

Interview

Exploring Key Issues in Materials Development

N.P. Sudharshana in conversation with Brian Tomlinson

Prof Brian Tomlinson, a leading expert on materials development in ESL/EFL contexts, founded MATSDA, (Materials Development Association, 1993) and the world's first MA dedicated to the study of materials. He has conducted numerous workshops and given several plenary sessions on materials development in over sixty countries and authored several well-known books on materials development such as *The Complete Guide to the Theory and Practice of Materials Development for Language Learning* (with Masuhara, 2018), *Developing Materials for Language Teaching* (2013) and *Materials Development in Language Teaching* (1998, 2011) and contributed to textbooks for many countries.

N.P. Sudharshana (NPS): Professor Tomlinson, thanks for accepting our invitation. It is indeed a privilege to have you with us today. Your name is synonymous with “materials development.” You started MATSDA in 1993, an organization exclusively dedicated to materials, and also established the world's first MA in Materials Development. What were your thoughts behind this?

Brian Tomlinson (BT): Certainly, at that time materials were not considered to be worthy of academic study. Back in the 1990s, there were very few universities who had courses on materials. There were no journals, or publishing materials. Materials development was called ‘materials writing’, and it was considered to be a practical pursuit, not really worthy of academic study. And to me, this was wrong because this was actually leading to materials which were not helping learners to acquire language. The people writing the materials were not sufficiently informed. If you analyse course books over the last 40 or 50 years, they haven't changed. They have different blurbs and buzzwords like ‘communicative’, ‘natural’, ‘functional’ and ‘notional’. But if you

actually analyse the units, it's the same... it's PPP, presentation - practice - production. So, I thought it was time to challenge this dogma and the only way of doing that really was to get people to talk about, think about, learn about how language is best acquired. And that's why I started the M.A.

NPS: You have suggested an important link between materials and second language acquisition. How important are materials for successful second language acquisition?

BT: The best materials writer for a class of students is the teacher. The teacher knows the class, so ideally, materials develop organically as the writer of the materials becomes more familiar with the students who are going to use them. But that's not realistic. In many countries, teachers might be teaching 40 lessons a week; they do not have time. So, some of this has to be done externally to help the teacher; but the materials must never replace the teacher. The materials are there as a resource to be accessed and exploited by the teacher and the students. I want exposure to the language in use. Most students around the world cannot get it outside the classroom; they can only get it inside the classroom, and they get it from materials. So that's what I really want from a course book, a lot of language in use... a lot of text. I did a research for a British publisher in 12 different countries around the world and the teachers in different countries such as Argentina, Australia, Russia wanted interesting texts. And they said, "If you give us interesting texts, then we can exploit them ourselves". And the students said, "We want interesting stories, not grammar practice."

So, what to me is important in materials is the exposure to language in use, and also the stimulus to learn. We tend to assume that all students are motivated. But my experience in different countries around the world is that the majority of students learning a foreign language are not motivated to learn that language. They find it difficult. They don't succeed. They get low marks. They're demotivated by this negative experience. So, the main job of the teacher, and therefore of the material, is to stimulate, to motivate to get students to really want to do the activity. And therefore, we need interesting texts and engaging activities.

NPS: There is a sort of misconception among many teachers—for them materials mean only the printed coursebook and the workbook. How would you actually define 'materials'?

BT: I've always said that to me materials are anything which can be used to facilitate language acquisition. So, the obvious thing is the coursebook. But I would also argue that a newspaper, for example, could be language-learning materials. In many countries, I have brought in speakers of the language into the classroom. They are not teachers, but they're interesting people. They have a story to tell about their life or about their work. And they are providing motivated exposure to the language in use. So, they are language-learning materials as well. I'm saying the teachers and learners should look out for English. Look for English in the environment, bring it to the classroom. Look for possible exposure to English in interesting and different ways. You can't do that in every lesson; it's supplementary but very important.

NPS: You are often critical of published coursebooks and maintain that 'Materials cannot substitute teachers'. But teachers often do not have enough time or any training in developing materials. In India, most often, the course books are prescribed by a centralized authority. What can teachers do in such situations?

BT: In such situations where the coursebook is prescribed, there is a prescribed syllabus, and there is an examination which the students are working towards, then the teacher is constrained. But the teacher can make small changes to the material, which makes the material more meaningful and more engaging for the learners. Well, I'll give you an example. Usually in case of a book dialogue, you often get students to read out the dialogue. It's normally pretty meaningless since there's no context. It's not engaging. So, what I would do in that situation is to give a context. This was for an adult class. There was a dialogue in a shoe shop, where a male salesman is selling shoes to a female customer. What I did was to tell the students that the salesman and the customer - they were married to each other but have recently got divorced. The female customer didn't know her ex-husband was now working in the shoe shop and the salesman didn't know his ex-wife was a frequent customer. So, then it's not just "Good morning Madam! What can I do for you?"; "I would like a pair of shoes". It's - "Good morning madam! Hmmm... What can I do for you?" and it becomes a drama! So, in other words, turn it into a creative activity. So, it's little changes, you don't need to write anything on the coursework, you just do that verbally. The key word is 'open'. Keep to the syllabus but open up some of the closed activities. And one other thing would be to add more texts. I'm

a great believer in extensive reading—not to answer questions, but to enjoy reading. Most units are organized around a topic or a theme. So, I would look for other texts on the same theme. Or I would ask students to look for texts on the same theme, bring them to class, and read them.

NPS: Can you please elaborate on what it means to ‘open up a closed activity’?

BT: If you look at most coursework materials, they are closed. There’s only one answer. For instance, multiple choice, yes/no, true/false, filling in the blanks, matching. They’re all objective. But what I’ve done is to take a closed activity and open it up. A quick example: I use a lot of children’s literature with adult learners of second language. At a university in Oman with a group of 19-20-year-old students, I used a very famous children’s story. It is called ‘Not Now, Bernard’. It’s about a little boy who comes home from school. Says “Hi Mommy” and the mother says, “Not now, not now dear”. And then he says, “Hello Daddy”, and the parents ignore him. There’s a monster in the garden. And he tells his mother that there’s a monster in the garden and he’s going to eat him. The monster eats the kid and replaces him. The parents don’t notice that the monster has replaced their child. Now, instead of lots of comprehension questions I asked the students who was to blame for the death of the boy. It’s a very serious question - very silly story, but very serious, open-ended question. And this was a class where all the males were on one side and the females on the other. Normally, they didn’t interact. But on that day, the arguing went on for an hour in English! I found that sometimes learners, who don’t normally speak, open up. And of course, it’s not going to be grammatically perfect, but it doesn’t matter; what matters is that they are communicating. The accuracy can come later.

NPS: You have raised the issue of accuracy. In ESL contexts grammar teaching is extremely popular. In most cases, teaching English is synonymous with teaching grammar. Should grammar be taught or not?

BT: I suppose I can answer that in one word and the one word is ‘eventually’, and not at first. Don’t start with grammar teaching. That’s a big mistake. If you look at any coursebook, almost any coursebook straight away starts teaching grammar. If you look at natural acquisition of first or second language, grammar is delayed for a long time. What comes first is the acquisition of vocabulary because if you have vocabulary

you can communicate. But if you just have grammar and not enough vocabulary, you can't communicate. The learners' inner desire, in-built agenda is 'focus on meaning'. The teachers and the coursebooks focus on accuracy. So, you've got a conflict. The students find it frustrating. They don't succeed initially. And, this initial failure carries on right through the course and right through their lives. When acquiring a language naturally, you only gradually acquire the syntax. And the native speaker children, for example, say the first conditional, they might never acquire it. It might take at least four or five years to acquire a lot of the verb tenses and verb forms we teach in lower elementary classes. But nobody asks the question - why do the learners really need this tense? Isn't it more important that they are acquiring more vocabulary? Isn't it more important that they learn how to communicate? What does it matter if they can't use that tense at this time? And those are the questions never asked but should be asked.

NPS: The keyword you used regarding grammar teaching is 'eventually'. Can you give an example how this can be implemented?

BT: We ran a project in Indonesia in which one class of 11-12 year olds in most secondary schools throughout the country became experimental classes. We developed an approach called 'TPR plus' and the emphasis was very much on vocabulary and meaning. So, instead of just commands and physical responses such as "stand up, sit down, put your hands on your head", the teacher would tell a dramatic story, something very silly or very dramatic. The students would act out the story in the class. So, if they didn't know a word, they would look and watch other students. If nobody knew it, then the teacher would mime. So, no grammar teaching, no grammar practice. They listened and mimed, they listened and played games, they listened to instructions and cooked food. Gradually, they started to use the language themselves. They did acquire a lot of grammar passively; but the focus was on meaning not on grammar.

NPS: Another controversial issue in ESL/ EFL contexts is using learners' mother tongue. Do you think L1 can be a resource or does it actually hinder acquisition of English as an L2?

BT: I believe that forcing students to use the L2 from the beginning is a big mistake. Nobody in the world has ever started a course in language by producing perfect sentences and perfect communication. It's impossible because the language acquisition process requires you to get things

wrong to get them right. If you watch children acquiring their first language, they don't immediately get everything right. They get things wrong and gradually they revise their hypotheses and start to conform to the norm. This is a big problem that there is an approach to language teaching which says language teaching is about listening, reading, speaking, writing. So right from the beginning, we start teaching the four skills, which is a huge mistake because natural language acquisition is first of all listening. Young children listen for a long time before they start to produce. And we, you know, in the first lesson ask students to produce and therefore they make mistakes. So, I would certainly not force students to produce the L2 from the beginning. I would ask them to listen to the language. Going back to our study in Indonesia, TPR plus was based on this approach that some of the kids talked in their L1. We didn't stop. We certainly didn't make them speak English. They listened and responded physically. About three weeks later, they started reading. Then later to writing, and then to speaking. The speaking sort of came automatically. We insisted that though the students could use their first language at some time, the teacher should always use English. What they were doing was giving an instruction in English and then translating it into Bahasa Indonesia. So, we encouraged teachers to stop this so that they only gave the instructions in English because instructions satisfy many of the criteria for language acquisition – they are meaningful, salient, and necessary. They are recycled over and over again. And we found that the students had no problem. After a few weeks they could understand all the instructions. And I'm also a great believer in code switching. I've tried that, and I think that's a very valuable approach for beginners in the classroom.

NPS: So basically, it's important to make learners comfortable by allowing them to use their L1. It's equally important to encourage learners to step out of their comfort zone by consciously attempting to listen to the teacher's English. In your project you insisted that teachers use only English.

BT: Yes. It's a fine balance between keeping the students happy but at the same time challenging them to move forward. In that study, at first the students were disturbed, and they weren't out of their comfort zone. They were challenged; but they realized, if they didn't understand the instructions in English, they couldn't do the activity. So, they were motivated to really listen and try. And the teacher used a lot of

repetition, a lot of examples to make it meaningful, and gradually had to use fewer examples. And, you know, gradually the instructions were more easily understood. The students were happy with their success. It was rewarding for the students. We have done this in a course book. I would grade the activities according to their challenge. So, each activity gets more and more challenging. The students wouldn't necessarily do all the activities. So, some of the more confident students will go on to the very challenging ones and some of the others would not. I'm a great believer in giving choice and letting students decide for themselves.

NPS: An important issue in the current scenario - we are talking about online teaching and digital materials. Your thoughts on this?

BT: There is an assumption that digital materials are better, because they cost a lot of money, they're very modern and up to date. Digital materials are portable, you can use them anywhere. The materials are more flexible. There are things you can do with digital materials you've can't do with paper like you can give instant feedback. So, there are these benefits or affordances. But that doesn't mean that they're necessarily more useful for the learner. It's what you do with these materials that matters. Unfortunately, a lot of digital materials are simply reproducing what happens in the coursebook and are not exploiting the affordances. It's not digital materials per se which stimulate creativity or anything else. I'm not saying that digital materials aren't useful. They can be extremely useful. But I'm saying to materials writers - look at ways in which you could do things with digital materials, which you can't do with the coursebook. I'm a great believer in blended learning, where you combine face-to-face instruction, and peer-to-peer interaction, and also digital learning. There is an interesting case study on taxi drivers learning to speak English in Turkey. The course was a combination of the classroom where the taxi drivers came and had instruction with the teacher, but because the taxi drivers were working, they couldn't spend a lot of time in the classroom. So, they were given materials on their phones. So, if they were waiting for a customer, they would use the phone and also, I think, they then put into practice with the customer if the customer was English speaking. The teacher can interact as a human being with you, providing exposure, setting up interesting activities and giving advice, but also can respond by monitoring the learner. The computer can't do that. But the computer can do things which the

teacher can't do. And therefore, what I say is to combine the two in blended learning approach.

NPS: Prof Tomlinson, teachers would want to improve their proficiency and language skills. Any suggestions for them?

BT: I strongly believe in materials development for teacher development. In a project in Indonesia, the teachers came out from the schools for a two-week in-service workshop where they did a lot of materials development. What we found was in revising, say, a reading comprehension activity by themselves, it made them better teachers of the reading comprehension in the coursebook, because they were more able to understand the principles behind it. When the teachers came, they had no confidence. But during this two-week course, they gained tremendous confidence. Then they went back to their schools and put into practice a lot of the things we did on the course, by making small changes, by adapting the coursework, by supplementing the coursework.

NPS: Professor, thank you once again for being with us. It was wonderful talking to you. I am sure our readers will find this interview very useful.

BT: Thank you very much! It was indeed a very enjoyable experience!

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Language Activities

Teaching of NM: Using Newspapers for Teaching Short Forms in Note-Making

Ravindra B. Tasildar

Focus: Teaching the use of short forms in Note-Making (NM)

Level: Tertiary

Estimated time: 40 minutes

Size: 5 students per group

Objectives:

- i) To acquaint learners with common practices of using short forms, especially in newspapers.
- ii) To develop the skill of using short forms for making notes.
- iii) To encourage creativity in preparing abbreviated forms.

Materials: Daily issues of newspapers, e.g. *The Times of India*

Procedure:

1. Bring the issues of any daily for example, *The Times of India (TOI)* of previous month to the classroom.
2. Ask any one member of the group to pick up an issue of *TOI*.
3. Illustrate short forms used in newspapers.
4. Provide activity sheets and explain the activity to the learners.
5. Introduce learners to the importance of short forms in note-making (this is a sub-skill focus activity which may be used at any stage of teaching note making)
6. Guide the learners to write examples from newspapers in appropriate categories as well as develop their own short forms.

Activity Sheet

A. Lead-in Activity (5 minutes)

Note the short forms used in following newspaper headlines and discuss them with your group members.

1. Fight polls on DeMon, GST: Priyanka to PM (May 9, 2019, *TOI*, Pune, p. 11)
2. Mum-Ahd private train from November (Aug 29, 2019, *TOI*, Pune, p. 01)

B. Main Activity: Fill up the table with different types of short forms

Refer to the short forms used in headlines in the newspapers with your group and complete the following table by adding more examples to each category. One example of each type has been provided for you. (30 minutes)

| Sr. No. | Types of Short Forms | Examples |
|---------|---|----------|
| 1 | Single letter | L, |
| 2 | First letter, apostrophe and last few letters of the word | K'taka, |
| 3 | First two letters of the word | Cr, |
| 4 | First and last letters of the word | Bk, |
| 5 | First three letters of the word | edu, |
| 6 | First three letters of the word, apostrophe and last letter of the word | nat'l, |
| 7 | First three letters and any one middle letter and last letter of the word | supdt, |
| 8 | First three letters and last letter of the word | govt, |
| 9 | First four letters of the word | Cong, |
| 10 | First five letters of the word | Kejri, |
| 11 | First letter, any middle letter and last letter of the word | grp, |
| 12 | Words ending with letter 'n' | popn, |
| 13 | Any three letters from the word | guv, |
| 14 | Any four letters from the word | bldg, |
| 15 | Abbreviations | GST, |
| 16 | Acronyms | Niti, |

| | | |
|----|-------------------|--------|
| 17 | New formation | DeMon, |
| 18 | Numbers for words | XII, |
| 19 | Signs and symbols | %, ₹ |
| 20 | Any other | |
| | a) | Prez, |
| | b) | biz, |

C. Follow on Activity (5 minutes)

Make a list of **ten** creative short forms used by your classmates in their writing.

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Language Tasks Across the Curriculum: Reading *The Communist Manifesto*

Poulomi Das

Focus: Reading an authentic text

Sub-skills: Predicting, scanning, skimming

Level: Tertiary

Estimated time: 60 mins

No. of students: 30

Objective: Developing analytical and critical skills for reading authentic texts and culling out relevant information.

Material Needed:

- Excerpts from *The Communist Manifesto*

- A Youtube video: *A Call Against Capitalism*
- Activity sheet

Note to the Teacher: *The Communist Manifesto* is part of the syllabi of many undergraduate courses. However, ESL students often find it difficult to engage with such theoretically and linguistically dense texts. These interactive sample tasks can be mimicked to curate introductory classes to teach authentic critical texts, with levels of scaffolding as required.

Suggested Methodology

I. Pre-reading activity: Divide students into groups of five and ask them to watch the video clip (link given in references). Each group **predicts/anticipates** the answer to any one of the following questions and shares their ideas with the entire class. (20 mins)

- Why is *the Manifesto* considered an important political document of the 19th and 20th centuries?
- Who were the ‘new working class’?
- Why are the authors advocating a ‘worker’s revolt against capitalism’?
- What social and historical events might have triggered the mass movement of people from villages to cities?

II. During Reading Tasks

1. Student-groups have to find meanings of any two words/ word phrases from the list given below by **scanning** the Preamble and Chapter I of *the Manifesto* for contextual cues. They discuss among themselves and then share their answers. (15 mins)

List of words/word phrases:

MANIFESTO, BOURGEOISIE, PROLETARIAT, COMMUNIST, FEUDALISM, CLASS ANTAGONISM, WAGE LABOUR, CAPITAL, FREE TRADE, MODES OF PRODUCTION.

2. Each student **skims through the book** and finds out which of the following themes (one or more) do these quotes correspond to? (10 mins)

CAPITALISM, COMMUNISM, CLASS, WEALTH,
OPPRESSION AND POWER

| | |
|--|--|
| “Working Men of All Countries, Unite!” (Chapter IV, last sentence) | |
| ‘...the condition for capital is wage-labour.’ (Chapter I, last paragraph) | |
| ‘The French Revolution, for example, abolished feudal property in favour of bourgeois property.’ (Chapter II, 13 th sentence) | |

III. Post Reading

Does any incident happening around you in current times (e.g 2020 Pandemic) resonate with this quote from *the Communist Manifesto*? Discuss. (15 min)

“These labourers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.”

Evaluation of the Activity

The three targeted sub-skills related to the reading process (predicting, scanning and skimming) have been mapped onto sequential tasks and this facilitates high learning outcomes among ESL students. Evaluation of the improvement in the receptive skills can be assessed from the students’ gradual improvement of productive skills.

References

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Book Reviews

Prabhu, N.S. (2019). *Perceptions of Language Pedagogy*. (Ed. G. Durairajan). Hyderabad: Orient BlackSwan (342 pages)

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Reviewed by Vasim Tamboli

Perceptions of Language Pedagogy is a collection of 29 papers by N.S. Prabhu spanning over six decades from 1966 to 2019. The book deals with language education (in general) and English Language Teaching (ELT) (in specific). ELT in India has been enormously vital since the post-independence age, when it redefined the objective of teaching English from 'literary appreciations' to using the language as a tool of communication (p. 4). In this book Prabhu paves the way to rationalize steps in designing and implementing ELT programmes. He addresses the issues concerning ELT—practical and theoretical—within a multidimensional framework.

The chapters provide a rationale for the development of ELT and describe the first prominent phase of educational reform during the time period 1956 – 1966 with an establishment of 10 specialist ELT institutes to bring about better teaching of English. Prabhu discusses educational changes through institutional planning and effort. A series of two lectures delivered in 1995 demonstrates the transitions: In the first lecture, Prabhu provides the chronological overview of this phase – setting up of the institutes, their efforts, and the current scene. In the second lecture, he discusses the global theories of how learning takes place and which methods are available to best promote them. He introduces two methods developed in India – (i) The Reading Method and (ii) Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT). A discussion around the methods find a mention in Chapter 20 (pp. 233-234) according to their significance and provide a firm basis for classroom practices in Indian context and ideas that could be further explored as classroom-based research.

The book covers a range of topics beginning with language education

related problems (e.g. Chapter 1), the need for ELT reform in India (e.g., Chapter 2), combines 'old ideas' with 'new ideas' to present three models in second language pedagogy (e.g. Chapters 11 & 12), incorporates articles exclusively dealing with issues of classroom teaching like language lessons (e.g. Chapter 14) and teacher autonomy (e.g. Chapter 25), to the interplay of teaching and research perspectives (e.g. Chapter 19). Therefore, the book serves as a window to teachers and young researchers who wish to know the progression of ELT in India and the theorisations of languages in education globally. The chapters are arranged chronologically in the book as per the date of their first publication and not according to their thematic categories.

The collection of articles for one's ease of understanding can be divided into three components of language education – *teaching*, *learning*, and *evaluation*: Chapters (9, 21, & 22) are related to the classroom context and teaching and they draw extensively from research and theoretical underpinnings. These provide a wealth of information on the role of communicative language teaching (CLT) and the precursor of TBLT from a research project - The Communicational Teaching Project in South India of June 1979 (also known as Bangalore Project, Chapter 28). Prabhu theorises the role of CLT at 3 levels: (i) learners' involvement in a meaning focus activity, (ii) use of language functions to make communication possible, and (iii) course construction based on needs analysis. There are a few papers which exclusively deal with learners' role and efforts in learning languages (Chapters 13 & 20), and evaluation and assessment (Chapter 27). Additionally, in an interesting manner the book supports the importance of lesson planning within a conceptual framework such that it can contribute to teacher growth and autonomy. Finally, what comes across strongly is the fact that methods can be adopted in a combinatorial manner according to the needs of every teaching-learning context. The author's comment sums this up brilliantly: "There is no best method', but there is some truth to every method" (p. 125).

The chapters in the book, written in a lucid style, effortlessly combine 'old ideas' with 'new ideas' to present feasible models for second language instruction. Although it does not give a set of activities for the practitioners to use in the classroom context, it certainly provides a rationale in selecting methods to aid the process of second language learning.

The editor Prof. Geetha Durairajan in putting together this wonderful collection of Prabhu's work has aptly explained the challenge of bringing his original work at one place in an interesting format so that coming generations of ELT practitioners can benefit from this anthology. To conclude, the book invites readers to introspect their classroom teaching and build perceptions of their practices in the light of Prabhu's foundational work on language education.

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Mohanty, A.K. (2019). *The Multilingual Reality: Living with Languages*. Bristol, Blue Ridge Summit: Multilingual Matters. (288 pages).

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Reviewed by Vrishali Patil

The Multilingual Reality: Living with Languages is a well-researched, theoretical reappraisal of bi/multilingual education in India. The book engages with the issues of "the indigenous, tribal, minority, and minoritized" (ITM) Indian languages (p. 23). ITM languages, as Mohanty aptly points out, are at the periphery of mainstream educational structures and policies. The book is a comprehensive study and thorough critique of the hierarchical separation of multi-languages in India in terms of education, employment and economic benefits for the speakers of ITM. This seminal book is an outcome of Mohanty's decades of tireless research and field-work amongst the Kond tribe in India, where he has worked for the education of these tribal children and their social justice. It is a detailed account of the various projects that Mohanty did with the ITM communities in India.

The book is spread across nine chapters interconnected thematically with the concept of 'multilingualism' and the 'double divide'. The major themes in the book are:

- Multilingualism and its features
- Multilingualism as a cognitive resource
- The double divide due to language, power and hierarchy
- Negotiation of identities in multilingual marginalized communities and assertive maintenance of identity
- Socio-economical disadvantages of absence of home language in education
- Multilingualism and educational policies
- Possibility of multilingual education (MLE) in India
- The dominance of English in a multilingual world

In an autobiographical tone Mohanty portrays a clear outline and purpose of the book, which is to understand the multifaceted concept of multilingualism within the framework of marginalized population and the place of ITM in education. The book can be theoretically understood in three parts as follows: Firstly, Chapters 1 to 3 focus on the case of multilingualism in India, unlike other multilingual nations as a simple withdrawal from monolingualism to a natural progression towards bilingualism. Citing from Annamalai (2003, 2008) he asserts that it is the “functional relationship between many languages in different domains of use that makes India multilingual” and establishes the construct “multilingualism at grassroots” (pp. 41-43). Further, he gives an account of early views on bilingualism and in the context of the Kond tribe to demonstrate the metalinguistic advantages bilingual children have. He also discusses the limitation of considering bilingualism as one language at the cost of another. Rather he argues that multilingualism is a cognitive resource and not a disadvantage for multilingual children (pp. 75-88).

Secondly, Chapters 4 to 6, illustrate the concept of ‘the double divide’ with Mohanty arguing that “there is a divide between the elitist language of power and the major regional languages and another divide between the regional languages and the dominant one” (pp. 91-117). This brings about a discrimination and marginalization of ITM languages leading to serious disadvantages at many levels for the speakers of these languages. ITM languages struggle for recognition and maintenance due to official non-recognition. This results in social, psychological, educational, and socio-political linguistic suppression. Due to educational neglect,

exclusion, poverty and deprivation to develop capabilities among the marginalized ITM speaking children, this 'double divide' continues to challenge the mainstream education system of India.

Thirdly, Chapters 7 to 9 present an analysis of language-in-education policies where the author gives strong reasons behind the failure of experiments in different Indian states on early language education. He highlights that the implementation and practices have failed to bring about the change that Education Policies in independent India have visualized. He asserts that the limitations in implementing policies are due to "treating languages as problems rather than resources" (p.175). However, Mohanty rings in a positive note about the future of multilingual education (MLE) irrespective of the challenges of ITM in education and dominance of English over all other languages. He is optimistic about reducing the 'double divide' by practicing MLE.

The book is an excellent resource for language teachers in a multilingual context where children from all socioeconomic backgrounds come to learn. It is a demonstration of the fact that a teacher-researcher can be an "agent of change" (p. 23) by enabling children to use their home languages, by demonstrating *inclusiveness*, and by respecting *socio-linguistic identities* in multilingual classrooms, otherwise dominated by English and the so-called state languages with their academic variety. The book is a helpful documentation of the history of development of multilingualism among the other knowledge takeaways. However, new readers may find the third part a little heavy for conceptualization of policy and the role of English in a multicultural context if they are not aware of the socio political background and linguistic heritage of India.

To conclude the book is a valuable resource at the onset of National Education Policy 2020 in India and presents a dynamic perspective for teachers, researchers, students and policy makers to understand social mobility, inclusion, and equality through the lens of multilingual learning mechanisms.

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Fortell, Issue 44 (January 2022)

Special Issue on Mentoring Teachers and Researchers

Increasing heterogeneity, varying language proficiencies and diverse sensitivities challenge traditional pedagogies in a classroom today. Degrees and diplomas do not prepare teachers and researchers to deal with onsite challenges and predicaments. The transformative potential of schools and colleges can be realised only through continued professional development of its faculty. The concept of mentoring teachers to become effective mentors themselves has received little attention in teacher training programmes. One has usually relied on the experience of a senior to help sail through implementation of state set standards and to manage diversities in a classroom.

Extensive studies by scholars ratify the success of mentoring programmes in developed countries. According to Head, Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall (1992) the core of mentoring lies "in the value and worth of people and an attitude toward education that focuses upon passing the torch to the next generation of teachers." A well-structured mentoring program not only helps in the professional development of teachers but also goes a long way in their psychological well-being. It enhances the ability to analyse statistics, prepare lesson plans, nurture pedagogical skills, identify students with special skills including slow learners, aids in development of targeted approaches, reflect on existing strategies and practices and much more. In India, mentoring and the roles, responsibilities and attributes of a mentor needs to be taken with systemic seriousness and should be viewed holistically as a multi-dimensional complex process of guiding, nurturing and honing different competencies. The need of the hour is to discuss, reflect and develop well strategized mentoring programmes for teachers in schools and colleges. This special issue of *Fortell* on '*Mentoring teachers and researchers*' seeks to open a dialogue on the need and efficacy of such programmes in creating resources in teachers which are in sync with the changing needs of the learners.

Submissions need not be restricted to some sub themes mentioned below:

- Impact of mentoring
- Mentoring in pre-service and in-service teacher training and education
- Teacher research mentoring
- Mentoring courses and mentor mentoring
- Online mentoring
- Evaluation of existing mentoring programs

Apart from the theme area, **articles of general and wider interest to teachers of English language and literature are also welcome.**

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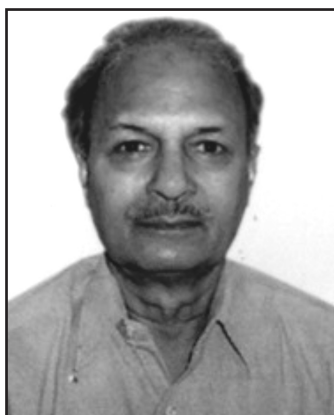
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Dr Ravinarayan Chakrakodi, Professor, Regional Institute of English South India, Jnanabharathi Campus, Bengaluru

In Remembrance of Dr. Naresh Kumar Jain



(20 June 1934-20 September 2020)

Our friendship with Dr. Jain goes back to 1960s. Self-improvement was an obsession with him and he was constantly brainstorming with friends about new ideas on it. He would also be pushing his friends towards this. And he would not take "No!" for an answer.

Dr. Jain wrote on varied subjects: He has, to his credit, *Muslims in India: A Biographical Dictionary*, two books on Modern English Usage (with Dr. V.P. Sharma), UGC Project on Study Materials on English in Distance Education (with Dr. Kamal Bhasin), and was working on a UGC Project on Indian Folklore.

The high point of his academic contribution was setting up of FORTELL (Forum for Teaching of English Language and Literature), an association for interaction and exchange of ideas on teaching of English literature and language. After a short period, a regular newsletter was brought out (by Dr. N.K. Jain and Dr. V.P. Sharma) highlighting the activities of FORTELL. No one could ever imagine that one day FORTELL would go international and blossom into its present *avatar*!

Dr. Jain served as the Secretary of FORTELL for two terms in its initial years and as the President from 2004-08. We must, however, admit that FORTELL owes its present stature to the efforts of Dr. A.L. Khanna and his team.

How true: A line always starts with a dot! And the first FORTELL dot was put by Dr. Jain.

Dr. V.P. Sharma, School of Open Learning (SOL), and Dr. Kamal Bhasin, ARSD College, University of Delhi.

About FORTELL

FORTELL (Forum for Teachers of English Language and Literature), an autonomous organization was set up in 1989 in Delhi by about a hundred teachers of English. From its humble beginnings three decades ago, it has grown to nearly 500 members from schools and colleges across the country. It is an internationally recognised body and is an affiliate of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages), USA and an associate of IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language), UK.

FORTELL has organized numerous workshops and seminars over the years in areas of teaching methodology, materials development and curriculum design for professional development of teachers of English. Its resource persons are academically recognised for training programmes in English Studies. Moreover the journal published by **FORTELL** is its most visually recognized face in academia. *Fortell* is a bi-annual peer-reviewed journal available in both print (ISSN 2229-6557) and online (ISSN 2394-9244) versions. It has published 41 issues so far, and the entire archive through its open access policy is available on the website (www.fortell.org). The journal, with its thrust on pedagogical issues, is a pioneer in attempting to bridge the fields of literature and language and in linking theoretical concerns with classroom practices. Catering to both college and school teachers, it plays a significant role as an interface between school teaching and higher education.

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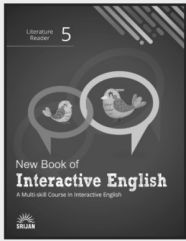
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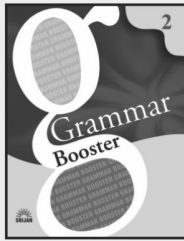
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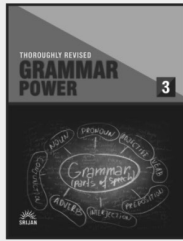
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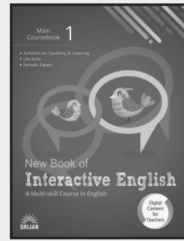
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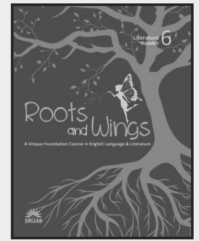
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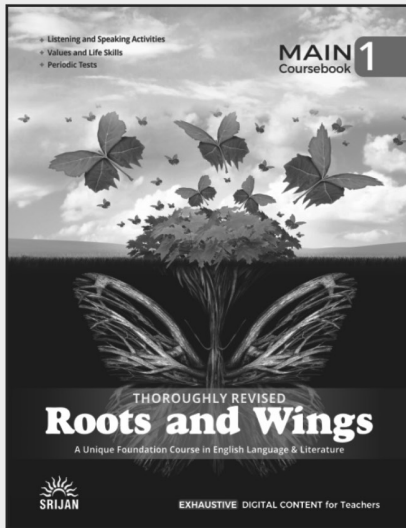
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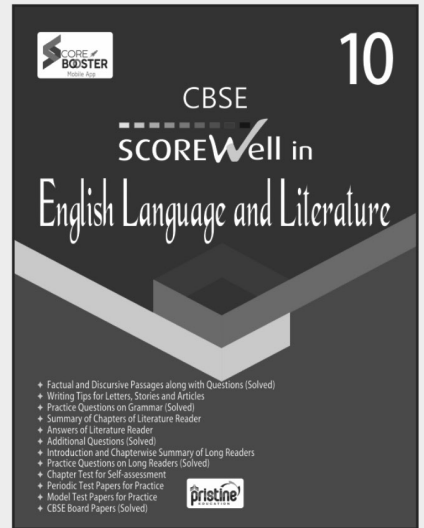
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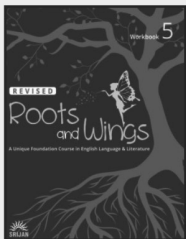
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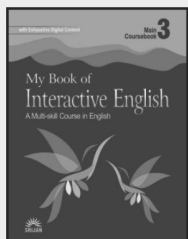
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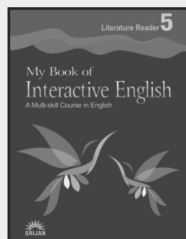
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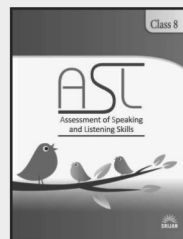
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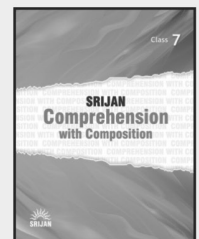
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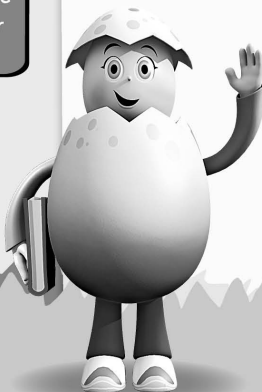
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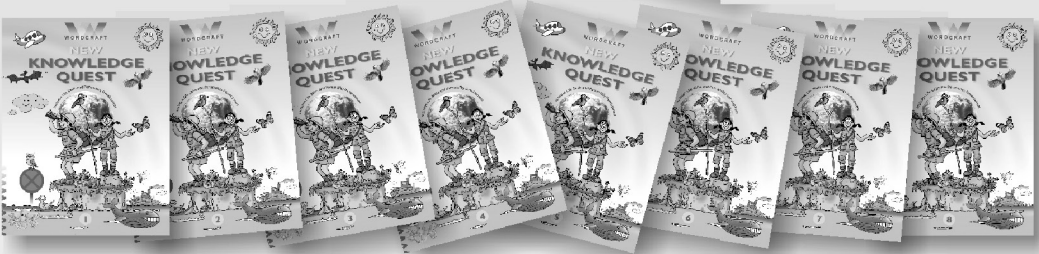
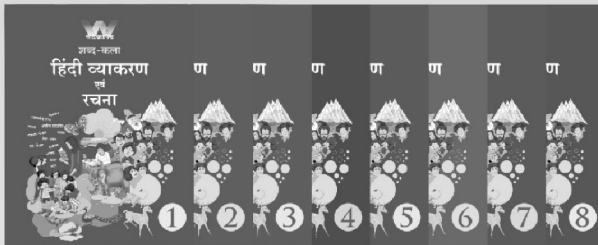
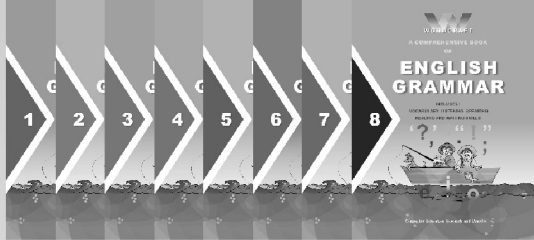
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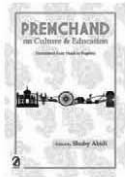
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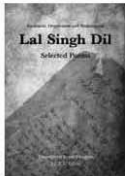
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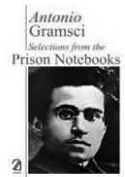
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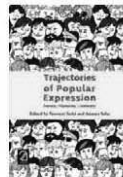
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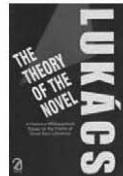
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