 'public mechanisms' for the 'doctoral students' development'. Teaching is often excluded from that charmed circle of observation, supervision, review and iteration and treated more like a 'privatized' activity divesting it of any serious status. We could take our cue from Shulman (2011) who points us in the right direction when he reiterates that 'teaching would never achieve anything near parity with research in the work of professors until it became more like scholarship, until it came out of the closet and was subject to peer review, that is, until it became "community property" just like their research.' If that is not a clarion call for an urgent intervention of pedagogy in our English classrooms, what is?

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Assessment Literacy:

A Panacea for Many Problems in Language Assessment

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What is Assessment Literacy (AL)?

AL may refer to 'the range of skills and knowledge that stakeholders need in order to deal with the new world of assessment' (Fulcher, 2012, p.115). It is the ability to plan, design, conduct and evaluate assessments and interpret and use assessment results for taking pedagogic decisions. This term has started gaining importance across the world with the movement towards making assessment learning - learner-centred, classroom-oriented, teacher-designed, need-based, authentic, and so forth. English teachers need some of the above-mentioned abilities to carry out assessment related duties effectively.

Current Assessment Scenario in India

After Examination Reforms in 2006, assessment in schools got decentralized and teacher-based assessments were promoted. The aim was to make assessment a 'support for learning' (Tharu, 2011, p. 30), something that can be a part of classroom instruction. In other words, teachers were expected to engage in 'dynamic assessment' (Mathew, 2006, p. 11). It was a good change at the policy levels though not a very well planned one. The intention of replacing tests, that are anxiety-ridden, memory-based, summative, centrally designed and paper-pencil-based, with assessments that are anxiety-free, classroom-based, developmental, integrated, diagnostic, proficiency-oriented and innovative was an admirable one. However, the

recent establishment in January, 2013 of Centre for Assessment, Evaluation & Research (CAER), an assessment training programme for teachers by CBSE indicates that the change in policy had not really paid off the way it was expected to. There is a late realization about the necessity of training teachers in classroom assessment and developing their ability to assess learners' progress. And if this is the case with government school (CBSE) teachers, we have a lot to worry about English teachers in state-run, semi-aided and private schools. In addition to this, the levels of AL of other stakeholders like teacher-trainers, syllabus and curriculum designers, textbook writers, etc. must be considered seriously because together with teachers they constitute the Educational system.

What Level/s of Assessment Literacy?

It has been pointed out many-a-times that English teachers (along with other teachers) in schools need some training in assessment. But very few attempts have been made to define the abilities they are expected to develop. What they actually require is training in only some aspects of language assessment at a certain level. While it is important to talk about teachers' abilities in assessment, it is equally vital to ensure that the other ELE professionals mentioned in the previous section also attain an acceptable level of AL. The abilities, knowledge, etc. that more or less

comprise AL are presented in the following table:

S No.	Abilities/ knowledge / skills / principles
1	Principles (formal knowledge) of assessment (validity, reliability, authenticity, etc.)
2	Applying of these principles to the construction of classroom assessments
3	Language acquisition and proficiency
4	Different methods of assessment (Self-assessment, peer-assessment, examination, portfolio, journal, etc.) and selecting appropriate one/s for particular classroom purposes
5	Constructing classroom assessment tasks
6	Developing assessment criteria and rubrics
7	Interpreting assessment results
8	Giving constructive and diagnostic feedback to learners
9	Evaluating the effectiveness of assessments
10	Keeping record of learners' progress with regard to using language

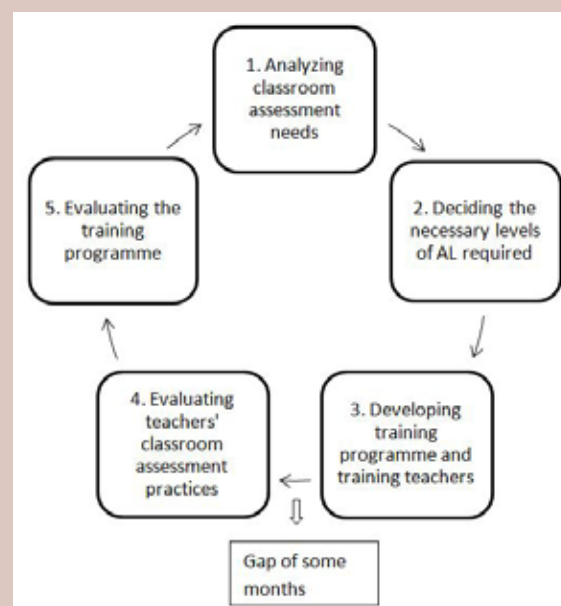
The above mentioned abilities, knowledge, skills and principles can be further divided into levels such as: Expert, Advanced, Skilled and Beginner and each level needs to be defined realistically and carefully keeping the educational context and needs of the target group (of professionals) in mind. For example, an English teacher in class VIII (CBSE) can manage with only a beginner level expertise in principles of assessment, whereas, a teacher-trainer will need nothing less than an advanced level of expertise in the same area. But the same teacher may need something between skilled to advanced levels when it comes to applying these principles of assessment to developing classroom assessments. This kind of division can help us avoid putting unrealistic demands on teachers in relation to assessment abilities.

The level of AL for one homogenous group of professionals, for example a group of secondary school English teachers working in state-run schools in Andhra Pradesh, can be arrived at after conducting a thorough Needs Analysis. The analysis must take into account several factors like the educational background, the teaching and assessment responsibilities, and the institutional/organizational demands and constraints of the professional in addition to some information about the target group/s of learners, their language

needs and expectations and the curricular goals in relation to ELE in the state and the country.

Developing Assessment Literacy through Training

The above-mentioned ideas, about dividing components of assessment literacy, aim to simplify a few things related to the assessment needs of English teachers and other ELE professionals in India. However, putting the suggestions into practice is a hard job. Like the process of Curriculum Design, development of teachers' AL should be a continuous and cyclical process. It should start with the analysis of teachers' classroom assessment needs. In the next stage, the required level of AL should be defined in clear terms. Then the training programme should be designed and training should be imparted to help teachers reach that level. Teachers should be allowed a gap of a few months to internalize the training content. Their classroom assessment practices can then be evaluated after the gap and in the light of its feedback, the training programme can be evaluated and altered accordingly. As shown in the following block cycle, this process of developing AL should incorporate findings of new research in the areas of Classroom Assessment and Language Assessment so that teacher-developed classroom-based assessment can become a fruitful and healthy activity. Also, it can help in infusing growth, freshness and innovation into language assessment in schools.



The above model can be utilized in both pre- and in-service teacher education programmes. As this is an open model, there is always room for additions and changes. The five stages can be

further elaborated and fine-tuned so as to make it more convenient and usable.

Conclusion

Teacher education has been one of the main concerns of Indian education system (NCTE, 2010; Government of India & NCTE, 2012), and assessment is one of the 'inadequately-focused' areas in teacher education programmes across the country. Furthermore, it is surprising that '...in India where English is believed to be contributing to the overall development of the country, there is no special policy for ELT and its practitioners' (Mahapatra, 2011, p. 109). So it may not be wise to expect any sudden change in the practice of English language assessment in classrooms at school level. However, we have a good start with Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) and Examination Reforms, at least in terms of policy. It can be hoped that the changes in policy find their way into classroom practices. Training teachers in assessment and developing their AL can be an appropriate and necessary step in this direction. It will help us achieve the goal of making teaching and assessment 'mutually dependent and supportive' (Tharu, 2011, p. 30).

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Classroom Strategies to Develop Critical Thinking

Kirti Kapur

*I keep six honest serving-men
(They taught me all I knew);
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who*

— Rudyard Kipling

Traditionally, the focus in English language classrooms has been on enhancing the four skills LSRW – listening, speaking, reading and writing among learners. Along with these four skills, thinking skills too need to be developed. Teaching children to become effective thinkers is rooted in the constructivist paradigm and is increasingly being recognized as an immediate goal of education. It is possible to enhance the creative and critical thinking skills of students through practice and instruction. Thinking skills enable a

person to infer, reason, reflect, evaluate and make judgments.

This ability makes students creative, practical and reflective. Therefore, the activities/tasks taken up in the class should be such that they make students think, explore and question. It has also been observed that students are not encouraged to question. Every child has a right to ask questions. They should be encouraged to do so. This requires designing activities and tasks that promote thinking and questioning among children.



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‘Critical thinking is expected of students, but it does not automatically and quickly develop of itself. This skill must be developed, however; and it requires a great deal of effort on the part of teachers to help students learn to think critically. In order for students to develop these skills, teachers must learn to incorporate critical questioning into their classes. The responsibility for developing these skills then shifts from the student to the teacher as questioning becomes the guiding force.’ (Chalupa & Sormunen, 1995).

A lot depends on the kind of questions that are asked. Instead of ‘asking... lower-level questions most of the time, it is important to balance literal or knowledge-based questions with higher level questions so the students will learn to think at a higher level of thinking as well.’ (Exforsys Inc., 2009).

The following section details some activities that were developed and adapted/adopted by practicing teachers as part of a workshop.¹ These activities encourage the process of constructive questioning and therefore critical thinking on the part of the students. The activities have been clubbed theme wise.

Igniting inquisitive minds

- Students can be asked to keep a question book, where they can write any question that comes to their mind. They can then be encouraged to find the answers in pairs or groups and even with the teacher. Sharing questions and discussing possible answers can be a whole class activity as well.
- An innovative strategy to engage children who are shy by nature can be a question box. A box titled ‘Question Box’ can be kept in the class and students can drop any question into it without writing their name. The questions can later be discussed in class.
- A questions game is another meaningful way of encouraging students to raise questions. The teacher can prepare a grid with what/why/when/where/ describe/ if/ can etc. Thereafter, a topic is chosen with the consensus of the whole class and each child picks up a word from the grid and constructs questions with that word for the whole class to participate. The same can be applied to sections of lessons as well.
- Similarly, a questions chain can be made

where one question leads to another on a given topic. A similar grid can be prepared keeping the theme of a story/poem in mind and each student can choose a word of her/his choice and use it in question form by picking a word from the grid. This is a good way of revising as well as providing an opportunity to students to speak in context.

Beyond the text

- Another useful activity is to give the students some words from any lesson and then ask them to write as many uses of the given words as possible. This promotes lateral thinking, which develops creativity among learners. For example, teachers often use the words ‘School’ and ‘Homework’.
- Open ended questions encourage multiple/ diverse answers. A question can be partially open ended or completely open ended.
- Picture games can also be prepared from magazines and newspapers. Students can be asked to create a story or a poem on the picture.
- Another option can be the activity titled ‘Exploring Things’. Students can be asked to explore different themes like nature, old objects, steps in making/preparing crafts etc and then write about them.

Change is the spice of life and yet, as teachers we always start our classes in a routine manner. There are a variety of texts in any curriculum such as stories, poems, drama etc. Therefore, it is possible to begin every lesson in a different way. This will add variety and divergent thinking will become a habit. There are many ‘word games’ that not only develop vocabulary but make students think in context.

Word play

- Give students two words (depending on their age) and ask them to insert 10-20 words in between them. Take ‘build’ and ‘run’ for instance. Here there will be no right or wrong answers since the students use their own logic and perspective to fill in words.
- We can give them a word and ask them to find alternate meanings. For Example, the word ‘bear’. The same word has different connotations in noun and verb form.
- Students can be given a big word and asked to make as many words as they can think of using the letters in the word.

- Making a pyramid with words involves starting with a letter and adding letters subsequently to create bigger words. For example:

b
be
bee
been
begin
benign
belittle
beginner

Intertextuality

Describing music, art, painting and pictures can bring novelty in the classroom and each child's perception can find a place in the overall scheme of things. Film clippings and serials can be used for promoting thinking and questioning among children.

Learning by doing

Activities like conducting an 'interview' or a 'survey' should be encouraged. Students may interview people like a postman, vendor etc. Herein, they should be encouraged to ask as many questions as they like.

Project based learning helps develop research skills. It includes planning, collecting material/data and then finalizing it. Beyth-Myron et al (1987) have described thinking skills as means to making good choices. 'Thinking skills are necessary tools in a society characterized by rapid change, many alternatives of actions, and numerous individual and collective choices and decisions [emerge from them].'

Role-plays/drama develops imagination and students use language in context. The process involves detailed thinking and questioning. Students can also be asked to generate different alternatives and possibilities. This develops a problem solving aptitude and enables them to find a solution.

Therefore, connecting texts to contexts, encouraging questioning, respecting individual learning styles, creating a non-judgmental environment and above all, allowing them to make mistakes and learn from them will help students develop critical thinking skills.

While, the list given above is not exhaustive, it is suggestive of the numerous opportunities that a reflective and innovative teacher can add to and make learning joyful in the real sense. Language learning takes place all the time, be it a playground, classroom or school assembly. Every

moment is an opportune moment for children to practice thinking in all walks of life.

The workshop was conducted in the National Capital Region for teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas. There were 40 English Language Teachers who taught from grades VI to X.

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'Is that I' – Self-Schemas and Vocabulary Development

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Introduction

The teaching and learning of vocabulary is closely linked to the development of basic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing (LSRW). It is a common observation that most learners have ideas on a particular topic but do not have the requisite vocabulary to express them. Thus knowledge of context-specific words and phrases becomes essential to develop fluency and accuracy in learners and such knowledge needs to be long-term and comprehensive, covering learning of individual words, exposure to lexis-enriched language in speech and writing and creation of a large 'generative word knowledge' (Nagy, 2005, p.29). According to Nation (2003) there is an increasing amount of research on the psychological basis for vocabulary growth,

focusing primarily on the processes of noticing words, effectively retrieving or recalling them and elaborating or ‘stretching’ their usage from common to the uncommon, for instance using words as metaphors. This article proposes that one of the ways of developing a comprehensive vocabulary where words are noticed, retained, retrieved and elaborated by learners is by the application of schema theory, particularly self-schemas.

Schemas: Self-Schemas

Schemas are mental frameworks to comprehend or make sense of the social reality around us. Bartlett’s (1932) discussion of schemas was extremely influential in cognitive psychology wherein he asked experimental subjects to read a story called ‘The War of the Ghosts’ and write about it later, finding that they modified the story according to their beliefs and experiences. In other words, when participants were faced with new information they modified and understood it according to their schematic constructions. Schemas also figured in Piaget’s (1952) theory of cognitive development when he postulated that learning occurred in interaction with the environment through the processes of assimilation and accommodation. New information, if it matches with our pre existing ideas (schemas), is assimilated and if it is different from our ideas, then it is accommodated.

Marshall (1995) defines schemas as:

a vehicle of memory, allowing organization of an individual’s similar experiences in such a way that the individual

- can easily recognize additional experiences that are also similar, discriminating between these and ones that are dissimilar;
- can access a generic framework that contains the essential elements of all these similar experiences including verbal and nonverbal components;
- can draw inferences, make estimates, create goals, and develop plans using the framework; and
- can utilize skills, procedures or rules as needed when faced with a problem for which this particular framework is relevant. (p.39)

Thus, schemas are thought and behavior patterns about persons, objects, events and situations that develop in early childhood, are variable, subject to change, based on our experiences and help us in dealing with new situations and people. For example one can have a schema about eating out

at a restaurant based on one’s past experiences of eating out, the food served, the ambience and the service of the restaurant. Such schemas are called event schemas (Shank & Abelson, 1977). Another type is known as person schema, that is, one’s ideas about other individuals such as teachers, doctors and lawyers which would include beliefs about the person’s behaviour, speech, manners, appearance etc. For example, one expects a teacher to be well-dressed, knowledgeable, approachable yet strict, fluent and explanatory. Yet another schema, which is central to our discussion, is self-schema.

Self-schemas are complex frameworks that include information about the self. They answer the question ‘who am I?’ Self-schemas are multiple and, like other schemas, are based on one’s experiences. S. Samson (2010) explains that self-schemas refer to how individuals view themselves, their ideas, thoughts and beliefs about themselves. Fiske and Morling (1995) state that different self-schemas are aroused depending on the varying contexts or domains in one’s life (such as professional life, emotional likes and dislikes, religious views, political opinions etc.) and all these are part of one’s idea of self or identity. A hypothetical example may explain the point:

Q: Who am I?

A: I am a doctor, an atheist, a nationalist, am warm-hearted, serious, a lover of music, like pets, dislike untidiness and hypocrisy.

Self-Schemas and Vocabulary

Self-schemas are generated from various contexts/ domains and we pay more attention to and process information directly related to our self-schemas (Fiske & Morling, 1995). I propose that words, which cover various contexts and relate to self-schemas, would be processed and recalled faster and thus facilitate vocabulary development. Language would provide the words for one’s self-schemas and help in classifying one’s multiple selves for after all its language that defines and describes who we are, and aids in interpersonal communication.

In the chart below, I have suggested some domain-based categories for self-schemas and provided some words within each category. The number, complexity and variety of words can be increased or decreased according to the competence of the students and requirements of the curriculum. The words that I have given below roughly belong to the level of students of class 8 and 9.

Categories for Self-Schemas

Emotional	Physical	Intellectual	Interests/ Activities	Interpersonal	Profession
Sensitive	Slim	Intelligent	Blogging	Friendly	Doctor
Cheerful	Healthy	Rational	Music/Film Aficionado	Frank	Teacher
Solemn	Athletic	Studious	Outdoor Sports	Timid	Engineer
Calm	Comely	Meticulous	Indoor-games	Cordial	Fashion- designer
Impulsive	Freckled	Creative	Drawing	Generous	Chef

A person's self-schema is a conglomeration of multiple selves in multiple domains. The words and phrases given in the chart can act as descriptive labels for a person's multiple selves. Thus these words and phrases can be used as starting points to teach vocabulary related to self-schemas. Given below is a lesson plan based on the above chart:

Stage I: Elicitation of words describing one's self in the various categories

The teacher chooses a particular domain (emotional, intellectual etc.) and asks the learners to write a few words that best describe them in that category. This activity elicits vocabulary that is directly related to the student's self-schema in that domain.

For example: In the emotional category, the student may describe himself/herself as cheerful, impatient, and caring.

Stage II: Antonyms and Synonyms for the self-schematic words

The students are divided into groups. The teacher tells the students to provide two synonyms and antonyms each, for the words they have written and discuss them. Collaborative discussions aid in broadening the students' knowledge about the words and their various connotations.

For example: Cheerful:

Synonyms: happy, gay, joyful

Antonyms: dull, morose, sad

Stage III: Collocations for the words discussed

The teacher tells the learners to write the collocations for the words they had originally written and for the antonyms and synonyms. The students also discuss and write the different grammatical forms of the words.

For example: Very cheerful

Extremely happy

Rather dull

Too morose

Grammatical forms: cheerfully, cheerfulness, happier, happiest, happily, happiness, dullness, dullish, dully, morosely, moroseness

Stage IV: Oral narration about a personal situation using the new words

The teacher tells the learners to orally narrate in a few lines a situation/event that made them cheerful or dull. As far as possible, the narration should include the new words (synonyms, antonyms, or collocations) discussed. This activity associates the new words with the experiences of the learners (that is their self-schemas) and facilitates vocabulary growth. It also builds their listening and speaking skills.

Stage V: Self-schemas and writing

The teacher tells the learners to write the above narration, thus honing their writing ability.

Conclusion

This article highlights how an individual's self-schemas are based on multiple domains and self-schematic information is noticed and processed faster. Hence an attempt is made to provide words in domain-based categories and several activities are discussed which aim to develop vocabulary related to the learner's self-schemas, its related words (synonyms, antonyms), collocates and generative knowledge (grammatical forms of the word). If students have adequate, expressive vocabulary that would enable them to answer the question 'who am I?' they would be lexically more competent. Apart from vocabulary, other LSRW skills can also be enhanced through this approach. The word-complexity can be varied according to the competence of the students and exercises can be expanded to include the teaching of concepts such as polysemy, homonymy, metaphors and idiomatic expressions.

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Using Films in Language Teaching

Anindita Dutta

Introduction

Films are an excellent source of language used in context. Using films in language teaching can be both entertaining and motivating for learners with different skill levels. Movies, in fact, provide learners with real life language input difficult to receive in a non-English speaking environment.

As an ELT practitioner and researcher, for many years now, I have thought of innovative teaching methods in every class. I have tried ways to win the hearts of young learners and involve them wholly in the language learning process. Since television and films play so large a part in the life of young learners, I wondered if films could be exploited for language acquisition. An interaction of an hour with my intermediate class revealed that many of my learners were avid movie watchers and viewed English films with or without subtitles. I therefore decided to make the best use of this opportunity, to take them a little further and make films the tool in the teaching-learning process.

Films as authentic materials

My experiment with films as a resource in the language classroom has proved to be very rewarding, touching almost every area of language teaching.

The advantages of using films in the language

classroom are manifold. Films enhance the ability to understand spoken language in all its variety. Learners unconsciously assimilate language and sentence pattern as they view the film. They get an insight into new cultures, comprehend and recognize various accents and improve pronunciation. Learners are exposed to various social and cultural discourse conventions, which are pragmatically very apt. Besides, films are a valuable tool for raising the learners' awareness of the role of body language, facial expression in communicating different attitudes and emotions. The realistic language encourages learners to participate in film-related activities.

To prepare students for the challenges presented by today's globalised, networked, culturally diverse world teachers should put into practice, strategies and activities that involve assessing, analyzing and interpreting visual messages. Films have a great potential in the language classroom as they bring together a combination of various modes. They are rich in linguistic meaning, but they have certain modes, which are impossible to illustrate in a standard language lesson, particularly the gestural component.

Selecting the film

Films are ideas; they are unwritten texts, stories best suited for the purpose of teaching language,

challenging students to examine all aspects of their personal, social and cultural lives. One should be very particular while selecting films for the language classroom. Not any film will do. Action pictures do not usually work. Their issues are usually too black and white to promote discussion. Even more ineffective are the many Hollywood movies that appear every year designed to attract a large number of young people with varying combination of sex, violence and gross humor. These films have not much to say in them. The same goes true for movies with obscure problems or problems remote from the experience of students.

Teachers should take into consideration the interest and versatility of the film from a linguistic, cultural and thematic point of view. The level of language should also be evaluated, examining factors such as style or linguistic register and the dialect used. Teachers need to consider if the film is appropriate for the classroom. Again, while selecting movies, the proficiency level of the learners and the comprehensibility of the film should be taken into consideration. It is best to avoid films that make language learning difficult such as high verbal density, archaic language and heavy accent. The delivery of speech is also a factor that affects understanding.

Learning through films is one of the best ways to improve comprehension skills. Teachers should therefore try to select films that have a close connection between speech and action, a conventional story line with a simple plot and elements that enhance the diction. Thus careful selection and previewing of a film is essential. The teacher should be familiar with the film before screening. The material needs to be viewed with the audio off, in order to make out the visual message. The film should then be watched with the audio on, to decide if the language and plot is comprehensible enough. The idea of viewing a film in a language class creates a positive atmosphere in the classroom, which can enhance learner motivation. Stories that lend themselves to different learning activities with the integration of all the four language skills are best for use.

Films with subtitles are preferable for students' with language proficiency of intermediate to low level whereas films using colloquial language are more suitable for advanced students. Students might be asked about their preferences regarding different films. Films again provide exposure to various accents and cultures.

Task based activities

Films not only enhance the teaching techniques and resources but also diversify the curriculum. A combination of the audio and visual elements make films a comprehensive tool for language teaching. To keep the language class enjoyable and relaxed, learners need not passively watch films, it is important to plan the task ahead and check the learners' knowledge and vocabulary. The use of films with the support of structured materials can help students develop all four communication skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Oral skills

When teaching oral skills, it is important to notice that textbooks usually focus more on formal language and do not focus much on small talk or conversational interaction. A film can initiate a topic of group discussion, an interesting debate, exchanges of views and opinions or enactment of popular scenes from a film. For the purpose of encouraging conversation in language training, films that use emotional provocation in the context of debatable issues are considered to be the best.

Teaching vocabulary

Movies can be useful while teaching vocabulary. If the goal is to provide learners with communicative competence, it is interesting to hear them pick up instant phrases and expressions that they could actually use. The realistic verbal communication helps students to pick up language more effectively. Films help learners acquire instant vocabulary around a certain theme. The acquired vocabulary can be used in oral exercise or in a written assignment. Other vocabulary assignments related to films are for instance word lists or a gap-fill activity from a certain scene of the movie.

Cultural aspects

Using movies is a very apt medium to teach cultural aspects. The textbook gives a very limited picture of the English speaking world. It is important that the ESL learner views and understands another culture quite different from his own. Films again, work as a springboard for discussion and as an introduction to a new culture.

Regardless of the activity, it must be borne in mind that there is no point in showing the whole movie. Choosing a short film or excerpts from a movie, i.e. few scenes of 7-15 minutes duration is most appropriate.

How to start working with films

To begin with, I watch the selected film intently,

taking notes of words and expressions I want my students to learn and acquire. I pay attention to the plot and characters and note down important events, characteristic features, and cultural aspects. I prepare worksheets for the students to do before or after watching the film. I usually choose a short film (sometimes as short as 15 minutes) depending on my class duration. I use short scenes or movie clips to give learners practice in vocabulary and functional language. With the sound off, I would play a scene for the learners to study a character's body language. I would listen to their views and wrap up the activity by letting learners watch the scene again this time with the sound on. I would pause the recording after each character line to drill the learners for accuracy and then get them to practice the conversation together, trying to apply as many gestures and facial expressions as possible.

Films can actually make students speak. Films inspire language, students talk in spite of anxieties, that otherwise hold them back. Even the most timid students often find the necessity to express their feelings about a film they have just seen. Beyond generating a desire to speak, films provide a basis for conversation in a highly charged viewing experience that learners share with each other. Movies can rouse views and opinions and create discussion. Different types of group discussion or debates can thus be part of useful assignments including a talk on the favourite character or discussing an alternative ending for the film.

In addition to demonstrating aspects of spoken language such as tone and emphasis that are difficult to convey in other instructional forms, films provide an opportunity to become accustomed to idioms, slangs, colloquialism, regional accents and the everyday corruption of language that takes place among native speakers. For advanced students films provide a valuable learning resource. For less advanced students, it is better to screen old English /American movies of the 1950s and 1960s. Students might find them less engaging, but the standards of film realism were lower in these decades as far as language is concerned. Dialogue is uniformly audible and variables such as accent and idiom are minimized.

Conclusion

At the end, an important aspect to be remembered is the frequency in using the movies. As it is supposed to bring variety to the class and be an element of surprise to motivate the students in the teaching-learning process, this effective tool cannot however be overused.

This paper is based largely on insights gained from my personal teaching experience. It has been a positive experience that has revolutionized the way I approach language teaching and motivated me to look for newer alternatives to improve my own teaching and my students' learning.

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Only English, Please: We are Indians!

M. R. Vishwanathan

Scene 1¹: A state university : Students are riveted listening to a professor of literature lecture on Wordsworth's and Shelley's poetry; Professor A uses Tamil to fantastic impact, his students mesmerised by the comparison he evokes to drive home a point about Shelley's radical ideas or Wordsworth's spiritual themes - alternating between Tamil and English, Shakespeare and *purananuru*, Swami Vivekananda and Tennyson, Bharatiar and Shelley; Ramayana and the Iliad; sweet and refreshing to listen to one's tongue being honoured and treated at par with a foreign tongue; excited to be able to arrive at commonalities in thought between Indian and English poets; most of all, a happiness flooding one's being in being allowed the freedom to use Tamil to comprehend a wholly foreign idea, which ceases to be foreign when L1 is used and comparisons with indigenous cultures/texts are drawn.

Scene 2: A central university: Students are told in no uncertain terms that the best way to appreciate English literature is in and through English; mother tongue use is near taboo and a rule that must be respected for the duration of the programme; worse, L1 use is seen as stiling one's attempts to master English. Even worse, the pontificating that stress, rhythm and accent help one appreciate poetry or prose in English literature, since English is a stress timed language; a futile attempt to evince interest, and a slow death of enthusiasm over the semester.

Introduction

If English teaching harbours a multitude of sins in post-colonial India, the most cardinal among them is a faithful, almost fanatic, devotion to enforcing 'English only' rule in institutes of higher learning, where the medium of instruction is English. That *monolingualism* was a convenient piece of chicanery foisted on the natives by the colonizers for the latter's convenience and to endorse one language-the colonizers'-at the expense of indigenous languages, was first brought to light, ironically, by a onetime British council officer, Robert Phillipson, in his seminal work, *Linguistic Imperialism*, in 1992. Labelling it the *monolingual fallacy*, Phillipson maintained that it dates back to the time when language learning was inseparable from culture learning and when the British found it convenient to compel English on the colonized. Compelled by circumstances, the natives swallowed the *monolingual approach* bait and propagated the idea themselves, long after research in bilingualism established the monolingual approach as untenable.

While the monolingual approach sealed off attempts to teach learners in the mother tongue, thereby excluding from the system 'the child's most intense existential experience' (Phillipson, 1992, p.189), it also simultaneously set the scene for professional disaster. Local teachers of English who could have done a far better job of using local languages to teach language ended up teaching English through English with disastrous results.

In Andhra Pradesh, there have been several cases reported of students subjected to corporal punishment for failure to use only English in school. At college, students have been ridiculed for not being able to speak or write English fluently though the cause for poor performance lies in factors beyond the learners' control and which often go unreported. One such fallacy – the insistence on using only English to teach English – is still in vogue. This article seeks to give the lie to the belief that arbitrarily enforced rules

stimulate language learning; it argues that using L1 in the second language classroom strengthens second language learning.

The study

The impetus for the study emerged from teaching a class of first year students of engineering, many of whom were first generation learners and who lacked the necessary skills or input to follow lectures in English. Common sense informs one that meaning-making is better achieved through a language that both the teacher and the learner operate. A lot of time and effort is saved if certain items are taught in Hindi or Telugu rather than several futile attempts to teach it in English. Teachers who swear by '*English through English*' run the risk of alienating learners from learning the language. It is quite likely that even a die-hard believer in the 'English is best taught through English' may change their stance when confronted with a group of learners who need their mother tongue to get by.

The futility of persisting with English to teach the prescribed text became apparent when teaching a textbook titled *Wings of Fire* to first year students of engineering. After the class, a few students wanted to know what 'satellite' meant. This is a frequently occurring word and failure to know the meaning implied a total failure to make sense of the lesson. Efforts to reach them in English through circumlocution and paraphrasing failed until a student fluent in both Telugu and English was called upon to translate the word into Telugu from English and supply the Telugu equivalent: '*upagraham*'. The students felt very happy as they were able to relate better to the lesson from that point onwards.

The experiment with L1 use did not stop there; instead it marked the point of departure for the entire semester. Students who had had their education in regional medium schools – there were quite a few – were not only able to relate immediately to the lessons but also showed renewed enthusiasm to participate in the learning process. Words, which one assumed were commonplace, did not reach the students and translation eased the task of interpretation. Words such as missile (*Kshipani*), boat (*oda*), battle ship (*padava*), guns (*thupakki*) were easily understood and the lesson better received after the Telugu equivalent was supplied. Using L1 therefore had its uses and failure to use it meant wasting the text on a bunch of eager minds.

Teachers ought to be encouraged to use L1 in the second language classroom. In some quarters there has been criticism over the use of mother tongue



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on the mistaken assumption that mother tongue will somehow be a barrier to SLA. Research has proved that this is far from true. Teachers of English who share the learners' mother tongue needn't feel guilty or embarrassed to use mother tongue whenever and wherever necessary, if using the learners' language makes for better comprehension.

There are two major schools of thought where learning English in a second language classroom is concerned. Howatt (1984, p.284) characterises the two broad points of view as 'using English to learn it' and 'learning English to use it', the former i.e. 'using English to learn it' emphasises using only English in the second language classroom, while the latter view advocates the use of the mother tongue to learn it. The two divergent points have divided ELT practitioners worldwide, more so in countries that employ native speakers of English to teach English as a foreign language or second language.

A study that is of particular significance in the present context is the one by Kim & Petraki (2009), which investigated the perception of teachers and students to the use of L1 in the second language classroom. The study assumes importance in that it was conducted in a school that had both native (NESTs - Native Speaker Teachers of English) and Non-NESTs (Non-Native Speaker Teachers of English). The students were all Korean speakers learning English as a foreign language and divided into three levels based on their competence: Basic, Intermediate and Advanced.

Data from the study revealed a very interesting pattern of response to mother tongue use in the classroom by teachers and students. NESTs were unanimous in dismissing the idea as non viable and inadvisable, a predictable response considering that none of them knew the local language-Korean- or attempted to learn it while Non NESTs favoured its use at Basic and intermediate levels, though they did concede that advanced level students did not need Korean for helping them learn English. Interestingly, Korean students themselves heartily welcomed the suggestion as a great help in learning English. The number of students who invited L1 use, however, diminished with increase in levels of fluency. Students with low proficiency levels were highly approving of the idea to use Korean as a scaffold to teach English while those at the advanced levels did not perceive the desperate need for L1 use.

Both students and teachers specified where L1 ought to be used and where it should not be. Students for example felt that using L1 to teach

rules of grammar and clarifying the meaning of words and idioms was highly desirable. They did not take to the use of L1 in group and pair work. Teachers on the other hand saw as most beneficial, the use of L1 in teaching reading and writing while they frowned on its use in listening and speaking. Both teachers and students concurred that 'the lack of the L1 option especially with the mixed ability students, can lead to cultural misunderstanding and can create an unsupportive environment where there is a lack of sympathy and negotiation on both sides.' (Kim & Petraki, 2009, p.72).

Much like Kim & Petraki, Canagarajah (1999) offers many useful suggestions for incorporating L1 in the second language classroom. He advocates workable strategies to take language to learners whose proficiency in English is low, but who need the language to get into gainful employment and for socio-economic advancement.

1. Setting up small groups for tasks and discussion with students from similar language groups.
2. Pairing more proficient students with less proficient students of the same language group for peer tutoring provides opportunities for peer translation of text or teacher instruction.
3. Encouraging the use of bilingual dictionaries and provision of native language reference books will enable students to deal with L1 written material and negotiate bilingual literacy.
4. Maintaining journals will help to provide students with ways to use their own languages or mixed codes for expressing themselves imaginatively. (p.193)

The above mentioned strategies lower student inhibition and encourage active participation since their 'affective filter' (Krashen, 1982) is considerably lowered and the compulsion to switch immediately to target language is dispensed with. The cause of English language teaching and second language acquisition is served better if teachers promote the use of L1 in L2 classroom and allow learners leeway in choosing those areas that need L1 use in the initial stages by weak learners. The strength lies in identifying the exact nature of help that learners may need from time to time and provide them with that help to help them master a language using a resource they are already in possession.

The use and promotion of L1 in L2 learning therefore need not be treated with dismay or seen as policy failure to achieve successful learning

from using target language alone. Such a view, it must be clear by now, needs to be discredited. L1 functions as a resource worthy of use in the second language classroom; discounting it is tantamount to promoting a spurious approach to language teaching that does more harm than good.

Conclusion

As teachers of second language in our own right, the onus is on us to take language to learners without making them feel inferior or pressured to conform to pre-determined norms which make unnecessary demands on the learners' limited L2 linguistic repertoire; teaching them using L1 goes a long way in providing them with coping mechanisms while ensuring their continued participation and meaningful learning in the pedagogic process.

I was a student of both the universities mentioned above.

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Translating and Transacting Folk Literature in Indian Classrooms:

A Comparative Study of Afro-American Music and Awadhi Folk Songs

Amit Singh

In a multilingual and multicultural environment, teaching texts from Indian literature is a complicated pedagogical act. Some respite is provided in this act if the text under consideration is safely enshrined within the written literary tradition. Such a text provides a degree of ease to the instructor whose biggest challenge in such a case is to negotiate the cultural gap between English and Indian language dexterously with least deviation from political correctness. But the same instructor would be completely at sea if given an oral work to teach. This is so because the folk space itself, with its shifting definitions, changing vocabulary and evolving repertoire of issues addressed, is a difficult terrain for theorizing, translating and teaching. Pedagogical problems associated with teaching folklore may be delineated as the following.

Firstly, the paradigms that define literary studies most often—the author, the context and the historicity of the text—are conspicuously missing in the case of texts from folklore. The first challenge in front of the instructor is to convey to an eager student the idea that there *is* indeed literature which operates without these 'essential' parameters of literary studies and that the study

of such literature is no less valid or relevant than that of material they have become used to deal with. Evolving some new parameters in this case could shift the students' focus from the rigmarole of literary studies and make them aware of some newer aspects of literature seen in oral texts only. The teacher also needs to facilitate a process of unlearning as the most commonplace understanding of the folk is picked up by students from sources (such as Bollywood cinema) which usually present a distorted picture of folklore. One could seek as examples numerous film songs, which claim roots in the folk culture, with sound and effect of folksongs but which at best have only cosmetic sprinklings of peppy folk elements. A picture of folklore, particularly folksongs as texts with a serious and set agenda, needs to be firstly impressed on a student's mind to prepare the ground for further negotiation.

The second task is to reach a common ground of understanding in a multilingual, multi-ethnic Indian classroom. The issue gets definitely complicated when one thinks of including a folk text, say a folk tale or a folksong in translation, in a syllabus catering to students coming from diverse linguistic backgrounds. The heterogeneous



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matrix is rendered even more complicated when each student is considered as a carrier of not just a different language but a unique folklore too. Folklore both unites and divides. While the universality of some basic issues in folklore may bring people together, the differences in language, ideology and culture often prevent any accession for mutual dialogue between diverse folklores. It is indeed a herculean task to address this heterogeneity in a university classroom, which has more often than not, its own power dynamics.

The third problem that faces an instructor transacting a folk text in class is related to the pedagogical framework. It takes a lot of blood and sweat to convince the students that, folklore is as mainstream a branch of enquiry as say, Renaissance studies. As a humble student of folklore studies, it has been my common experience to be questioned as to how what I do is related to literature. And both the custodians of the discipline as well as the students ask this question repeatedly. In the present times when Culture Studies have become integral parts of research in literature departments across the globe, and when the definition of the 'text' is pushing into diverse directions, it is rather lamentable to be asked such questions. In such a scenario, sensitizing students towards the importance of oral traditions and folklore is extremely pertinent. Also required of them is an ability to differentiate between the anthropological/ethnographic/sociological study and folkloristics/folklore studies. The epistemic boundaries of the subject matter need to be laid down before one proceeds to analyze a text.

The final and to my mind the biggest challenge that the instructor faces is that of authenticity. With numerous versions available of the same piece in the oral field, any mention of authenticity sounds not just tough to tackle but also preposterous. The fact that folklore is essentially communal in nature and therefore attributing a folk-text to one particular author is impossible, adds to the academician's woes. The questions, which arise thus are-How to project the chosen text not as *the* definitive text but as a representative one? How to convey to the class that all its versions though outside the purview of the syllabus, are as valid and good? Does one nod in agreement with early folklorists like Cecil Sharp who believed that folksongs also are subject to Darwinian process of natural selection-only the best ones among them survive while the others fall by the wayside? Or does one concur with Ramanujan's assertion about folk texts that 'no text is original, yet no telling is a mere

retelling'? (Ramanujan, 1991, p.158) These are some questions on which one needs clarity before entering the class with that one folk text.

Translation, the obvious vehicle for the transaction of folklore in English classrooms, does address the problems related to heterogeneity. While the inclusion of a song or a tale in English translation eases out many practical knots, it also foregrounds the diversity of folk culture itself. A useful exercise in class could be to let the students collect folk texts related to the one in syllabus from their own folk milieu and attempt to translate them. Such a comparative reading would not only compel them to think about their own folklore, but also sensitize them to wider issues such as representation in translation. What gets lost in translation becomes apparent only when one translates. It can also teach the students what is gained in translation- not just a common ground between languages for a dialogue but also a reservoir of tricks to handle sticky translation problems. An example that comes to my mind is the emergence of an appropriate word for 'railway station' in a discussion about translation I was part of. While Hindi does not really have a proper common noun for the term, Marathi has the word 'sthanak' (derived from Sanskrit of course) to convey the image exactly. So, even if the immediate point of reference of such discussions is English, they offer a level ground many a times for a fair exchange of ideas related to the Bhasas.

Another way to address these pedagogical problems is to take refuge in comparative studies and foreground the universality of certain emotions and thoughts as far as folklore is concerned. Shifting the dialogue from multi-ethnic to multicultural grounds provides a better perspective to the students in class. 'A multicultural view can show that art is produced by groups for similar reasons, though objects from various groups may be expressive of differing beliefs. It can also reveal similarities, point out to students that all humans get inspired in similar ways.' (Congdon, 1985, p.16) True to this thought, a comparison between Afro-American music and Awadhi folksongs seems a viable option. The comparison derives validity from the fact that it began as folk music of a well-defined ethnic community and that some genres in Afro-American folk music have exact parallels in the Awadhi folk tradition. Awadhi genres of 'Sawan', 'Kajri' and 'Birha' have a strong resemblance with Blues in sentiment. Blues as a 'stylized complaint about earthly trials and troubles, a complaint countered, if at all, by the flickering promise of an occasional good time or loving

companion' (Gates & McKay, 2003, p.22) defined in many ways the emergence of Afro-American music as a commercially viable enterprise. The indefinable state of blues, which finds expression in Blues is experienced even in the Kajri and Birha songs from the Awadhi belt. As a witness to large scale migration of men from villages to urban centres for a livelihood, this region has had a long tradition of music of woe and sorrow expressed by women. Interestingly, Birha and Kajri also comprise the genre of complaint in Awadhi folk music. Typically in this region, the folksong is the space where fantasies, wishes and desires of women find an articulation. Even those women, who belong to the 'lowest' substratum of society and who have no language or medium of self-expression, take recourse to these songs to articulate their desires. The emotional framework of an average Kajri or Sawan is similar to that of the Blues. In the following examples of Sawan, Kajri and Blues songs, one has tried to highlight this similarity.

*The window was open all night long
O where did you waste the night?
I served dinner on a plate of gold
The dinner lay there all night
Water from Ganga, anklets, amulet,
The amulet lay there all night.
I prepared the bed with a white bedspread
The bed lay there all night.*

I chose to translate this Kajri ('Khirki khuli rahi sari ratiya') and the next Sawan ('Sawan aaye, saiyan nahi aaye') because of their explicit expressions of desire and disappointment which match not only Bessie Smith's Blues quoted here but also several others like 'St. Louis Blues', 'See, See Rider' and 'How Long Blues'. One gets a similar feeling on listening to the following Sawan:

*The month of Sawan is here but not my beloved,
O my Nanadi's brother isn't here.
The courtyard is a blooming garden
I can't cross the threshold dear.
The bed seems teaming with snakes
Stinging me in his absence dear.*

These sentiments of sorrow, loss, gloom, loneliness and desperation find echo in the following Blues, originally recorded by Bessie Smith in 1923.

*I've got the blues, I feel so lonely
I'll give the world if I could only
Make you understand
It surely would be grand
I'm gonna telephone my baby
Ask him won't you please come home*

*'Cause when you're gone, I'm worried all day long
Baby won't you please come home*

*I have tried in vain
Ever more to call your name
When you left you broke my heart
That will never make us part
Every hour in the day
You will hear me say
Baby won't you please come home...*

*Cause your mama's all alone
I have tried in vain
Never more to call your name
When you left you broke my heart
That will never make us part
Landlord getting' worse, I've got to move May the first
Baby won't you please come home, I need money
Baby won't you please come home.*

To conclude, this technique of comparison solves some of the pedagogical problems stated above by providing a field for interrogation and examination of certain aspects of folklore, which transcend ethnic, lingual, cultural and national boundaries. Comparative folk studies is a framework in itself in which cross-cultural analysis gains precedence over technical issues such as context and historicity. It also foregrounds the 'universal' realization that the literature generated by common people, addressing their common emotional needs is significant for study within formal spaces of classrooms and syllabi.

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Challenges of Heritage Language Teaching

Rajesh Kumar

Introduction

Special attention to the teaching of heritage and foreign languages is on the rise in most part of the world in general and in the United States of America in particular. A lot of work has been done on the teaching of heritage languages such as Arabic, Japanese, Korean (Kondo-Brown, 2004) and Spanish (Valdés, 2000). Heritage languages of South Asian origin in general and Hindi in particular have not been among such languages (Gambhir, 1999). There have been two professional meetings on heritage languages. 'First National Conference on Heritage Languages in America' in 1999 in California where around three hundred participants including professionals, researchers and representatives of government and private organizations representing thirty different heritage languages termed them as 'national resource' and highlighted core issues. Another similar effort is UCLA Language Steering Committee Meeting, which raises similar questions. One of the conclusions of both the meetings was to identify student population and formalize students' profile to design courses and materials that respects and recognizes what learners bring to the class.

This paper outlines learner profile of Hindi in the United States. It begins with the definition of heritage language and presents a brief synopsis of the issue in literature. It presents learners profile, makes recommendations and outlines challenges in research and heritage language instruction.

The Issue in Literature

While understanding the term heritage language learner Carreira (2004) quotes the popular story of six blind men and an elephant¹. Disagreement exists among researchers and teachers about the term heritage language learners (Wiley, 1999). Most of the researchers seem to agree with Fishman (1999) on the definition of heritage language. Heritage language includes any indigenous, colonial, and immigrant languages. They may or may not be a language regularly used in home or in community (Fishman, 1999). Similarly, many seem to agree with Valdés' (2000) definition of heritage language learner. According to her heritage speaker refers to 'a student who is raised in a home where a non-English language

is spoken, who speaks or merely understands the heritage language, and who is to some extent bilingual in English and the heritage language' (Valdés, 2000).

Focusing on Spanish learners Valdés (2000) discusses the language characteristics of heritage learners. She talks about the ways in which bilingual heritage speakers develop skills in English and in the heritage language. She further discusses the challenges that the language pedagogy faces in the USA and educators' attitude. Fishman (2000) and Wiley (1999) have highlighted issues in pedagogy as well. Wiley (1999) gives an account of national policies on heritage language education and maintenance. He observes a shift in the twentieth century in changing attitude toward heritage speakers including 'promotion, accommodation, tolerance or suppression'.

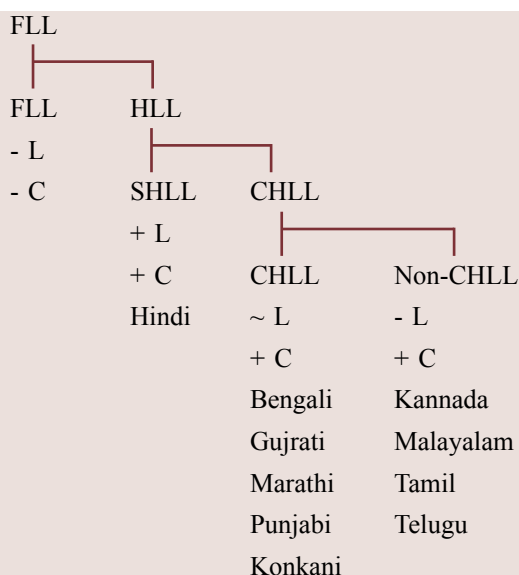
Most of the work on heritage language and heritage language learners came up following the census of 1999 of USA (Chevalier, 2004). It shows 10% of the total population as foreign-born. It is not surprising that the statistics show this figure of foreign-born residents the largest in United States history. Statistics show that in 1990's Americans speaking a language other than English at home grew up by 47%. More than 150 languages other than English are used in the USA (Brecht & Ingold, 1998). Such a change in statistics and eventually in demography must attract the attention of policy makers and researchers. Nonetheless, Hindi does not appear receiving enough attention in the USA.

Gambhir (1999) presents a clear situation of Hindi teaching enterprise. He puts Hindi as 'truly less commonly taught languages (TLCTLs)'. He contrasts it with the enrollment statistics of various languages. Needs, motivations and strengths of the learners of TLCTLs are well categorized in Gambhir (1999). Gambhir observes that the low enrollment in Hindi classes results into fewer class offerings at American Universities. Subsequently, we get a class of students with mixed proficiency in the target language. Among the challenges that Hindi teaching enterprise is facing, Gambhir highlights, are non-native instructors, lack of appropriate teaching materials, teacher training, and informed

methodology. The lack of research in teaching methodology and patterns of language acquisition in Hindi is worth mentioning here. In the next section, I would like to focus on two issues namely learner profile in Hindi classes.

Learner Profile

According to the conclusions of the UCLA Steering Committee meeting in 2000, the distinction between heritage language and foreign language acquisition is that heritage language acquisition begins at home, as opposed to foreign language acquisition which at least initially usually begins in a classroom setting. This observation is crucial for a discussion on learner profile of Hindi. Until early 1980s, Hindi was essentially a foreign language. Beginning late 1980s, we observe a change in the learner type in classrooms. Since then a considerable number of American born South Asians come to Hindi classes. After late 1990's and in the recent years too, we find such students in Hindi classes in majority. This section discusses the composition of a typical Hindi class. The following diagram illustrates.



A Hindi class shows two groups – Foreign Language Learners (FLL) and Heritage Language Learners (HLL). For a Hindi class those who are not Heritage Language Learners are Foreign Language Learners. Heritage Language Learners bring some knowledge of language and culture to the class (+L, +C) whereas the Foreign Language Learners do not bring any thing of similar sort (-L, -C). Heritage Language Learners have had Hindi or some other Indo-Aryan or Dravidian Language in their background whereas Foreign Language Learners do not have such background. These two subgroups of a Hindi class require separate attention.

Composition of a class with heritage language learners reveals that this is not a homogenous group. We divide heritage language learners into at least two groups – Strict Heritage Language Learners (SHLL) and Cognate Heritage Language Learners (CHLL). Strict Heritage Language Learners bring language and culture (+L, +C) both to the class. Among the Cognate Heritage language Learners, we find two sub types such as – Cognate Heritage Language Learners (CHLL) and Non-Cognate Heritage Language Learners (NonCHLL). All the types of Heritage Language Learners have had one or the other Indo-Aryan language or Dravidian language in their background. Students with Hindi in their background fall in Strict Heritage Language Learners (SHLL) category. Students with any Indo-Aryan language other than Hindi i.e. Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Konkani, etc. fall in Cognate Heritage Language Learners category. Finally, students with Dravidian language (such as Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam) in their background fall in Non-Cognate Heritage Language Learners category. This classification of a Heritage Language Learners is purely based on the familiarity of students with language and culture. SHLLs bring both language and culture to the class (+L, +C). The situation is different with CHLLs i.e. ~L, +C. Note that it is not – L. However, NonCHLLs come with no language but they do bring to the class familiarity with culture. Such is the variation of learners in a Hindi class. Foreign language learners are usually from English and Spanish background.

Suggestions

Such a wide range of learners has serious implications for classrooms. Learners' aspirations and motivations are different from one another. FLLs and NonCHLLs fall in the same category. They have no knowledge of written or spoken form of the target language. The SHLLs and CHLLs are familiar with at least spoken language. Many from these two groups of learners speak and understand some bit of Hindi. They do not read or write Hindi though. This comes from answers on initial survey form in the class.

We see a clear pattern of at least two types of audience in the class. FLLs and NonCHLLs constitute 25% of an elementary Hindi class, whereas SHLLs and CHLLs constitute 75% of the class. Elementary classes usually begin with an assisted instruction of script. For the first two to three weeks, things go relatively well. However, HLLs learn the script faster than the FLLs. On the other hand, once learning of script is over, HLLs make more mistakes than the FLLs do. FLLs

seek more emphasis on the structure of language, whereas the HLLs (including Non-CHLLs) do not demand or prefer such an emphasis in the class. HLLs seek more information about the cultural aspects of India. They want to be able to speak Hindi as fast as possible. Keeping the aspirations and the need of the SHLLs and CHLLs, if the focus turns more on spoken Hindi in the elementary Hindi class, the FLLs and NonCHLLs in the class are lost on the way. The class becomes too fast for such a group of students. This conclusion comes from a careful study of the comments on the required evaluation sheets.

If we look at the history of Hindi teaching in the USA, the curricular framework was designed to deliver Hindi to FLLs in the early days. In some way or the other most of the time elementary classes follow structural and pattern drills method of teaching. Since the last decade, professionals in the field of teaching Hindi have realized that the target-learning community has changed from largely FLLs to largely HLLs. Many Hindi teaching programs have not responded to the need of target community in giving required attention to both groups. Similarly, teaching materials do not address learner-needs and contemporary contexts of learning situations of either of the two groups.

The proposed suggestions are as follows. Teaching programs require two separate tracks for two learner-types. It requires focus on the development of the teaching materials that incorporate interactive technologies to teach skills for spoken and written language in a manner that provides an understanding and appreciation of cultural nuances of linguistic interaction with people of South Asia. Language learning must be embedded in the context of contemporary cultural setting with the goal of teaching the language and its use in the native cultural context with appropriate grammatical details. Materials must be grounded in the indigenous context. Learners must negotiate meaning through interactional social context with knowledge of language use.

Conclusion

This paper focuses on the changing audience in a Hindi language classroom. The audience has changed from purely foreign language learners to largely heritage learners. This paper provides a description and the classification of the heritage language learners in a Hindi class. Finally, it argues the need of two separate tracks for teaching both the types of learners as the requirements and expectations of two types of learners are different. This paper underlines the lack of specialized teaching materials and suggests

that precautions must be exercised in designing such materials.

Six blind men were describing an elephant. Each of them came up with a description of the elephant based on the part he touched. They reached contradictory conclusions. They resolved the issue when somebody who had seen the elephant described it to them. They realized that the integration of all their views would give them clearer picture.

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Interview with

Dee Broughton

by Iqbal Judge



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Iqbal Judge, Ph.D is an Associate Professor at Govt. College for Girls, Sector 11, Chandigarh and is keenly interested in ELT methodologies, the use of innovative teaching practices as well as interrogating gender issues and campaigning for women's equality.

Ms Dee Broughton is Senior English Language Fellow, Regional English Language Office (RELO), American Centre, New Delhi. She is currently on a year's programme at H.M. Patel Institute of English Training and Research at Vallabh Vidya Nagar, Gujarat, where she leads teacher training sessions, works with teachers in developing teacher-training materials, school-level text-books, etc. and runs academic writing sessions for research scholars. She specializes in teacher training, teaching academic writing, proficiency assessment and usage of frequency-based vocabulary tests. She is engaged in doctoral research on the use of sources in second language writing.

In the US Ms. Broughton is on the faculty of MA-TESOL in the Dept. of English, University of Idaho, where she teaches advanced research writing for international students and international English Language teachers. In her spare time, she designs professional presentation materials and writes and edits e-books for private clients.

RELO has very generously made her services available for conducting workshops on Streaming as well as Teaching of Academic Writing at Bharati College, New Delhi.

She was interviewed by Dr Iqbal Judge during the course of the workshop for teachers on Teaching Academic Writing to students of the BA Programme.

Why Academic Writing

Academic Writing is a prime concern, especially in higher education. Though we place great stress on it and test our students almost exclusively through their ability to write, we don't actually

and formally teach them academic writing. In schools, the culture of rote-learning and writing readymade, short, often one-line answers deprives students of the ability to think and to independently write a coherent piece or present an argument formally. There is not only a paucity of ideas and originality, but also the fact that given the popularity of code-mixing, code-switching, SMS, facebook and twitter, many students are unable to keep to a formal register. Research papers are rejected because norms of academic writing are not adhered to or more seriously, on charges of plagiarism. Therefore, teaching academic writing is the need of the hour.

The Interview

Iqbal Judge (IJ): Thank you for agreeing to this interview, even though you must be quite exhausted after your intensive 3-day workshop here at Bharati College, as Senior Language Fellow under the auspices of RELO.

What is your assessment of the language teaching scenario?

Dee Broughton (DB): Well, I'm constantly impressed by how interested teachers are in doing good things with their students, despite the obstacles and challenges they have to contend with!

In India, there is a great deal of emphasis on assessment, and we see a lot of effect that has on the teaching and on the learning and not all of it is very effective. Teachers are expressing the desire to change the assessment so that the teaching can change, so that the entire system can produce more English language users, with a greater ability to use the language skillfully in different situations...and they need a change of



the emphasis in assessment from Literature to proficiency, so that they can move from teaching Literature to proficiency.

IJ: You place a lot of emphasis on teaching Academic Writing to students. Why?

DB: From what I've seen, there is no *real* teaching of academic writing in India...I haven't seen any at all. Doesn't mean it doesn't exist, but it certainly isn't widespread. I see people who are admitted into M.Phil. programmes and that's the first time they do extended writing. From my point of that's quite late and so I would love to see more writing at school level. My emphasis right now is on training teachers to introduce academic writing at the undergraduate level, so that by the time people get to an M.phil or Ph.D. programme, they have actually quite a lot of basic experience in using sources, structuring complex ideas, etc. and are equipped to do real research.

My strong belief is that academic writing is the way to share ideas and solve problems in the world, and we need the ideas and researches of Indian scholars to be included in that; and in order to do that they need to publish internationally. So we need to raise particularly their ability to use sources, to cite properly, and to connect those to their own ideas properly. My focus is on the use of sources and on the structures that academic writing uses to organize ideas, because with these two things you can share your ideas with the world internationally.

Much smaller issues are like grammar, and things like that...which can be fixed after the ideas are expressed clearly and shared properly.

IJ: Isn't this a kind of paradigm shift then, for us teachers in India, because here the focus seems to be on teaching Literature and improving grammar?

DB: Right...exactly. I think it's definitely a paradigm shift because in the past focusing on Literature has also led you to focus on 'the facts of the text'; sometimes Literature is not even taught in English at all, it's taught in a class in somebody's mother-tongue in Hindi or Gujarati, and it's a 'cultural approach' to Literature, we're teaching *about* the Literature, not actually teaching the text...So this a very large shift, because to build proficiency in a language you need to focus on the *language*, and many times people do think it means focusing on grammar or whatever, but it doesn't mean just that. Even more importantly, if you focus on writing, there's a focus on: Look carefully at this text to see how the writer did this ...why did the writer use all of these adjectives...

why did the writer punctuate it this way... why did they use dialogue here ... what *changes* in the meaning of a text when the writer does this or that?... *That* is what focusing on the language means.

Teachers need to be constantly reminded that the real goal is to improve proficiency...it's not to produce a perfect paragraph about a particular poem or story, it's to produce a student body that is capable of writing a paragraph about *anything*, that will make sense to other people - and *that's* very different. Because in one case you may be trying to model a paragraph for your students to repeat it perfectly and in another you'll teach them to think deeply about what they read, and to respond with ideas and how to organize those in ways that other people will understand.

IJ: This would mean then, that the students must actively engage with the text; but very often one finds that some students—particularly those used to the 'teacher explains in the mother-tongue and students memorise method' can't understand the text at all, or at least most parts of it.

DB: One thing we talked about in this workshop is the idea of comprehensible input. It's very important at low levels of learning English that students be given information that they can understand in the language. You have to understand about 85% of what you can read, in order to learn the other 15% that you don't understand. So if we want students to learn new things from language, then it has to be mostly comprehensible in the beginning. One of the things we worked on a few months ago here was the idea of what makes it comprehensible...based on vocabulary ... and how to determine the level of the students as far as what vocabulary they already have so we can assume that it will be comprehensible.

IJ: I think you'd mentioned some internet sites that we could use to check whether a particular text would be comprehensible for a particular level of student.

DB: There are a couple that I use a lot...you can google Paul Nation... He's a very big name in vocabulary, a very generous researcher; he distributes a lot of his findings and data, and the test he's devised. There's also a software he's devised, called 'Range'. You can feed a text part into it and it will give you a report that tells you how many of the words in that text fall into the most common list of words, and how many into the next most common and how many are in the academic list, so it gives teachers or text

book writers an awareness of how common the vocabulary is in that piece.

IJ: You also lay a lot of emphasis on stimulating thinking.

DB: Yes, that's the second keystone of my approach to building language proficiency. People acquire language only by using language meaningfully. And you can only use language meaningfully if you are thinking.

In order to organize your thoughts, you have to have thoughts; in order to use language you have to have something to say. So we need to stimulate thinking, to encourage them to think about the input, to think about the story, letter, text or whatever, in ways that will help them to produce more language. Therefore, we need more open-ended questions, less of yes-no questions, or questions that already suggest an answer.

And then, one of the ways in which people show they've learnt the language, especially in an academic or testing situation, is to write. Most of the time proficiency is also being tested through writing, so that's one reason. The other is simply that writing is thinking. We, as a human species, can't have very complex thoughts without writing, because we can't hold all of them down in our heads at one time. We have to write things in order to remember them, we have to analyse them, and revise our thoughts to make them clear. All that requires writing. So writing is thinking.

IJ: What about encouraging spoken interaction, doing brainstorming, etc?

DB: I suppose you can do some of that in speaking, but programs that start by teaching speaking only bring your student up to a certain level; yes, you can get a job, you know, in some service fields or whatever with good spoken English, but that is not going to raise the entire level of India in international academic standards. People don't have high-level ideas about research orally; you write them down. So that's why we're bringing in writing.

IJ: Could you give us a glimpse, perhaps by way of an example, of how, even at lower levels, teachers could bring students to engage in higher-order thinking and how to structure an academic discourse?

DB: Well, the important thing is to get your students to think about and engage with real problems, real issues in their lives, and to write about them. Something that isn't in the story or text that they've read, but is possible in real life, is a good question to provoke thinking.

For example, if it's an article or story about inventions, children could be asked to think of and list inventions that they think are important. Then, each student would be asked to think about what makes these inventions 'important'. Does 'important' mean that something is popular? Does it mean that it saves lives or helps people? Is something more important if it helps more people? Each student would need to think about their definition of 'important'. The text must actually serve as a spring board to spark off thinking and this exercise helps to develop logic and evaluation skills. Children should be stimulated with open questions to realize that the idea of 'importance' is relative. There is no 'right' answer to what makes something important, but it is important to critical thinking to realize that when people say something is important, they have some criteria in mind for what that means.

I mentioned earlier about citing sources, and the structures that academic writing uses to organise ideas. These too can be dove-tailed into the above activity. For example, each student would need to ask at least six, or eight, or ten others, what they thought an important invention was, and why... or what their definition of 'important' was. They would then need to present their findings in writing, using the structures that the teacher would have already given them: Some people think that... others say, within quotes... one said.. and I think that...

IJ: That sounds interesting and do-able. It engages the students, makes them use language, ask questions, note down responses, categorise the responses, become aware of different viewpoints.. and it also gives them the 'content' for writing. Wow!

DB: Yes, and you can see that this simple organisational format can be used at different levels, from the simplest to more advanced, complex pieces of academic writing—research papers, for instance.

IJ: Well, you've enthused me, Dee, into trying this technique out in my very next class, and I hope those who read this will also do the same. Thank you very much for this stimulating interview.

DB: My pleasure...



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Language Games and Activities

Ruchi Kaushik

Task 1

Let's play a game *Guess your friend's nature, win a friendship band!*

Skill focus: Speaking, Listening

Task Type: Pair-work

Time: 40 minutes

Material required: Some friendship bands, chits containing some problem situations



(Retrieved July 14, 2010 from <http://www.committedmarriage.com/images/Personality.jpg>)

Methodology:

The teacher invites responses from students as she/he introduces the theme of friendship. The teacher should emphasize on how we look for certain qualities while making friends. For e.g. honesty, loyalty, helping and understanding nature etc. The teacher writes down important ideas/ words on the blackboard.

The teacher divides the students in pairs. He/she tells them that they are about to play a game called *Guess your friend's nature, win a friendship band!* The teacher gives each pair a chit

containing a problem situation- asks the students not to look at it until the game begins.

The teacher explains the game now. Once the game starts, each pair works in the following manner: The students read the problem situation. They provide their response to the situation one by one to each other in 2-3 sentences. Based on the response, each student conjectures what his partner's nature/personality is. For e.g. if the problem situation is *-You have an exam and you are caught in a traffic jam...*

The first student's response is- First of all, I will pray to God that I reach the exam centre in time. Then I will call/sms my father and ask him what I should do.

The second student's guess about him/her - Your response suggests that you are a very religious person and you are certain that God will rescue you whenever you are in distress. Also, you rely heavily on your family, especially your father for advice. However, you seem hesitant to take an action on your own etc.

Then the second student gives his response and the first student guesses about him.

The teacher then announces that the game has begun. So that the students pick up their chit, read the problem and offer their response. They take turns to share their opinion about each other. If a guess is wrong then the partner can help by giving more hints without providing a direct answer. Each pair gets 8-10 minutes for the activity.

The first 5 pairs who finish this task get friendship bands that they can tie to their friend's wrist. Also the teacher invites them to share their responses with the class.

Task 2

Friendship is like...

Skill focus: Writing, speaking

Task type: Pair-work

Time: 25 minutes

Methodology:

1. As a follow-up exercise to Task 1, the teacher asks students to define friendship by comparing it to a process/ thing etc. They can bring in humour and creativity. The teacher must encourage students to write freely and imaginatively as that is the first step towards good writing.

2. The teacher divides the class into pairs of two and puts some interesting ideas on board such as:

Friendship is like...

Friendship is like a thick crust pizza...

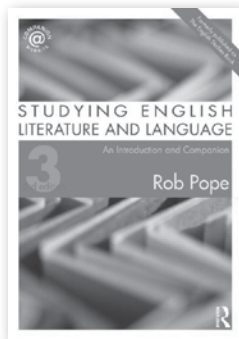
Friendship is like a spiral staircase...

Friendship is like a tattered pair of jeans...

3. Now the teacher asks the students in each pair to write 100 words on whichever comparison they like and can build on.

4. The teacher asks a few volunteers to read out their answers.

STUDYING ENGLISH LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE



Pope, Rob. (2012). *Studying English Literature and Language: An Introduction and Companion*. London and New York: Routledge.

Pp 448, Rs. 2167/-

ISBN: 9780415498760

Reviewed by: Satyendra Singh

Being a student and teacher of English in India, the one quintessential question that has always warranted (or perhaps, dictated) my attention and curiosity since years has been to understand the nature, purpose and politics of English studies in India. In a classroom of English in India, one constantly encounters a diverse range of arguments and counter-arguments, ranging from postcolonial, nativist, anti-globalization subject positions to aesthetic and liberal humanist perspectives, and many more, which compel us (students/teachers of English in India) to repeatedly examine and re-examine the motif, structure and methodology of our pedagogy. These debates inevitably make their way to our English classrooms and require us to engage with larger questions of changing nature of English studies in India and across the world over the past few decades. Rob Pope's *Studying English Literature and Language* attempts to capture this consciousness of the changing terrain of the discipline in recent times, as it seeks to open up the boundaries of the discourse to a more dialogic, more pluralistic, and more self-reflexive, multicultural approach. The latest, third edition of the book (which came out in the year 2012) incorporates several new sections that attempt to address English and English studies from a more varied, more diverse, and more interdisciplinary perspectives, while at the same time, making it valuable and useful for students and teachers of not only English literature, but also of language, communication, cultural and media studies. The book purports to be a companion, a guide, a handbook, as well as an anthology, meant for flexible handling, which tries to trigger off creative and critical engagements with the various textual, critical and theoretical propositions, instead of adopting a closed, informative and informative approach (Pope, 2012, p.1).

The book is divided into six coherently interconnected sections that deal with the various dimensions of doing English; addressing not only academic concerns (like how to write an essay or a seminar paper, or how to do research) but also delves into pragmatic issues like the various kinds of job opportunities available in market for a student of English, and how a dynamically interrelated complex of studying-working-playing can be carried forward to the rest of our lives (Pope, 2012, p.366). Part One of the book, Introduction to English Studies, brings out the plurality of English, owing to its history of origin and proliferation across the globe (along with colonialism), making it not just a linguistic polyglot but also a culturally polyvalent discourse. In the Prelude to the book, titled Changing English Now, Pope highlights that the changing nature of English makes it neither a 'single subject' nor a 'simple object', but renders verbal attributes of a 'process' to it, which has been changing with the changing contexts of place, person and time (Pope, 2012, p.8). Or in other words, '*it is what we do*' (Pope, 2012, p.8). Pope's model of doing English, then, becomes his chief methodology throughout the book. It is a dynamic and dialogic methodology where English becomes a 'meta-language', that is, 'Meta-English' or 'English-on-English'. Consequently, doing English becomes a 'participant-observer' activity involving a complex interplay of the reading-writing and the critical-creative dialectics (Pope, 2012, p.7). This open plurality becomes a remarkable asset of Pope's approach to English studies.

Part Two offers lucid insights into ways of approaching, analyzing and interpreting a literary text by coupling critical and creative strategies. This section enlists numerous suggestions, exercises and project topics that try to bridge the gap between creative and critical writings, and consequently, their respective departments across various universities that are very often insulated from each other. By recognizing translation, adaptation, parody, imitation and performance studies as necessarily involving a historically and contextually informed critical approach, Pope tries to uphold a model of interdisciplinary and intertextual synthesis in English studies.

Part Three can be a good introductory resource to the various theoretical formulations (from New Criticism to Poststructuralism, Postcolonialism and Gender Studies) of twentieth century for undergraduate students. Besides providing the requisite basic concepts and insights into theory as a play and practice, the self-reflexive approach of the author also raises relevant and poignant



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questions about the fate of theory in present times. Instead of presenting an abstract, authoritative version of Theory with a capital T, Pope probes into the possibilities of having reached a Post-theory phase, which can either be discarded as an exotic jargon of the elite academia, or can be regarded as an 'ongoing process of reflective practice' which can offer enabling perspectives to understand the relationship between word and world (Pope, 2012, p.10).

Part Four consists of twenty entries that feature more than sixty key critical terms and topics (like author and authority, centre and margin, characterization, canon, dialect and so on) that recur in critical discourses. Once again, the focus of the extensive suggested activities and pointers for discussion is on creative and alternative modes of reading and writing about texts by adopting a fluid, interdisciplinary approach.

Part Five offers a rich anthology of historical and cross cultural texts across diverse genres and exhibits varieties of English language, literature and cultures (or worlds). The section of 'Poetries' goes beyond traditional poems to pop songs and performance pieces, while 'Proses' incorporates extracts from news reports, street texts and graffiti. Similarly, the section titled 'Crossings'

contains writings on translation/transformation, versions of ageing and mapping journeys. This eclectic, cultural studies and popular culture approach seeks to break boundaries between high-brow and low-brow art. At the same time, it also offers a novel and adventurous outlook towards the multifaceted popular culture. The last part of the book addresses the market prospects of English studies and provides practical insights into job opportunities, applications and interviews. At the same time, it also celebrates a model of lifelong learning over the rhetoric of 'work-life balance' by highlighting 're-creative powers and pleasures of doing English' (Pope, 2012, p.4).

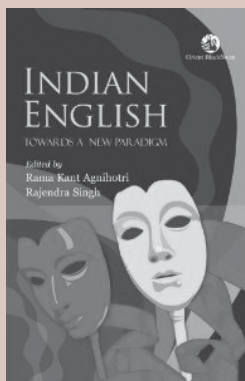
The multifarious and multipurpose approach of the book, along with a rich store of additional information available on the companion website, makes it a valuable resource for those who are doing English at various levels in their personal and/or public lives. The theoretical lucidity and original insights offered into various texts and concepts make it a fascinatingly enjoyable read. The book can open up new perspectives and novel avenues of thinking in Indian students doing English across various universities of the country, where cultural studies and interdisciplinary approach has still not picked up much.



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INDIAN ENGLISH TOWARDS A NEW PARADIGM



Agnihotri, R.K. and Singh, Rajendra. (Eds.) (2012). *Indian English: Towards A New Paradigm*. New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan Private Ltd.

Pp 336, Rs. 515/-

ISBN: 9788125043713

Reviewed by: Shaivya Singh

This book is about the status of English among Indian languages. The discussion involves the notion of Native and Non-Native. English being foreign to India is not theoretically and empirically grounded. Once upon a time English was a foreign language but has now acquired a stable position in the Indian multilingual setting. Papers in this volume are responses to the target

paper 'Reflections of English in India and Indian English'. In his paper Singh investigates the position of Indian English and argues that English is very much part of 'linguistic ecology' of India. Responses come from variety of perspectives such as - Grammatical, Sociolinguistic and Diachronic, Cultural, Political and Philological, and Pedagogical.

The central issue of treating English in a special way in India has been revisited. Those who speak English in India are the native speakers of Indian English are the foundation of Singh's argument. The authors have culled sufficient apt literature to demonstrate, Indian English being integral part of India's social and political ecology. Rajesh Bhatt finds the issue provocative and establishes Indian English as a language in its own right. Agnihotri supports Singh's position saying there is no linguistic justification or any paradigm to distinguish native and non-native. Each variety has its own nuances of structures that are not present in other varieties of English. Chaudhary and Ritt find the discussion relevant in the present scenario which opens up a fresh door for empirical research. Authors like Leslie Dickinson, Kolaczky and Wekwerth feel quite uncomfortable with Singh's idea of the distinction of native and non-native. Kolaczky and Wekwerth ground their

discussion on the learner and speakers proficiency.

This volume presents a substantial research describing the condition of English in the multilingual India. The point of discussion started by Rajend Singh is a logical stand and is truly problematic in the present state as Rehman says this issue, instead of providing a solution creates more problems. Singh favours the term Indian English like other Englishes such as British English for Britishers or American English for Americans.

According to Singh the term Indian English is more telling about the position and the location of English. The sociolinguistic factors like the speech community and culture substantiate and comments English in a better way. What I feel is the status and position of English is like the story of 'an elephant and the blind men'. English now remains an idea, like a phoneme and all its varieties like allophones. When we distinctively look at English

spoken in India, we see that Indian English has its own native speakers. In India people were influenced by what Britishers left them with but today, Indian English is a new and emerging pattern of communication. Indian English is the result of the creation of the discursive space – a *third space* (Bhabha 1994). As per the notion of native and non native, the number of speaker of native English is comparatively very few. "The whole mystique of the native speaker and the mother tongue should probably be quietly dropped from the linguist's set of professional myths about language" (Ferguson 1982).

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'De-territorializing Diversities: Cultures, Literatures and Languages of the Indigenous'

A two day International Conference organized by the Department of English, Maharaja Agrasen College in collaboration with IGNCA, Department of English, University of Delhi, FORTELL & Supported by ICSSR (6th and 7th February, 2013)

A Report compiled by Anupama Jaidev

A two-day international conference at Maharaja Agrasen College (MAC), University of Delhi on the theme of 'De-territorializing Diversities: Cultures, Literatures and Languages of the Indigenous' was held on 6th and 7th February, 2013 in the college premises at Vasundhara Enclave. The Conference, organized by the Department of English of the college, was held in collaboration with the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), Department of English, University of Delhi and FORTELL (Forum for Teachers of English Language and Literature) supported by ICSSR, New Delhi. The conference generated considerable interest in the academic community, and was attended by as many as 20 international and 55 national scholars, folklorists and practitioners. It drew eminent scholars and creative artists from places like Canada, America, Nigeria, Scotland, England, Taiwan, Germany and Sri Lanka, including Prof. Julie Cruikshank from University of British Columbia, Dr Nancy Wachowich from Scotland, Prof. Pin chia Feng from Taiwan and Prof. Ronald Strickland from Michigan Technological University, USA as also Indian experts from Kashmir to Kerala; from Jharkhand to Gujarat, from the Northeast to Karnataka and a fair representation of scholars from University of Delhi, JNU and JMI. Papers by Mithila painting artists like David Tzanton and Peter Zirnis added a rich dimension to the academic deliberations of the conference. The delegates and invited speakers from India included Dr. K.K Chakravarty, Chancellor, NUEPA, Prof. Malashri Lal, Dean, Academic Activities and Projects, University of Delhi, Prof. Jawaharlal Handoo, President, Indian Folklore Congress, Mysore, Prof. Molly Kaushal, IGNCA, New Delhi, Dr. Sukrita Paul Kumar, Cluster Innovation Centre (CIC), University of Delhi and Prof Anjali Gera Roy, IIT, Kharagpur, among many others. Apart from this, delegates, over two days, engaged in extensive deliberations on perceptions of indigeneity across remarkably diverse linguistic, literary and cultural registers. The conference brought together a wonderful

wealth of research ranging from cultural practices of, for instance, Inuit communities in northern Canada, on the one hand, to folk music of the Baul community in Bengal on the other. Led from the front by Dr Prem Kumari Srivastava and Ms Gitanjali Chawla of the Department of English, MAC, the truly international spirit of this conference has set a new benchmark for such events in the college and the university.

An exhibition titled AKHYAN was put up by the IGNCA as part of the conference. The exhibition, curated by Prof. Molly Kaushal celebrated the spirit and the soul of the narrative traditions through Puppets, Masks, and Picture Showmen traditions of India.

Prof. Malashri Lal, Dean, Academic Activities and Projects, University of Delhi, inaugurated the event. Mr. Mukesh Bansal, Chairman, Governing Body, Dr Sunil Sondhi, Principal, Maharaja Agrasen College, Dr. Prem Kumari Srivastava, the convenor, and Ms Gitanjali Chawla, Organizing Secretary, welcomed the delegates to the conference. Dr. Sukrita Paul Kumar set the perspective for Prof. Julie Cruikshank's keynote address where she spoke of the significance of oral narrative traditions in the first nation communities in Canada.

The intervention of the dialogues that this Conference engaged in and generated becomes all the more important in the wake of the recent novel cultural practices resultant of globalization, current advancement of technology, glocalization and translocalization. This will engineer a melting of borders and opening up of the spaces closed earlier. Broadly, the Conference also facilitated the dichotomous idea of preservation and dissemination of cultures in its bid to arrive at a certain kind of understanding within accommodation of cultures. The Conference also examined the two different trajectories, one emanating from the West and the other from India. In addition, the Conference articulated through its sub-themes the 'India' experience with its homogenization, inwardness and concept of



inclusivism. Without submitting to dispersion in its totality, propositions of other de-territorializing practices to approach Indigenous Studies and cultures were also discussed. Plenary Session 1 was an enriching lecture by Prof. Molly Kaushal on 'Urbanism & Deterritorialization of Ritual Spheres' with Prof. Jwaharlal Handoo in chair. She extensively talked about the trajectory of modernity within the composite social space of Delhi. According to her, the modernity of the aforementioned kind is not a product of Europe, but a dialectical hybrid. Professor Kaushal then went on to deconstruct some migrant community specific rituals such as the *Chhat Puja*, the annual *Kawariya* processions, and the *Durga Puja* festivities in Delhi colonies as instances of deterritorialization of cultural practices in a bid to negotiate social spaces. Plenary Session 2 had Prof. Anjali Gera Roy delivering a lecture on "Mustard Fields and Chiffon Saris: Deconstructing Punjab, Punjabi and Punjabiya" with Dr. J.C. Batra in chair. The talk was mainly about Siraiki, a language of the Multan district forgotten and overshadowed by the widely spoken Punjabi.

Prof. K.K. Chakravarty, from the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, Delhi, chaired the third plenary session. In his address, he talked about the lingering appeal and glamour of the old order, stating that people are still hungry for kings. He suggested that this misplaced sense of faith in glamorised ideals of authority come from the literature of the times, hinting at the problems of literary representations. Prof. Jawaharlal Handoo, the invited speaker from the Indian Folklore Congress, in his lecture, talked about the linkages and connections between written discourses, knowledge, and power. He

spoke about how even though literature came into being some 6000 years ago, but did not answer significant questions, because it remained confined to feudalism. Nevertheless, he asserted that written literature in India could become a small medium for social change. Positing folk lore traditions against the hegemonic text traditions, Professor Handoo talked about their essential democratic inclusivity. He remarked that, in the kingdom of folklore, metaphorically, even small animals are important. He pointed out that all popular characters like Donald Duck and Shaktiman in children's literature have their genesis essentially in folk literature.

With the Valedictory Session, the conference drew to its end. Dr. Sukrita Kumar who chaired this session, expressed the view that the root of oral tradition is the text, in that reading orality is complicit with text traditions for contemporary readers. Prof. K.K. Chakravarty in his address spoke about the different meanings of the 'indigenous' in different places. He remarked that its theory needs to be reformed. Professor Chakravarty also stressed the need to resist the overwhelming obliteration of local languages which seems to be overtaking humankind, and indeed the need to remain rooted in our originality.

The conference closed with Prof. K.K. Chakravarty's penetrating valedictory address and a detailed personalised vote of thanks by the convenor, Prem Kumari Srivastava. The hectic academic deliberations were followed by a special visit for the delegates to the Akshardham temple where everyone enjoyed the delightful musical fountain show.



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Refresher Course in English titled 'Academic Reading, Writing & Assessment'

(25th February to 16th March, 2013)

A Report by Mukti Sanyal

The CPDHE, in collaboration with Department of English, University of Delhi successfully ran a Refresher Course dealing with three key areas of concern to English teachers: Academic Reading, Academic Writing and Assessment. This was designed to serve the pressing need of English teachers to impart better proficiency in the English language to undergraduates so that they, in turn could be 'employable'. The need for this has been most urgently articulated in present times. University authorities have been bemoaning the fact that a vast majority of university students cannot use the language fluently.

Twenty two participants (of which eight were out-station; there were four from different parts of Maharashtra; one from Chennai and one each from Manipur, Rohtak and Gurgoan) enjoyed their three weeks of intense interaction and discussions with over thirty experts from Delhi and other parts of the country. Prof Rama Kant Agnihotri, Prof Jacob Tharu, Prof Ravinder Gargesh, Prof Tanmoy Bhattacharya and Prof Rama Mathew (University of Delhi), Prof Pramod Pandey (JNU), Prof Jagtar Kaur Chawla (The Bhopal School of Social Sciences), Prof Anju S Gupta and Dr Shubhangi Vaidya (IGNOU), Prof Simi Malhotra (Jamia Millia Islamia) were among those who spoke to them.

Academic reading, which is beginning to receive attention in many parts of the world, was competently dealt with by Prof. Mukta Prahlad from The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad over three full days. Participants enjoyed the focus she brought to teaching cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies that increase students' comprehension and study skills.

Similarly, Writing, which is a complex, multi-faceted skill often neglected skill in colleges was the prime focus of three resource persons: Ms Dee Broughton, Senior English Language Fellow ran nine sessions on teaching Academic writing. Ms Diane M Millar, Regional English Language Officer, American Centre showed how the Speaking/Writing Continuum could be negotiated and academic discourse patterns effectively used. And, Mr Pat Mac Laughlin, Senior Training Consultant, British Council demonstrated how students could be helped to develop research proposals.

The third key concern, Assessment and Evaluation, was primarily addressed by Prof Jacob Tharu. He agreed that students learn and teachers teach so that examinations can be successfully passed. Assessment procedures and examination

formats determine what happens in the classroom. Therefore, until there is a close and direct match between learning outcomes, instructional strategies, curriculum design and assessment procedure little will be achieved. College teachers who have been active in trialing alternative methods of language and literature testing, shared their experiences with the group. For example,



Ms Sanam Khanna spoke on peer evaluation and the advantages of sharing evaluation criteria with students while Ms Tulika Prasad spoke about face-to-face test of Speaking. Others like Dr Anjana Dev, Dr Mita Bose, Dr Sabina Pillai, Dr Tasneem Shannaaz, Dr Anita Bhela, Ms Ruchi Kaushik shared their expertise in methods and materials of language teaching.

Lectures on Critical Theory were brought in to meet participant demand. For this, special thanks are due to Mr Rudrashish Chakraborty, Dr Raj Kumar, Prof Simi Malhotra and Dr Albeena Shakeel who agreed to talk at such short notice. Participant Khalahe Ananda Arjun's special gratitude went out to Prof Uday Kumar and Prof Saugata Bhaduri who gave him several hours from their busy schedule discussing his research

topic with him. The point to be noted by faculty members of the department is that outstation participants look forward to interaction with them.

The participants were grateful for logistic support and accommodation arrangement made by Dr Vijay Laxmi Singh and her team at CPDHE for out-station participants. They thanked the Course Coordinator, Prof Rupendra Guha Majumdar for being available for informal discussions. They appreciated the idea of having peer teaching sessions instead of paper presentations for evaluation. The extent to which they enjoyed the course can be gauged from the fact that they have formed a Google group and are keeping each other posted on academic and personal matters.

Course Convenor: Dr Mukti Sanyal

Call for papers

for

FORTELL

ISSN no: 2229 – 6557

January 2014, Issue no.28

Special issue on 'Interdisciplinary Approaches in English Studies'

Interdisciplinary studies, that is the method of using two or more academic disciplines, has gained popularity in academia in the recent decades. The disciplines may be related through a central theme, issue, problem, process, topic, or experience. While on the one hand, breaking strict disciplinary boundaries and enriching one's understanding with perspectives from other fields of knowledge seems to be a fruitful exercise; on the other hand, this enterprise seriously brings into question the apparent expertise of a teacher in borrowing

and subsequently using concepts from a discipline that she might not have much idea about. Even as interdisciplinarity continues to be the buzz word in policy, practice, teaching and research, skepticism for the concept exists among educationists. We invite contributions that address the issue of interdisciplinarity in Indian education system with special reference to the English classroom. The papers could address themes including but not limited to the following areas:

- Use of interdisciplinarity in designing curriculum
- Rethinking pedagogy with breaking of discipline boundaries
- Learning outcomes
- Problems regarding infrastructure and team teaching
- Research issues

The Guest Editors for the issue will be *Ruchi Kaushik* and *Rachna Sethi*.

The last date for receiving contributions for this issue is October 31, 2013.

Note for the Contributors

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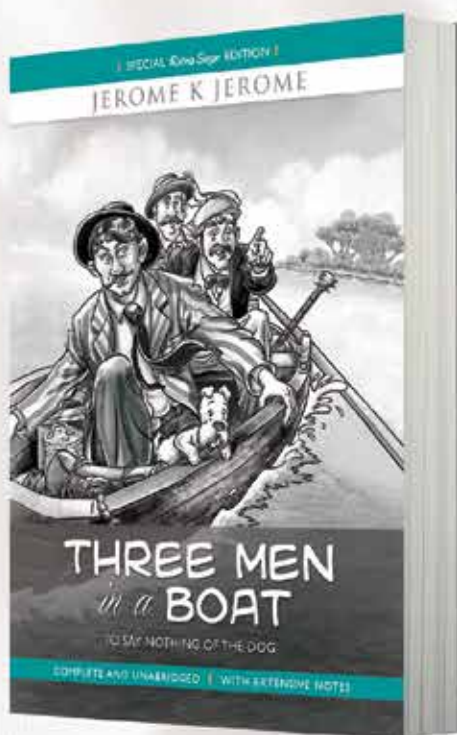
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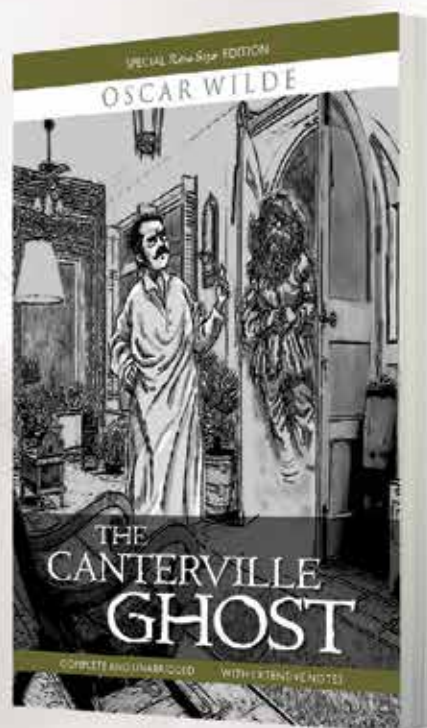
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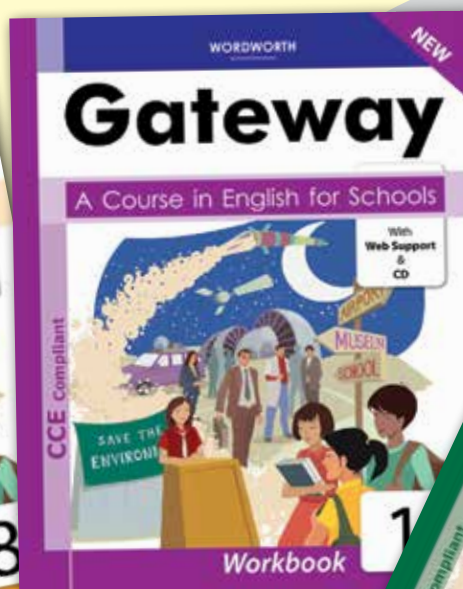
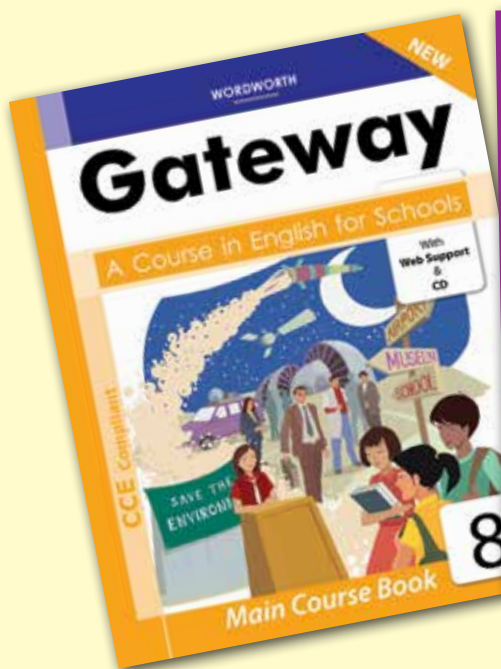
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