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**SELF  
LEARNING  
MATERIAL**



NETAJI SUBHAS OPEN UNIVERSITY

7&10

POST GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMME

মানুষের জ্ঞান ও ভাবকে বইয়ের মধ্যে সঞ্চিত করিবার যে একটা প্রচুর সুবিধা আছে, সে কথা কেহই অস্বীকার করিতে পারে না। কিন্তু সেই সুবিধার দ্বারা মনের স্বাভাবিক শক্তিকে একেবারে আচ্ছন্ন করিয়া ফেলিলে বুদ্ধিকে বাবু করিয়া তোলা হয়।

—রবীন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুর

ভারতের একটা mission আছে, একটা গৌরবময় ভবিষ্যৎ আছে, সেই ভবিষ্যৎ ভারতের উত্তরাধিকারী আমরাই। নূতন ভারতের মুক্তির ইতিহাস আমরাই রচনা করছি এবং করব। এই বিশ্বাস আছে বলেই আমরা সব দুঃখ কষ্ট সহ্য করতে পারি, অন্ধকারময় বর্তমানকে অগ্রাহ্য করতে পারি, বাস্তবের নিষ্ঠুর সত্যগুলি আদর্শের কঠিন আঘাতে ধূলিস্যাৎ করতে পারি।

—সুভাষচন্দ্র বসু

Any system of education which ignores Indian conditions, requirements, history and sociology is too unscientific to commend itself to any rational support.

—Subhas Chandra Bose

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# PGEL 7&10

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## **PREFACE**

In the curricular structure introduced by the University for the students of Post Graduate degree programme, the opportunity to pursue post Graduate course in a subject is equally available to all learners. Instead of being guided by any presumption about ability level, it would perhaps stand to reason if receptivity of a learner is judged in the course of the learning process. That would be entirely in keeping with the objectives of open education which does not believe in artificial differentiation. I am happy to note that this University has been recently accredited by National Assessment and Accreditation Council of India (NAAC) with grade 'A'.

Keeping this in view, the study materials of the Post Graduate level in different subjects are prepared on the basis of a well laid-out syllabus. The course structure combines the best elements in the approved syllabi of Central and State Universities in respective subjects. It has been so designed as to be upgradable with the addition of new information as well as results of fresh thinking and analysis.

The accepted methodology of distance education has been followed in the preparation of these study materials. Co-operation in every form of experienced scholarship is indispensable for a work on this kind. We, therefore, owe an enormous debt of gratitude to everyone whose tireless efforts went into the writing, editing and devising of a proper layout of the materials. Practically speaking, their role amounts to an all-out involvement in layout of the materials and an involvement in 'invisible teaching', as well. For, whoever makes use of these study materials would virtually derive the benefit of learning under their collective care without each being seen by the other.

The more a learner would seriously pursue these study materials, the easier will it be for him or her to reach out to larger horizons of a subject. Care has also been taken to make the language lucid and presentation attractive so that they may be rated as quality self-learning materials. If anything remains still obscure or difficult to follow, arrangements are there to come to terms throughout the counseling sessions regularly available at the network of study centers set up by the University.

Needless to add, a great deal of these efforts is still experimental-in fact, pioneering in certain areas. Naturally, there is every possibility of some lapse or deficiency here and there. However, these do admit of rectification and further improvement in due course. On the whole, therefore, these study materials are expected to evoke wider appreciation the more they receive serious attention of all concerned.

**Professor (Dr.) Subha Sankar Sarkar**

Vice-Chancellor

**Netaji Subhas Open University**  
**Post Graduate English Language Teaching Programme (PGELT)**  
**PGEL-10 (Value Added Course)**  
**Course Title: Critical Pedagogy- Peer teaching - self observation Report**

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**Course Code: PGEL-10 (Value Added Course)  
Course Title: Critical Pedagogy- Peer teaching -  
Self observation Report**

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# Module 1 : Pedagogical Strategies

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## Unit 1 □ Evolution of Pedagogical Strategies

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### Structure

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- 1.2 Objectives
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- 1.6 Reform phase from 1980 onwards
- 1.7 Educational innovations in the 21st century
- 1.8 Summary
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### 1.1 Introduction

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Pedagogy is 'the method and practice of teaching especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept', (Oxford Advance Learners' Dictionary). The word originated in the late 16th century from the French pedagogue, meaning a strict, stiff and old fashioned teacher. Teaching is referred as the 'noblest' of professions. Teachers' rewards are from the satisfactions on the effect they have, in transforming their student's lives. A teacher is an individual who brings different qualities, talents, experiences and attitudes. All of these need to be developed and learned so that the pursuer can be successful in the profession.

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### 1.2 Objectives

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At the end of reading this unit, you will be able to:

- a. Become aware of ancient education systems.



- b. Know the differences between ancient and modern education system.
- c. Become familiar with concepts in pedagogy
- d. Know different parts of the education reform

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## 1.3 Historical Context

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In this unit you will get introduced to the historical, social and pedagogic aspects of English Language Teaching. Before we begin, let us try to reflect on the following:

- ❖ How was education in ancient India?
- ❖ What were the features of education system in ancient India and ancient Europe?
- ❖ What were the aims of education in ancient times and how they can be useful for present education system?

Now let us come up with the answers.

In ancient India, people used to learn an art form to earn a livelihood. As part of the ancient education system, there were 64 art forms, which included dance, music, agriculture, medicinal sciences etc. The focus of this education system was also on religious aspects. These were religious duties, warfare, moral, social, psychological, political knowledge and development. In ancient times, education aided fulfillment. Thus, body, mind, intellect and spirit were the components for simultaneous and harmonious development. Strict moral codes of conduct dominated education. Self-reverence, self-knowledge and self-control were the features of the education system. Discipline was free. The education could go on as long as 48 years.

The first teachings on language were in form of dialogues, for example, as found in Plato's *Cratylus*, a debate on the origin of language and its relation between words and meanings. The dialogue is between Socrates and Hermogenes and between Socrates and Cratylus. According to Hermogenes, language is 'conventional' and the relation between words and their referents is just arbitrary. Cratylus is of the opinion that there is a natural 'relation' between words and their meanings. This debate between the conventionalist and the naturalist position initiated and led to a detailed study of the Greek language.

Plato introduced the traditional classification of words into 'parts of speech'. He made a distinction between 'onoma', a nominal, and 'rhema' a verbal. In a proposition, 'onoma' is the term and 'rhema' is the predicate. For example, the sentence Madan teased Mohini is a proposition which has two terms, Madan and Mohini and a predicate, teased. Thus Plato used logical categories for describing language. Aristotle had made additions to Plato's traditional classification. He had added a new class - syndesmoi which further classified lexicons as pronouns, articles, conjunctions and prepositions. He defined the word as a minimum meaningful unit or component of a structure. Aristotle's definition of the word reminds us of a later Bloomfieldian definition of morpheme. The initial focus on oral speech soon shifted to the writing. The study of the ancient Greek language, started off as part of philosophy and logic and was concerned with the metaphysical features of language. The first grammar book of the language, *Hé Téchné Grammatike*, by Dionysius Thrax was on the art of writing. Speech was considered to be deviation from the standard of the written form and therefore a 'corrupt' form of language. The importance of literature reinforced this supremacy of the written form over speech - a phenomenon which continued down the centuries. An achievement of the language philosophers was devising a formal terminology for description of the Greek language that served as a basis for language study for more than two thousand years. Along with language, they had worked in other fields; logic, ethics, politics, rhetoric and mathematics.

The Romans were influenced by the Greeks. They followed the Greek framework for the description of Latin. However, the first comprehensive grammar of Latin was *De Lingua Latina* (on the Latin Language), written by Marcus Terentius Varro (116-27 B.C.). The book is a threefold division of language study into etymology, morphology and syntax. Varro's linguistic description broke away from the Greek tradition and on several issues his observations appear to be strikingly modern. For instance, he recognized the social and communicative function of language as more important and primary than its function as a tool for logical analysis and enquiry. In the middle ages, language study in Latin included pronunciation and syllable structure and morphology. Priscian (512- 60 A.D.) in his book *Institutiones Grammaticae* (Grammatical Categories) discusses all of the above as well as word and syntax of Latin. His work is the result of Greco-Roman unity and a bridge between antiquity and Middle ages on Language study.

The motivation for early Indian language studies was to preserve the sacred religious texts, the Vedas, which were orally transmitted and change in the texts (due

to change of language) was considered to be profanation, if not corruption. Therefore there was a need for an authoritative text, comprehensive yet minute including phonetics, etymology, syntax and metrics. The first extant description of Sanskrit is found in Panini's (4th century B.C.) *Astadhyayi*. The book presents 3959 sutras (aphorisms) and is considered to be the earliest description of any Indo-European Language. *Astadhyayi* deals with word formation but is also significant for its phonetic description and notions of sandhi or the morphophonemic processes in which sounds influence each other in connected speech. The scholarship is remarkable for its precision, exhaustiveness, clarity and systematicity and the sutras have required extensive and elaborate explanation and commentary down the centuries.

The educational framework in the medieval period was rooted in the seven liberal arts. These were grammar, dialectic (logic) and rhetoric, music, arithmetic, geometry and astronomy. From the twelfth century onwards, the history of language study was significant as the period of scholastic philosophers. They believed that language reflected reality and therefore, one effective way of analysing reality was analysing language. Other important developments that took place in the medieval period were in the fields of lexicography and translation. This happened with the increase in Christian missionary activities and the Byzantine writers' enthusiasm for introducing and expounding the Greek authors in the East.

Sir William Jones' discovery of the historical kinship of Sanskrit with Latin, Greek and the Germanic Languages is considered to be one of the greatest achievements in language study up to the present day. During his nine year stay in India as a judge in the British court, Jones studied Sanskrit, the classical language of India and Latin, Greek and the Germanic languages of Europe. The year 1786 is regarded as a landmark in the history of language studies as he read his famous paper (on 2nd February) to the Royal Asiatic Society, Calcutta. Jones observed:

"The Sanskrit language, whatever may be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than Greek, more copious than Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either; yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philosopher could examine the Sanskrit, Greek and Latin, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which perhaps no longer exists. ...".

Thus a methodology for studying the similarities and differences between languages

at different levels of linguistic representations was set up and language families across borders were established. Jacob Grimm, following his contemporary Rasmus Rask, discovered certain systematic correspondences between the sound system of Indo-European languages. His principled study on correspondence of sound changes is known as Grimm's Law.

The school system that we have today, originated between the 1830s and 1870s, in the colonial period. This education system included the text book, examinations and stiff administration. In this period we had witnessed the development of national systems of education and compulsory schooling. This period also witnessed the shift from indigenous schooling of the country which has existed mostly since the Vedic ages to the nationalized knowledge systems. The shift was from repetition and memorization to the text book culture.

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## **1.4 Early Phase of Education Reform**

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The early phase of education reform emerged between 1890s to 1940s. In the first phase, there was rejection of the indigenous schooling system. The modern education system, then, came with benefits of science and the need for social reform. Contradicting the earlier system, this system allowed education of all, removing the barriers from a few sections of the population accessing for knowledge and identity. The four distinctive responses from the late 1890s and early 1900s are the following:

Swami Vivekananda, an early influence articulated a distinct vision of education focusing on character building. This system was based on Vedanta philosophy and practice. A second response was formulated by Rabindranath Tagore where we had witnessed an alternative education system from that of the colonial system, relating nature as its central part. The third educationist in the discussion is Jyotirao Phule who focused on education of Dalits and women in rural contexts, The fourth educationist is Gandhi, who has formulated an education with a vision that had learning crafts at its core, in place of bookish curriculum.

During the late 19th century, English language teaching has a remarkable history. Professional associations and societies were formed, such as the International Phonetic Association (IPA), and phoneticians such as Wilhelm Victor (1850-1918) in Germany, Paul Passy (1858-1940) in France, Otto Jespersen (1860-1943) in Denmark and Henry Sweet (184-1912) in Britain had begun their work. A reform movement was founded on three basic principles. First is the primacy of speech; second, the centrality

of connected texts and third, the priority of an oral classroom methodology. The reform movement had introduced the scientific approach to language study.

### **Task 1**

Do you know what were the contributions of the four phoneticians ? Find out your answer from the sites in the reading list.

Your answer:

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## **1.5 Post Independence: the 1960s**

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A few years after independence, the growth of science education had developed. In the field of language, a number of English Language Teaching Institutes emanated. Different teaching methods were suggested by the scholars and notable amongst them was of Michael West's the Direct Method. As the study of language shifted from the ancient to the modern languages, new methods developed for teaching -speaking skills. This was necessary because the number of speakers for the modern languages were more than classical Greek and Latin. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, another language teaching method known as Natural Methods developed. These methods considered that second language can be learnt the way we learn our mother tongue. The Direct Method was one of these natural methods. The idea was to teach L2 without the use of L1.

In the medieval times a focus of language study was the "word". Bhatrighari's Vakyapadiyam, the notion of the word explains numerous theories of the word and sentence. In the early 1920, language educators were in search of a core vocabulary, which could be graded for the teaching of the language. How was this word list prepared? And on what principles of selection was it based?

Michael West's the General Service List (GSL), first published in 1926 is a list of 2000 word and 4000 word families for teaching English as a second language. The words were selected to represent the most frequent words of English, taken from a corpus of written English. The relative frequencies of various senses of the words were also included. The list was prepared for English Language Learners and English as Second Language teachers. It covers 85 % of the words in any corpus. The learner who knows all the words on the list and their related families would understand approximately 90-95 percent of colloquial speech and 80-85 percent of common

written texts. The list was revised in 1953. West's list was for the speaking in the language focused on productive and receptive skills.

In the early part of the 1900s, extensive reading, widely and in quantity in terms of purpose or outcome was considered traditional. Pioneers such as Harold Palmer in Britain and Michael West in India worked out the theory and practice of extensive reading to the teaching of foreign language reading. Palmer's work had been with word frequency, and West was exploring the idea of a 'defining vocabulary', i.e. common words to explain the meaning of other unusual items. A S Hornby's (1898-1978) publications along with Gatenby and Wakefield, the *Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (1952) and *Guide to Patterns and Usage in English* were influential reference books for learners of English. The main concerns of ELT in 1950s and 1970s were careful selection and grading of grammar patterns and vocabulary, pronunciation and the text.

1960s was a period of change for the scope and structure of ELT. Applied Linguistics had emerged with new ideas and priorities. The 1960s also witnessed the concerns in teaching English as a mother tongue (*Breakthrough to Literacy*, 1970) and the publication of language study materials for older pupils (*Language in Use*, 1971). New pedagogical ideas to language data appeared in *Cohesion in English*, 1976, by Halliday and Ruqaiya Hassan. The definition of the topic as defined by the author's mentions that for interpretation of any item in the discourse require making reference to some other item in the discourse, there is a cohesion. In the wake of post-structural concern for communication, major interests in new domains of linguistics i.e., text linguistics and pragmatics grew up. The 1970s had brought testing and teaching together and an alliance between linguistics and learning theory.

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## **1.6 Reform phase from 1980 onwards**

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Two areas of concern from the earlier phase which further developed from 1980s onwards were to help the adult learners who wanted to acquire a basic ability to communicate effectively in the foreign country. The second was to focus on learning the language with specific purposes, for learners with particular professional and educational reasons. The other developments were the emergence of notions and functions in language teaching. The T level courses had appeared from the late 1970s (*Strategies 1977-82* by Brian Abbs and Ingrid Freebairn). The T level initiated the development of a functional approach to language testing and assessment. N S Prabhu's

1987 Project on meaning focused activity combined tasks with cognitive processes in language acquisition.

From 1991, the phase of liberal education was adopted with the purpose of empowering learners with broad knowledge and transferable skills. It is based on the concept of liberalism. Liberalism is a way of studying a curriculum that provides a broad exposure to multiple disciplines and learning strategies in addition to in-depth study in English Language Teaching. From 2015, came the age of new liberalism. In order to understand the place of Teaching practices, curricula, materials and evaluation in the wider context of the global spread of English, it is essential to understand English in the light of neo-liberalism. English, as a neoliberal language is regarded as a natural and neutral medium of academic excellence. As a language of global competitiveness, Language Teaching has changed from professionalism to market-oriented reform policies.

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## 1.7 Educational innovations in the 21st century

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The beginning of the 21st century had conceived different theories suggesting different directions to the nature of language learning. The principals of them are described by reference to theory of language (with a purpose) and a theory of leaning (with a process). Following the English of ESP, there have been two developments in language description for use of language in different domain. These are genre analysis and corpus linguistics. Genre is a social construct in different discourses and genre analysis is an ability that students need to meet their purposes. Teaching of English over the recent years has moved towards restricted language use as a consequence of electronic technology. Technology had an impact on the modes of language use and communication and on the ways in which language used is recorded and analysed. The use of the computer to collect and analyse vast corpora of language data is a striking development over the past twenty years. Corpus Linguistics has brought in the shift of the focus of pedagogic attention from grammatical to lexical features. The primacy of lexis is a determining factor in the patterning the usage. Now, let us discuss two recent developments in ELT methodology.

### **Task 2**

Suppose you are in an unfamiliar context. Will you be able to communicate in a shared knowledge and cultural assumption?

**Your Answer:**

Language is only real to users and in pedagogy; it is a matter of presenting language which can be made real for the learners. The first term in the development for ELT methodology is the use of 'real' language and second term is 'examples'. The language of the classroom has to engage the learner as well as promote learning. The assumption is that learners will have to go beyond the actual language presented in the class and generalize from it. A direct approach, dealing with 'real' language is less realistic than the indirect approach. Samples of 'real' language in the indirect approach engages the learner with a range of language use without confining to any particular norm or behaviour, this integrates purpose and process.

### **Task 3**

Make an observation into the linguistic and cultural reality of your classroom learners. Identify few (2-5) local values and attitudes you have/ need to incorporate to make pedagogy appropriate to local conditions.

**Your Answer:**

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## **1.8 Summary**

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A brief look at the innovative pedagogy introduced you to the history of language studies. It presents the practical information and the hands on tasks in a nutshell. The teaching of language across the times should delve you into a search for how to teach language skills, the needs for specific classes, out-of-class activities and to develop teaching personality. Looking back at the history, you must have a logical and clear idea of what were the approaches in teaching L1 at the primary level that we can adopt as role models for our second language teaching. Percepts and principles in the past were derived from local circumstances, claims and findings from disciplines outside pedagogy.

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## **1.9 Review Questions**

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1. Discuss the features of education system of the ancient Greeks.
2. What were the contributions of the Romans in language study?
3. Discuss the features of Language study in the medieval period.



4. What was scope of ELT in the 1960s?
5. Discuss the features of language education in ancient India.
6. Reflect on the early phase of educational reforms.
7. What are the aims of education system of the earlier times that can be useful for the present time?
8. What were the changes in language teaching in the 1980s?
9. Discuss the education innovations of the 21st century.
10. Compare the school system during your school days and the system that we have today.

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## 1.10 References

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## 1.11 Reading List

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## Unit 2 □ Indigenous Evolution : Tagore's Sahaj Path and Sukumar Ray's Abol Tabol

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### Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Analysis of L1 text
- 2.3 Pedagogic principles of Sahaj Path
- 2.4 Textual Analysis of Dwitiya Bhag
- 2.5 Language in Ray's Abol Tabol
- 2.6 Summary
- 2.7 Review Exercises
- 2.8 References

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### 2.1 Introduction

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This unit discusses the impact of first language on second language learning. The idea is to become aware about the values of language teaching which are inbuilt in the learners and how to utilize those values in teaching another language. The language learner spends considerable amount of time (0-5years) with the Mother Tongue (L1) before joining the formal schooling system. This knowledge base of L1 can be utilized in Second Language (L2) learning. Let us find out how.

Do you remember how you started to learn language at school?

**Your answer:**

We all know that child language development begins with a lexical base. Thus lexicons were the first learning milestones in formal schooling. For L1 classes at the primary level, the focus was on spelling and vocabulary with an emphasis on the reading and pronunciation. These lexical bases although learnt from home and familiar, were unknown to the learner for their spelling. The spellings had to be learnt with practice by heart and from successful performances in spelling tests. To learn the

pronunciation of the new words, not learnt from home and introduced at the primary level, the focus was on syllables. The unknown new pronunciation was to be learnt by drawing references from the known utterances. Based on your observation, make a list of the things that you did while in learning L1.

**Your answer:**

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## 2.2 Analysis of L1 Text

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Language learning in primary L1 was mainly focused on reading texts and adding new words to the repertoire. The learning methodology has changed over the years. At the primary level of school system, today the above language skills are learnt through texts with following tasks and activities. The language elements from *Shahj Path-Pratham* bhag for standard 1 are analyzed as: a) Rhymes focused on the application of the consonant and vowel phonemes in simple nouns and verbs forms b) following exercises on minimal pairs, and c) vocabulary and sentence structure. This application familiarizes the learner with the phonemes of the language and their all possible occurrences. Now let us get back to our L1 learning. We had also learnt the phonemes of the language in a similar fashion. Though we did not have rigorous tasks on minimal pairs in our text books then, but the rhymes that the learners read today are centuries old. So what is new in the learning? Read through a L1 text of a primary class, what are your observations on the applications?

**Your answer:**

Now let us discuss the next level after the phoneme. This is vocabulary. New vocabulary is presented in a short reading text. The subject content of the texts is mainly focused on learning new vocabulary and their spelling, simple sentence structures. The narratives are of three kinds; poems on animals in their natural habitats, nature, and short stories reflecting the society. From first lesson to the third the texts are graded with more noun-verb combination structures. The following tasks are designed for the purpose of evaluation first and then learning. Vocabulary tasks are accompanied by: 1. Opposite words, 2. Meaning explanation, 3. Fill up the blanks/ provide appropriate

word for a phrase, 4. Pictorial identification, 5. Form words from jumbled alphabets.

Can we draw some insights from these tasks for our second language teaching?

**Your answer:**

Do you think L1 in the L2 class will be boring? For the language areas which are difficult for children to learn, and to strengthen their willingness and enthusiastic nature in the learning without negative impacts, L1 can be used contextually. These areas are: auditory discrimination, morphology, picture explanation, vocabulary tests and sentence repetition. L1 can be used for giving instructions and for overall comprehension at the beginning. To strengthen student's capacity to learn content vocabulary and concepts, simulation in to the language for a few years is necessary.

Let us see how we can deal with morphology. Research indicates that second language learners learn the irregular past tense forms of a few verbs before they learn to apply the -ed; regular form. And learning other tense markers is not simultaneous but gradual. To activate the background knowledge of L1 and to overcome lapses in the learning of L2, learners sometimes avoid using the structures which they find difficult to learn. And if not put to attention at the beginning, this may never become a part of the learner's systematic knowledge. For relative clauses, according to research, second language learners learn to use the subject and the direct object (nouns) before they learn to use indirect object and object of preposition. This is referred as accessibility hierarchy by Lightbrown and Spada, 2003. Starting from object of comparison, a child who can use relative clauses for possessives will also learn to use it for object of preposition, indirect object, direct object and subject. So how do L1 practitioners introduce morpheme?

Did we learn to break up words? Of course, breaking up a new word for mastering its pronunciation was important, which we had adopted on our own. We had also learnt about affixes in grammar. For the syntax, the frequent activities in L1 are c) Comprehension questions, and sentence formation with prompts. So, did our L1 texts tell us about the morphemes of L1? Is the concept necessary in Teaching L2?

**Your answer:**

When learners reach a certain stage of language learning, they may learn a second language rule but restrict its application. For example, in our second language context, dropping of articles before nouns or varied use of articles. When they find a similarity with L1, they may learn faster, for example the verb inflections for person and number. For example:

phaki thake gache	The bird lives on a tree
ami thaki barite	I live in a house

The learner is aware that similar to L1, there may be a change in verb inflection with change of subject in L2.

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## 2.3 Pedagogic principles of Sahaj Path

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For L1, in standards 1, the text for learning Bengali is *Sahaj Path* - pratham bhag by Rabindranath Tagore. We as first language speakers, learnt Bangla from this text at our primary level. Let us explore the text from 4 principles. Principle 1 is the gradation of the language forms from simple to complex. How had Tagore composed the texts on gradation? The second principle is the choice of themes. The themes those are interesting and familiar to the young learners. The third principle is the selection of vocabulary items and the fourth principle is the incidental grammar which is introduced with short sentences of stories and as rhythmic words in short poems. These compositions guide the learner to the inbuilt coherence and their applications.

**Principle of gradation** - the grading for the beginner level is based on reading skills and cultural awareness skill. The graded language is adapted to the level of the learners. The emphasis is on reading skill for developing language awareness.

The 45 alphabets of Bangla in pratham bag are introduced with short rhymes on basic verbs. These are introduced in 98 words. The verbs, as they occur in the rhyming sequence are:

say/speak (words), sit and eat (sweet), bark, shout (and ask for curd), bring (rice), sing and row (a boat), cook (on the river bank), feel (smoke), walk (with a crowd), sleep, cry, get hungry, make noise (on the drum), be quite, listen, go and pick (mango), get angry, not go, harvest (paddy), drive (bullock cart), sit and study, buy (an umbrella), return (home), cover (self), sit (at the corner) and cough. The subjects in these rhymes are a kid, the alphabets, thick cloud and a little girl. The objects are alphabets mostly. Since, the alphabets themselves are both subjects and objects,

performing different activities, they appear as real characters. The young learner is introduced to the alphabets and to the roles they can play in building on language. After the introduction of the alphabets, which is half of the text book, there are ten texts. Let us look into these ten texts in the next three principles.

**Principle of themes:** The first text is a poem of 16 lines. Each line has three-four words. The six subjects of this poem are tiger, bird, fish, crow, swan, and honey-bee. The poem describes the habitats and activities of these animals. This poem is followed by another poem of 32 lines on human beings. Each line has one or two words. The subjects are day light, wind, bamboo trees, water of the lake, crows, tamarisk branch, as well as 9 human characters; Khudiram, Madhu Ray, Jaylal, Abinaash, old maid, Harihar, Patu Pal, Dinanath and Gurudas. The poem begins with nature and its activities and ends with human beings and their activities (picking fruit, rowing, ploughing, mowing, sleeping, building a house, bringing rice, cooking rice and making soil). The poem is easy to read and memorize. From second to tenth text, each story of the text is followed by a poem. The second text is on a festival, arrangement for worship and the poem is on dawn and description of early morning. Purchase of fruits and grocery is the theme for text 3, and the following poem is about a lake, named as motibeeel. The poem also paints a picture of the paddy land adjacent to the lake and the harvesting activities therein.

The poems following the texts are more attractive than the texts. The poem following the text 5 is on a small river beside the village. The river, its landscape and its surrounding activities in the summer and rainy seasons are narrated in simple poetic language. The poem following text 6 is on the season of festivals in Bengal, October and pre-winter. It is on the appearance of nature during that time of a year and holidays in the season.

**Principle of vocabulary :** Text 2 comprises of 126 words with two to seven words in each sentence. There are 32 sentences. Each sentence has subjects, but ten of them are without verbs. The story is spread over 4 paragraphs with 3-5 sentences per paragraph. Text 3 is of 88 words. This text also has 5 sentences without verbs. The emphasis is on introducing names of objects and subject-object-verb concordance. The poem vocabularies introduce the learner to minimal, to simple poetic language and one or two poetic images. The verses are usually of six to ten words. The vocabulary range of the texts is 74-126 and the total number of vocabulary in Pratham Bhag is around 1000. The emphasis is more on vowel utterance. Different words with same diphthongs and vowels are in plenty.

A vocabulary strategy of the texts is presentation of compound words as single words especially in kinship terms (binipisi, ranididi, asadada, mainimasi, sourididi), location (telipara 'name of a locality', bansgache 'on a bamboo tree', pousmase 'during winter', tisikhele 'in the flaxseed field'), in names of plants (kachu pata 'taro leaf', kala pata 'banana leaf', talban 'palmyra palm forest', belphule 'in Arabian jasmine', juiphule 'in jasmine'). There are also occurrence of hyphenation of two words representing demonstrative (oi-je 'there'), location (unun-dhare 'beside the oven' thakur-ghore 'in the prayer room'), state (sara bhara 'pate full of', gal-phola 'healthy').

Reduplicated words have added to the rhythm and melody to the poems and texts. Reduplication is of three kinds. The reduplicated words from the texts are: exact, rhyming, and lexical doublets. Exact or repletion of the word are found in nouns, verbs and adjectives; ghare ghare (in every room), ghara ghara (many pitcher-full), chupi chupi (quietly), eka eka (alone), jhake jhake (group of), piche piche (follow behind). bhabite bhabite (while thinking), deke deke (repeatedly calling). Sometimes, rhyming or two halves of a single word a not exactly the same but they rhyme each other, for example, Jhalmal (sparkling), jhilimili, jhilmil (dazzling), kichimichi (noise of myna) mitimiti (twinkling). In mitimiti there is exact repetition. Lexical doublets are two words with different phonological forms, but same etymological root; hetha hotha (here and there), anka banka (crisscross). Reduplicated words bring in the sense of continuation, emphasis and sonority. The total number of reduplicated words in Pratham Bhag is 54.

Form the poems, some of the reduplicated words are: bhaye bhaye (in fear), chaka chaka (spotted), bane bane (in the forests), mehge meghe (in the clouds), jale jale (in water), dale dale (on the branches) etc. Beside these, there are also Onomatopoeic words as in; tup tup (sound of water), gun gun (humming a tunes), dhu dhu (empty field), hu hu (sound of wind), ghu ghu (sound of a dove), duru duru (in fear), dhal dhal (water in the lake), kar kar (sound of lightning), gheu gheu (dog bark), kiyo kiyo (cry of an infant), chik chik (shiny appearance of sand), kal kal (noise of river water).

**Principle of grammatical items-** Pratham Bhag at the beginning is composed on two-sentence rhymes on the Bengali alphabets, which have a subject, and a verb with supporting vocabulary. In the texts there are short and simple sentences. There is varied representation of the plural forms. For example, the other forms of the word megh 'cloud' is meghe 'in the coulds', meghera 'the coulds', megh guli 'the coulds'. The

plural forms-‘ra’ and ‘guli’ occur as a plural suffix as well as a separate word for plurality. Other grammatical features in the text are:

- a) Present, past and future tense and conditionals for verbs for example, 'to fly', ure occurs as; Pakha mele ore 'spreads its wings to fly', ure gelam 'I flew', ure gelo 'it flew away (past)', ure jaye 'it flew away (present continuous)', uribo gagone 'I will fly in the sky', urite petam jadi 'if I could fly'.
- b) Compound verbs with noun + verb and verb + verb components are common, for example, jaoya asa 'coming to and fro'(V+V) jege othe 'to wake up' (V+ N).
- c) **Negatives :** There are thirteen negative verbs in the text. These verbs are kaje tara nei 'no hurry to work', kada nei 'no mud', kakhono habe na 'will (it) never happen', ore na 'doesn't fly', pare na digiye jete 'cannot skip', sekhe ni 'haven't learnt', jabo na 'will not go', rakha jaye na 'cannot be kept', boli ne '(I didn't) say anything', deri sahe na 'cannot tolerate delay (the flowers)', dae ni 'did not bring', tari hoye ni 'did not prepare (curd)'. Two verbs for example, jani 'know' and jani na 'don't know', khela hobe 'will play', khela jaye na 'cannot play' occur with the negative uses. There is also a phrasal use o- ta noye 'not that one (bird) ', and an adverb kothao nei 'nowhere (in sight) in the text.
- d) **Collocations:** the word kaemon 'what kind of' occurs in the word combinations-kaemon bese 'in what kind of dress', kaemon kore 'in what ways', kaemon manus 'what kind of man'. Since the poems are major part of the text and are mostly on nature and natural habitats of birds and animals the verbs collocates with the subjects in poetic language. This has made the usages attractive to the learner.
- e) **Demonstratives:** Frequent demonstratives from the text are: oi 'there', oi-je 'over there', oi-khane, o- khane 'over that place', sei-khane, sekhane-te 'at that place' as well as ei 'this', ei-bar 'this time', ei-dike 'this way', and ei-je 'overhere'.

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## 2.4 Textual Analysis of *Sahaj Path - Dwitya Bhag*

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There are 13 lessons in the text. The first lesson introduces the last consonant (visarga) of the consonant phoneme series in a short reading text of 16 sentences. 15



words with the consonant with difficult pronunciation and spelling are included. The text is on a play. In the second text, the conjunct consonant (ya-phala) occurs. Twenty two words with the conjunct consonant appear in the 20 sentences of the reading text. Among these words, one is monosyllabic, 8 are disyllabic, 12 are trisyllabic and two are with four syllables. There is one to one grapheme phoneme matching in the varied spellings for those words. The text is on a meeting for an occasion.

For the third lesson, there is a short poem (hat) depicting the activities at the market, the people and the selling and buying of commodities, and pictures from the river and the road. The sentences are mostly of four words, the last word rhymed with the next line. The meaning is complete in each two lines. There are 11 such pairs.

The fourth lesson is a short text with another two conjunct consonant /nga/ (uaye- ga) and /kh-khiya/ (khiya). There are known utterances with their spellings. Ten words are with the first conjunct and three with the second (khiya). The text is of 13 lines and is on locusts and environment. The fifth lesson introduces two new conjuncts and revises on a previous lesson's conjunct. These conjuncts are /nda/, /ndha/, and /nga/. The text is on arrangements prior to two individuals visit and during the visit. The sixth lesson is on introduction to /r/ (reph), which occurs as a conjunct consonant in form of a suprasegmental and its pronunciation in contexts. It occurs only in word medial and word final positions. The text is on the neighbourhood in the monsoons. After a short text of 16 sentences, the lesson presents a poem on a forest hut, animals in a forest and their activities with the narrator. It is of 36 lines, with two - four words per line. Two conjunct consonants (hasanta, chandra bindu or suprasegmental nasal) are introduced. The seventh lesson is on /ra-phala/, a conjunct occurring in combination with 6 different consonants. These are /s, f, j, t, gha, g/. The text also includes a consonant cluster /nta/, in word medial and word final contexts. The eighth lesson is on the conjunct /sta, stha/. The text is of 13 lines. Other consonant clusters in the text are /kla/, /nta/, /tra/. The text is on marketing food items and their amounts to be purchased and arrangements for cooking on the way. The emphasis is on orthography and pronunciation. The ninth lesson is on the morning schedules of an employee. The 14 sentences text introduces consonant clusters /spa, fca, nka /.

The tenth lesson is on consonant clusters / şta, nja, spa, ştha/ the text is on a visit of a folk singer at a dwelling on a rainy day. /şta/ occurs in word finally and for inflected words in word medial position. The text is followed by a nature poem of 24 lines. The next lesson is on geminates /kk, thth, ll, nn, jj, tt/, which occur as conjunct

consonants. The 34 sentences are ornamented by reduplicated syllables in onomatopoeic words and echo words. Other clusters in the text are/ cch, sb, jjb, nc, sk, nth, nt, nd, nd/. The text is on home incidents at night. The text is followed by a 18-line poem on early morning.

The eleventh lesson is a story on tiger hunting. The text introduces the clusters /kt, st, kl, ndr, mb, sk, sb/ and conjuncts /kr, sr, pr, ru, ghr, dr/. This is followed by a poem on a dream. The next lesson is on a travel story of a doctor to a far away visit on a palanquin. It is on the travel experience through a forest. The last lesson is on a story of a poor father arranging for his daughter's wedding and the incidents. The story has a happy ending.

The entire text focuses on the consonant phonemes and orthographic recognition of new and old words learnt during the lesson. The short stories and poems are activities on reading and vocabulary. This also includes listening activities, learning by heart/ memorizing, and acquiring accurate pronunciation. By the time the learners are beginning their L2 acquisition, they have in-depth knowledge on the above L1 features. Thus in a similar fashion, this background knowledge can be used to some extent for acquiring L2 features. For the detailed orthographic peculiarities of L2, wherein there is no one-to-one matching between grapheme and phoneme, learners can be motivated to learn referring to the ways they had adopted for learning L1.

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## 2.5 Language and Abol Tabol

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Sukumar Ray in *Abol Tabol* had experimented with L1 words. In 'khichuri' (Stew Munch), there is blending of 6 animal names into 3 lexicons. These are duck and hedgehog 'hasjaru', swan and tortoise 'bakkochrop', and elephant and sea whale 'hatimi'. Besides these, combination of 10 other animals into 5 blending is mentioned in the poem. In the poem 'abal tabal' (Nonsense), Ray had coined a. new words such as; soft shadow of the rainbow - 'ramdhanuker abchaya' , voice city- 'kantho pur' b. new concepts; ringing of bells from the smell of light covered in darkness (alaye ahaka andhakar ghanṭa baje gandhe tar), the dew of the moon from the ancient times (adim kaler candim him). The poem is about a dream, its magical context, its music, its words, with a thought provoking line on word-cutter, cutting the twist created by words (kathaye kaṭe kathar panch).

From these two poems, the L1 learner can have inputs in creativity and on cognitive activities in playing with language in rendering word meaning and expressing

ideas. This background knowledge can be utilized in teaching writing.

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## 2.6 Summary

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Focusing on modified instruction in L2, the unit has discussed on indigenous pedagogy from two L1 texts, *Sahaj-Path* and *Abol Tabol*. These texts had taught us to learn while reading through the creative use of language. We as ELT learners can use this background knowledge of L1 of playing with words and varied use of language for L2 learning. The review exercise is more on exploring this varied use of language. This will enrich us to understand the learning context.

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## 2.7 Review Exercises

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1. What was gradation in reading comprehension from *Sahaj Path* pratham bag to Dwitiya bag.
2. Compare two poems from the two texts and discuss their pedagogical aspects.
3. 'The focus in reading skills more than other language skills in *Sahaj Path*'. Do you think so? Justify your answer
4. What are the language inputs for a L1 learner in Ray's *Abol Tabol*?
5. Take a L1 text from the high school and analyze how the pedagogic inputs have gradually modified from that of the primary level. Make a similar study for L2 Compare your findings in L1 and L2.
6. Take a text from *Abol Tabol* and discuss its pragmatic and semantic features.
7. Take a poem from *Abol Tabol* and analyse its linguistic features. Can we use this background knowledge in L2 learning. Justify.
8. What were the principles behind selection of Vocabulary in Sahaj path pratham bhag?
9. Discuss the principles of choice of themes in a text of *Sahaj Path*.
10. What ideas can you draw from *Sahaj Path* for developing language awareness in L2 learning? Discuss.

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## 2.8 References

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## Unit 3 □ Indigenous innovations in Gandhiji's Basic Education

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### Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Objectives
- 3.3 Principles of Basic Education
- 3.4 Activity oriented purposeful learning
- 3.5 Teacher training and development
- 3.6 NaiTaleem and main stream education
- 3.7 Summary
- 3.8 Review Questions
- 3.9 References

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### 3.1 Introduction

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In the previous unit we have discussed the pedagogical principles of the earlier times, and the educational reforms of the 21st century. In this unit we will discuss on the perspectives of Gandhiji's NaiTaleem - Basic education and explore the ideas from his autobiography, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, relevant for our language classrooms. Basic Education (1951) highlights a philosophy of life, some of which we have incorporated in our classrooms. Among these are non-use of physical force (corporal punishment) and violence. We had also adopted authority based moral force in bringing social order. In Gandhiji's philosophy, basic education is an important factor in shaping an individual, which can be achieved psychologically by an education which puts first things first, talks about the limitation in terms of good life, and does no place undue emphasis on material life.

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### 3.2 Objectives

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After reading the unit you will be able to

- a) Understand Gandhiji's concept on education
- b) Draw insights on language teaching from the concepts on Basic Education
- c) Reflect on purposeful learning

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### 3.3 Principles of Basic Education

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Basic education focuses on physical labor along with intellectual activities. These individual contributions to perfections should be based on principles of love, non-violence, truth and justice. Every conscious and honest worker is worthy of respect. Education is not literacy alone. Education is training of the mind and body and awakening of one's soul. There are three functions mentioned in the approaches to education and learning. These functions are:

- ❖ Sociological
- ❖ Pedagogical
- ❖ Spiritual

**Sociological function:** points out that there should be minimum education to all children. This system of education is indigenous, and therefore national. The society values the need for applications of knowledge. For example, in the school days, we were summoned for not keeping our bicycles properly. The defaulter was hunted out and asked to arrange all other bicycles neatly in the cycle stand. We also had SSSP (Social Service School Performance) classes every week. During the class we cleaned the overhead light shade and made the classroom tidy. Do you have any experiences of the kind in your school?

**Your answer:**

**Pedagogical function:** basic education must be imparted through mother tongue. In the method of teaching learning practice, some form of art or handicraft must be included. For our second language class, can we impart the lessons only through mother tongue? How much of the native language can be used in a language class?

**Your answer:**

The knowledge of the first language is an asset for a second language learner,

which can be utilized in the language classroom. But since the language we want our learners to learn is English, and the context of learning is limited for them, first language use may be minimized for the second language class. However, Gandhiji in *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* mentions, "It has always been my conviction that parents who train their children to think and talk in English from their infancy betray their children and their country. They deprive them of the spiritual and social heritage of the nation, and render them to that extent unfit for the service of the country." (p. 281).

**Spiritual function:** the spiritual function focuses on achieving the welfare of all. This function is based on the underlying notion of observing the human values and understanding the pressing problems of mankind in the present scenario. For example, "The spiritual training of the boys was a much more difficult matter than their physical and mental training. I relied little on religious books for the training of the spirit. Of course I believed that every student should be acquainted with the elements of his own religion and have a general knowledge of his own scriptures, and therefore I provided for such knowledge as best I could. But that, to my mind, was part of the intellectual training. Long before I undertook the education of the youngster of the Tolstoy Farm I had realized that the training of the spirit was a thing by itself. To develop the spirit is to build character and to enable one to work towards a knowledge of God and self-realization. And I held that this was an essential part of the training of the young, and that all training without culture of the spirit was of no use, and might be even harmful." (p. 303).

What is your opinion?

**Your answer:**

In Gandhiji's opinion, the teacher should live a straight (simple) life for the sake of his students. The teacher should try to be an eternal object-lesson to the learners and learn from them. The child naturally imbibes education in a well-ordered household. In the first five years of life, the education of a child begins with conception. The learning during this time is not repeated later on. So the spiritual training of the child begins from home. Gandhiji summarizes in three points from his reading of *Unto This Last*. The teachings are as follows:

1. That the good of the individual is contained in the good of all.
2. That a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's, in as much as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work.
3. That a life of a labour, i.e. the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman, is the life worth living." (p. 270).

On spiritual competence, he mentions, "Perfection or freedom from error comes only from grace, and so seekers after God have left us mantras, such as Ramanama, hallowed by their own austerities and charged with their purity. Without an unreserved surrender to His grace, complete mastery over thought is impossible. This is the teaching of every great book of religion, ....." (p. 286).

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### **3.4 Activity oriented purposeful learning**

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Experiential learning is linking work with knowledge. Gandhiji had stressed on vocational efficiency, linking learning through economic and craft based education. His aim was to embed learning through activities and not limit education as a learning skill only. For example learning shoe making, candle making etc. exposes the learner to the field. But continuous exposure to the making of the same craft for a number of years may turn the learner to be efficient in earning money, and at the same time inefficient in his intellectual competence. How can this be overcome? Do you have any suggestions for activity based learning for the second language classroom?

**Your answer:**

There is a need for time management when a learner is exposed to the skill of making a craft. The learner may be told that the objective of linking vocational education in the learning was to enroot the inherent principles behind the making of the craft. Thus the total time spent for the activity can be reduced by the actual class time to draw the learners' attention in the science behind the making of the craft/ item.

For the language classroom, experiential learning has been implemented for some years now. For instance, Learners can be asked to plant saplings in flower pots and at the same time describe the activity. In experiential learning good and bad learners come together to carry out a task.



"...if good children are taught together with bad ones and thrown into their company, they will lose nothing... . Children wrapped up in cotton wool are not always proof against all temptation or contamination. It is true, however that when boys and girls of all kinds of upbringing are kept and taught together, the parents and the teachers are put to the severest test. They have constantly to be on the alert."(p.306).

How far is this applicable for the language classroom? What are your reflections for the learning process?

**Your answer:**

This is true for the second language class. The activities in classroom often include group work. The individuals in a group include bright, weak and average students. The weak students try to pick up in group activities, where as the average students improve a lot. The bright students do not lose anything from the activity. They complete their task perfectly in time and in the process motives other individuals of the group to come up with answers.

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### **3.5 Teacher training and development**

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The common elements in Basic education are inclusive learning of productive skills under a supervisor and inculcating the attitude of truth so that the learner can take the right decision and face the world fearlessly. "A devotee of Truth may not do anything in deference to convention. He must always hold himself open to correction, and whenever he discovers himself to be wrong he must confess it at all cost and atone for it." (p. 314).Gandhiji in a teacher trainee's discussion, 1939, had stated the following:

"Our education has got to be revolutionized. The brain needs to be educated through the hand. If I were a poet, I could write poetry on the possibilities of the five fingers. What make you think that the mind is everything and the hands and feet nothing? Those who do not train their hands, who go through the ordinary rut of education, lack 'music' in their life. All their faculties are not trained. Mere book knowledge does not interest the child so as to hold his attention fully. The brain gets weary of mere words, and the child's mind begins to wander. The hand does the things it ought not to do, the eye sees the things it ought not to see, the ear hears the things

it ought not to hear, and they do not do, see or hear, respectively what they ought to. They are not taught to make the right choice and so their education often proves their ruin. An education which does not teach us to discriminate between good and bad, to assimilate the one and eschew the other is a misnomer."

In Gandhiji's view, learning and knowledge acquisition through participation in productive work is an effective and critical developmental tool at different stages of childhood and adolescence. Integration of 'head, hand and heart' is essential for all children irrespective of their social and economic background for the development of values and skills. The idea of education and work had been experimented through various initiatives all over the world. In spite of the benefits of the pedagogic roll of work in education, it had not been widely adopted in the main stream education. In India, this is present in policy and documents and being implemented for some schools but not at the center of all curricular activity. Why do you think this is so?

**Your answer:**

Basic education considers the teacher as a textbook in building the knowledge base of a learner. The teacher provides opportunities to the child to grow with wisdom, and cope with situations in daily life. The student observes the conduct and practices of teacher daily and tries to extract values even long after he had left school. Here is an illustration from the story of my experiments with truth:

"It is possible for a teacher situated miles away to affect the spirit of the pupils by his way of living. It would be idle for me, if I were a liar, to teach boys to tell the truth. A cowardly teacher would never succeed in making his boys valiant, and a stranger to self-restraint could never teach his pupils the value of self-restraint. I saw, therefore, that I must be an eternal object-lesson to the boys and girls living with me. ... One of them was wild, given to lying, and quarrelsome. On one occasion he broke out most violently. I was exasperated. I never punished my boys, but this time I was very angry. I tried to reason with him. But he was adamant and even tried to overreach me. At last I picked up a ruler lying at hand and delivered a blow on his arm. I trembled as I struck him. I dare say he noticed it. This was an entirely novel experience for them all. The boy cried out and begged to be forgiven. He cried not because the beating was painful to him; he could, if he had been so minded, have paid

me back in the same coin, being a stoutly built youth of seventeen; but he realized my pain in being driven to this violent resource. Never again after this incident did he disobey me. But I still repent that violence. I am afraid I exhibited before him that day not the spirit, but the brute in me." (p.304).

Can you identify the elements of conscience and wisdom from the above illustration?

**Your answer:**

Gandhiji had his unique technique of enhancing physical and mental talents of the child. He believed that each one of us have our own hidden genius of goodness which needs to be explored. The child unconscious of his arguments with Gandhiji had gained consciousness after he had witnessed the pain of his mentor while hitting him. Gandhiji's confession in the last two lines, projects the truth of the situation. Every teacher has faced such contexts while trying to teach. The way we deal with the context can only make the difference.

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### **3.6 NaiTaleem and main stream education**

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Experiential learning has helped to integrate the gap between knowledge and skill. Learners from standard 3 to 10 can develop a number of competences with the inclusion of work as part of the curriculum. These are cognitive, social and affective competences.

**Cognitive Competence:** In the language classroom, students can develop cognitive competences by suggesting a plan for a work. This task may be learning to prepare tea or juice. First, they can be orderly in the activity deciding on the process and prioritizing the steps. Next, they can learn the function of appropriate tools and describe how to use them. After that they can go for the preparation of the item and finally plan for making new and innovative items.

**Social competence:** for social competence one can be trained in the exchange of language forms involving interaction with others. Students may be trained to keep the neighbourhood clean, harmonize their actions with the nature and learn to value nature. They can work in a group, share and help others. They can learn to listen to instructions and take turns in following the directions. In the process, they will learn to clearly communicate in the language and will be open to other's point of view.

Affective competence: these are competences which result from emotions and determine the strength of the character. Students can learn to manage their emotions, self discipline and ability to carry on in difficult situations. They can be exposed to new experiences and develop on patience, empathy and positive attitudes. Let us take a look at an illustration from *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*.

"It was no easy thing to issue the first number of Indian Opinion from Phoenix. ... In the initial stages, we all had to keep late hours before the day of publication. Every one, young and old, had to help in folding the sheets. We usually finished our work between ten o'clock and midnight. But the first night was unforgettable. The pages were locked, but the engine refused to work. We had got out an engineer from Durban to put up the engine and set it going. He and West tried their hardest, but in vain. Everyone was anxious. West, in despair, at last came to me, with tears in his eyes, and said, 'The engine will not work, I am afraid we cannot issue the paper in time.' .... 'What about the hand-wheel?' I said, comforting him."

"Where have we the men to work? He replied. 'We are not enough to cope with the job. It requires relays of four men each, and our own men are all tired.' .... I woke up the carpenters and requested their co-operation. They needed no pressure. ... Our own men were of course ready. .... thus we went on until 7.00 am. There was still a good deal to do. I therefore suggested to West that the engineer might now be asked to get up and try again to start the engine, so that if we succeeded we might finish in time. West woke him up, and he immediately went into the engine room. And lo and behold! The engine worked almost as soon as he touched it. The whole press rang with peals of joy. .... For me the failure of the engine had come as a test for us all, and its working in the nick of time as the fruit of our honest and earnest labours. The copies were dispatched in time, and everyone was happy." (p.273-274)

Can you discuss the competences from the above illustration?

**Your answer:**

The above illustration clearly demonstrates all the three competences discussed above. This is an example of cognitive competence because the men had to learn how to operate a hand printing machine. It is social competence since they were working as a team, and in turns to get the job done. At that hour, when one group was

working, the other group was sleeping/ taking rest. They had shown confidence in using the equipment and enthusiasm in engaging in the work. Affective competence is although the illustration, as they were working in difficult circumstances, trying to get the printing done in time, all through the night on a hand wheel when the engine was not working.

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### **3.7 Summary**

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The unit on indigenous innovations in pedagogy from Basic Education is on the conceptual knowledge, to be taught contextually and learnt with constructive participation in work. This is an opportunity for you to delve into the teachings of Gandhiji, and try to implement them in your classroom. The discussion on experiential learning is interpreted in terms of experience of performance evolving reality. The indigenous innovations suggested by you for your classroom can be your reflection of Gandhiji's basic education.

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### **3.8 Review Questions**

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1. Discuss the principles of Basic Education.
2. What is Experiential Learning?
3. Discuss the competencies that can be acquired in Experiential Learning.
4. In what ways can the ideas from affective competence utilized in the language classroom?
5. How can social competence contribute in language development?
6. Design an activity on developing cognitive competence.
7. Design an activity on developing affective competence.
8. Taking the right decision is a feature of Teacher Training. Discuss with an illustration from your experience.
9. Design an activity on pedagogic function.
10. "The knowledge of the first language can be utilized in the language classroom" Do you agree? Why? Why not?

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## 3.9 References

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## Unit 4 □ Critical Pedagogy Mahendra Gupta's *Ramakrishna - Kathamrita*

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### Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Objectives
- 4.3 Sequences in language learning
- 4.4 Methodological Principles
- 4.5 Summary
- 4.6 Review Questions
- 4.7 References and Reading List
- 4.8 Notes

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### 4.1 Introduction

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This unit is on *Kathamrita's* concept of 'teaching'. The selections may seem old but they have much to offer in the field of Language Teaching which is relevant today. This is an opportunity to see the pioneering works of the earlier times from which we can draw professional ideas. The unit discusses the major landmarks in language learning and elaborates them with illustrations from Sri Ramakrishna's teachings on philosophy of life (as recorded in *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*<sup>1</sup>). These illustrations can be looked upon as good models in pedagogy. As recorded by Mahendranath Gupta in 1882-1886, Sri Ramakrishna's conversations, originally in Bengali language are with his disciples, devotees and visitors. He conveyed his thoughts on his realization of truth in formal language. Homely parables and illustrations from the observations of the daily life were common in his explanations.

Considering the systematic research on second language acquisition as a recent development the long tradition of language teaching had been linked to theories of mind and thought, philosophy and education. From the historical times till the recent times, rote teaching of forms and rules has co-existed with the attention to meaning in the acquisition process. Memorization is an important process in the privileged

status to 'learn' in the language. A concept that emerged in the 1950s and 1960s with the study of learner language was interlanguage (Selinker, 1972). This is the systematic language developed by the second language learner to develop their internal grammar. The various processes of this language development are simplification, overgeneralization, restructuring, U - shaped behaviour and fossilization. Now let us find out how these processes can be explained with illustrations from *Kathamrita*.

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## 4.2 Objectives

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After reading this unit you will be able to

- a) Understand language development process
- b) Reflect on teaching ideas
- c) Explore story telling as a teaching method
- d) Analyse the basic concepts of teaching

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## 4.3 Sequences in language learning

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Overgeneralization is the application of the form/ rules of the target language where it can apply and where it cannot apply. The attempt to fit regular patterns for irregular forms is a common over regularization in morphology. The over use of -ed with irregular verbs (as in comed, goed, falled) is over-regularization. Once the process of overgeneralization has occurred, the learner's task is to learn to retreat from the process and adjust the application in relevant context. Let us look at the following illustration to understand the process and see how it explains the retreat from process.

"Once a tigress attacked a flock of goats. As she sprang on her prey, she gave birth to a cub and died. The cub grew up in the company of the goats. The goats ate grass and the cub followed their example. They bleated; the cub bleated too. Gradually it grew to be a big tiger. One day another tiger attacked the same flock. It was amazed to see the grass-eating tiger. Running after it, the wild tiger at last seized it, whereupon the grass-eating tiger began to bleat. The wild tiger dragged it to the water and said; 'Look at your face in the water. It is just like mine. Here is a little meat. Eat it.' Saying this, it thrust some meat into its mouth. But the grass-eating tiger would not swallow it and began to bleat again. Gradually, however, it got the taste for blood and came to relish the meat. Then the wild tiger said: 'Now you see there is no difference between you and me. Come along and follow me into the forest.' (TGSR 232-33)<sup>2</sup>.



### **Task 1**

The above illustration of Ramakrishna, originally describes the Guru's grace on the disciple. The story is also an example of overgeneralization, by the cub, where it assumes itself to be a goat. Can you map this illustration to overgeneralization in language learning context?

#### **Your answer:**

The cub in the flock of goats had assumed itself to be a goat in absence of a proper context. This is overgeneralization towards false identity. It was later on dragged out of the flock and shown its identity by the wild tiger. Thus the cub had to retreat from the behaviors of the flock and adjust to the relevant context appropriate for a tiger. For example, the L2 learner in our contexts, there is the common overgeneralization of using -ing with the different verbs in the same grammatical form. The other overgeneralization processes exist in the learning of utterances and grammatically correct utterances. This is due to mismatching of grapheme phoneme sequences. After the process of overgeneralization has occurred, the learning process takes a U- turn to retreat from overgeneralization and adjust to relevant application of the language forms in contexts.

### **Task 2**

The above illustration talks of U-shaped behaviour. Explain Why.

#### **Your answer:**

The illustration also presents U-shaped behaviour. In the illustration, the wild tiger in the form of a teacher taught the cub how to reestablish itself in the streak of tigers. U-shaped behaviour is a pattern in the process of interlanguage where learners produce errors which they did not produce earlier. These errors then are worn away from repeated admonitions and reestablished later. In our contexts, U-shaped behaviour occurs in the application of the definite article. With the objective of learning missing articles in contexts, learners apply article in contexts where it is not required at all. (For example: The gold is yellow, Iron is the useful metal etc.) Restructuring is defined as "the appearance of correct, or native like, forms at an early stage of development which then undergo a process of attrition, only to be reestablished at a

later stage.'(Smith and Kellerman, 1989). In the restructuring process of interlanguage, learners experience U-shaped behaviour. Let us take another illustration.

"At one time there was a drought in a certain part of the country. The farmers began to cut long canals to bring water to their fields. One farmer was stubbornly determined. He took a vow that he would not stop digging until the canal connected his field with the river. He set to work. The time came for his bath, and his wife sent their daughter to him with oil. 'Father', said the girl, 'it is already late. Rub your body with oil and take your bath.' 'Go away!' thundered the farmer. 'I have too much to do now.' It was past mid-day, and the farmer was still at work in his field. He didn't even think of his bath. Then his wife came and said: 'Why haven't you taken your bath? The food is getting cold. You overdo everything. You can finish the rest tomorrow or even today after dinner.' The farmer scolded her furiously and ran at her, spade in hand, crying: 'What? Have you no sense? There's no rain. The crops are dying. What will the children eat? You'll all starve to death. I have taken a vow not to think of bath and food today before I bring water to my field.' The wife saw his state of mind and ran away in fear. Through a whole day's back-breaking labour the farmer managed by evening to connect his field with the river. Then he sat down and watched the water flowing into his field with a murmuring sound. His mind was filled with peace and joy. He went home, called his wife, and said to her, 'Now give me some oil and prepare me a smoke.' With serene mind he finished his bath and meal, and retired to bed, where he snored to his heart's content. The determination he showed is an example of strong renunciation."

"Now, there was another farmer who was also digging a canal to bring water to his field. His wife, too, came to the field and said to him: 'It's very late. Come home. It isn't necessary to overdo things.' The farmer didn't protest much, but put aside his spade and said to his wife, 'Well, I'll go home since you ask me to.' The man never succeeded in irrigating his field. This is a case of mild renunciation." (TGSR, 166)<sup>3</sup>.

### **Task 3**

The above illustration is an example of restructuring or self-reorganization. Can you discuss why?

**Your answer:**

The first farmer had self-reorganized his schedule in order to bring water to his

field. He had 'taken a vow not to think of bath and food' before he could bring water to his field. The second farmer on the other hand had not self-reorganized. He was on schedule for the daily task. To move away from overgeneralization, restructuring emerges. This restructuring process is accompanied by self-reorganization. If the reorganization phase does not emerge, then overgeneralization will exist. For the second language learner, the process of restructuring refines their L2 representations. The fifth process in the discussion is fossilization. This is a phenomenon, where the first language influences become permanent errors in the way second language is spoken and written. Fossilization results from lack of practice and exposure, as well as lack of positive attitudes towards the second language. Fossilization helps to identify individual differences in the learning phenomena. Let's look at an illustration.

"In a forest there lived a holy man who had many disciples. One day he taught them to see God in all beings and, knowing this, to bow low before them all. A disciple went to the forest to gather wood for the sacrificial fire. Suddenly he heard an outcry: 'Get out of the way! A mad elephant is coming!' All but the disciple of the holy man took to their heels. He reasoned that the elephant was also God in another form. Then why should he run away from it? He stood still, bowed before the animal, and began to sing its praises. The mahout of the elephant was shouting: 'Run away! Run away!' But the disciple didn't move. The animal seized him with its trunk, cast him to one side, and went on its way. Hurt and bruised, the disciple lay unconscious on the ground. Hearing what had happened, his teacher and his brother disciples came to him and carried him to the hermitage. With the help of some medicine he soon regained consciousness. Someone asked him, 'You knew the elephant was coming-why didn't you leave the place? 'But', he said, 'our teacher has told us that God Himself has taken all these forms, of animals as well as men. Therefore, thinking it was only the elephant God that was coming, I didn't run away.' At this the teacher said: 'Yes, my child, it is true that the elephant God was coming; but the mahout God forbade you to stay there. Since all are manifestations of God, why didn't you trust the mahout's words? You should have heeded the words of the mahout God.'" (TGSR, 84-85)<sup>4</sup>.

#### **Task 4**

The above illustration is an example of permanent cessation to learning. Can you explain the reason why this is so?

**Your answer:**

The disciple of the holy man had learnt to see God in all forms of beings. Thus he did not see the danger in standing on the way of a mad elephant. His previous knowledge and his turning of blind eye to warnings of the others in the forest had forbidden him to escape from the danger, before him. In the language learning context, there are two reasons for permanent cessation to learning. For some learners it is for short periods of time, i.e. learners can develop positive attitudes towards the target language with sufficient exposure and practice. But if it is not for short periods, then learners may not be enjoying optimal learning conditions and missing out the success of ultimate attainment. Here the teacher has to seek out the learning areas, bring in changes (for example, one which is adapted for this unit - story telling) and variability to stop the cessation towards learning. Simplification is a learner strategy where simple and complex messages are conveyed with little language. This is because the language forms that are needed in the context have not been learnt. Thus only isolated instances are integrated into the system. Simplification can develop from ineffective instruction. Let us consider the following illustration.

"Some cowherd boys used to tend their cows in a meadow where a terrible poisonous snake lived. Everyone was on the alert for fear of it. One day a brahmachari was going along the meadow. The boys ran to him and said: 'Reverend sir, please don't go that way. A venomous snake lives over there.' 'What of it, my good children?' said the brahmachari. 'I am not afraid of the snake. I know some mantras.' So saying, he continued on his way along the meadow. But the cowherd boys, being afraid, did not accompany him. In the mean time the snake moved swiftly toward him with upraised hood. As soon as it came near, he recited a mantra, and the snake lay at his feet like an earthworm. The brahmachari said: 'Look here. Why do you go about doing harm? Come, I will give you a holy word. By repeating it you will learn to love God. Ultimately you will realize Him and so get rid of your violent nature.' Saying this, he taught the snake a holy word and initiated him into spiritual life. The snake bowed before the teacher and said, 'Revered sir, how shall I practice spiritual discipline?' 'Repeat that sacred word', said the teacher, 'and do no harm to anybody.' As he was about to depart, the brahmachari said, 'I shall see you again.' Some days passed and the cowherd boys noticed that the snake would not bite. They threw stones at it. Still it showed no anger; it behaved as if it were an earthworm. One day, one of the boys came close to it, caught it by the tail, and, whirling it round and round, dashed it again and again on the ground and threw it away. The snake vomited blood and became unconscious. It was stunned. It could not move. So, thinking it dead, the boys went their way. Late at night the snake regained consciousness. Slowly and with great difficulty it dragged itself into its hole; its bones were broken and it could scarcely move. Many days passed. The

snake became a mere skeleton covered with a skin. Now and then, at night, it would come out in search of food. For fear of the boys it would not leave its hole during the day-time. Since receiving the sacred word from the teacher, it had given up doing harm to others. It maintained its life on dirt, leaves, or the fruit that dropped from the trees. About a year later the brahmachari came that way again and asked about the snake. The cowherd boys told him that it was dead. But he couldn't believe them. He knew that the snake would not die before attaining the fruit of the holy word with which it had been initiated. He found his way to the place and, searching here and there, called it by the name he had given it. Hearing the teacher's voice, it came out of its hole and bowed before him with great reverence. 'How are you?' asked the brahmachari. 'I am well, sir', replied the snake. 'But', the teacher asked. 'why are you so thin?' The snake replied: 'Revered sir, you ordered me not to harm anybody. So I have been living only on leaves and fruit. Perhaps that has made me thinner.' The snake had developed the quality of sattva; it could not be angry with anyone. It had totally forgotten that the cowherd boys had almost killed it. The brahmachari said: 'It can't be mere want of food that has reduced you to this state. There must be some other reason. Think a little.' Then the snake remembered that the boys had dashed it against the ground. It said: 'Yes, revered sir, now I remember. The boys one day dashed me violently against the ground. They are ignorant, after all. They didn't realize what a great change had come over my mind. How could they know I wouldn't bite or harm anyone?' The brahmachari exclaimed: 'What a shame! You are such a fool! You don't know how to protect yourself. I asked you not to bite, but I didn't forbid you to hiss. Why didn't you scare them by hissing?' (TGSR, 85-86)<sup>5</sup>.

Learners are not always ready to learn and are not motivated at times. This results in simplification. Simplification inhibits the learning process. Overgeneralization, however, fosters the learning process. Higher levels of overgeneralization along with lower levels of simplification lead to language development. Instruction in the above illustration was effective as well as counterproductive.

### **Task 5**

The above illustration is an example of the notion "Teachers cannot teach everything they want to". What was not learnt and simplified in the illustration? Can you explain?

**You answer:**

In the above illustration, the snake had simplified the brahmachari's message of not harming anyone. As a consequence, it had failed to protect itself and had suffered torture from the cowherd boys. The snake had to learn to protect itself without harming anyone. Language learners who are developmentally not ready abide by simplification despite favorable conditions for learning. This problem can be overcome with the aid of high quality instruction. This is discussed in the following section. In discussions on how to teach a second language, we would next focus on 'what' and 'how' of instructional design or the methodological principles and pedagogic procedures.

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## 4.4 Methodological principles

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In the wide range of settings and situations of language teaching, there is often more than one reasonable way for the formal learning to take place. With the shift of focus from the teacher to the learner it is realized that, each learner is an individual with distinct mental schema and attitudes. "... different learners have different overall learning styles, ... an individual learner utilizes different approaches to learning at different stages in the learning process." (Gagné 1965: 58-59). The responsibility of the professional is to know the best practice, from a given context. Take a look at the following illustration as an example.

"The mother cooks the same fish differently for her children, that each one may have what suits his stomach. For some she cooks the rich dish of pilau. But not all children can digest it. For those with weak stomachs she prepares soup. Some, again, like fried fish or pickled fish. It depends on one's taste." (TGSR, 189)<sup>6</sup>.

### **Task 6**

What inferences can you draw on multiple individual choices from the illustration? How can a teacher be aware of the multiple cognitive and personality factors and utilize them for different learning objectives.

### **Your answer:**

Learners of second language, for the learning of first language prior to the new language have already acquired certain learning skills and abilities. These are the individual choices which the illustration presents as cooking of the same fish differently. The teacher is the 'mother' who is aware of the individual choices and cares about his/

her teaching. Within the classroom, the principles of the teaching learning processes are initiated at an early stage. For this, the teacher needs to adopt certain pedagogic procedures. Pedagogic procedures are mostly based on teacher judgements on a number of choices for a group of same learners or different learners. Let us look at the following illustration.

"The mind will take the colour you dye it with. It is like white clothes just returned from the laundry. If you dip them in red dye, they will be red. If you dip them in blue or green, they will be blue or green. They will take only the colour you dip them in, whatever it may be." (TGSR, 138)<sup>7</sup>. In the context of language learning for young learners, the language produced can be taught better if the learning principles are connected with articulations learnt earlier. This learning is focused mainly on problem solving activities.

### **Task 7**

The above illustration can be linked to the context of developing skills in using language for normal language use situations. Can you explain how?

#### **Your answer:**

Here the different colours are the different language usage situations, where the learner has to deal with the language. The 'mind' is the learner who learns by engaging in activities and working on tasks. These tasks can be language forms (grammar forms, vocabulary) in an arbitrary order, i.e. the order in which the different colours of the dye would be applied to. The tasks can be on discrete bits of information about language in different contexts with the outcome of developing the ability to utilize the language for communication. Feedbacks, according to Michael Long, for example can be in terms of a) use of a rule or explanation, b) corrective recasts and c) cannot be judged well or ill-founded without knowing the context. For instance, the supra-segmentals, and their actual applications in contexts. Learners often fail to master the topic in detail and ill-judge the applications. But the problem with the learning of these features cannot be generalized for all age groups. Let us look at the following illustration.

"All men look alike, to be sure, but they have different natures. Some have an excess of sattva, others an excess of rajas, and still others an excess of tamas. You must have noticed that the cakes known as puli all look alike. But their contents are

very different. Some contain condensed milk, some coconut kernel, and others mere boiled kalai pulse." (TGSR, 141)<sup>8</sup>.

### **Task 8**

This illustration relates to different language learning strategies. Can you come up with your explanation?

#### **Your answer:**

The 'puli' is the general approach to language learning, and the different 'contents' are different learning styles and strategies. Students use different strategies to learn a language. Let us consider the two different learning styles, analytical and global. Students who prefer logical reasoning or analytic learning style tend to choose strategies such as contrastive analysis, rule learning, learning from fragmenting language units. Global learning style students use the main idea or the bigger picture for working on the details of the task. Now, let us look at this from another angle. Kathambrita discusses the terms sattva, rajas and tamas. The distinction of the three Sanskrit terms sattva, rajas and tamas is explained in the following illustration:

"Once a man was going through a forest, when three robbers fell upon him and robbed him of all his possessions. One of the robbers said, 'What's the use of keeping this man alive?' So saying, he was about to kill him with his sword, when the second robber interrupted him, saying: 'Oh, no! What is the use of killing him? Tie him hand and foot and leave him here.' The robbers bound his hands and feet and went away. After a while third robber returned and said to the man: 'Ah, I am sorry. Are you hurt? I will release you from your bonds.' After setting the man free, the thief said: 'Come with me. I will take you to the public highway.' After a long time they reached the road. Then the robber said: 'Follow this road. Over there is your house.' At this the man said: Sir, you have been very good to me. Come with me to my house. 'Oh, no! the robber replied. 'I can't go there. The police will know it.' This world itself is the forest. The three robbers prowling here are sattva, rajas and tamas. It is they that rob a man of the Knowledge of Truth. Tamas wants to destroy him. Rajas binds him to the world. But sattva rescues him from the clutches of rajas and tamas. Under the protection of sattva, man is rescued from anger, passion, and the other evil effects of tamas. Further, sattva loosens the bonds of the world. But sattva is also a robber. It cannot give him the ultimate knowledge of truth, though it shows him the road



leading to the Supreme Abode of God."(TGSR, 267)<sup>9</sup>.

Thus after being robbed, the man, who was going through the forest, went through three kinds of judgements. First, on getting killed; second, on getting bonded; and third, on getting released. The above illustration is a wide example of negative assessment in a natural context. Negative assessment is the aggression for assessor and humiliation for the one who is assessed. This is not assessment at all and can be eliminated. Negative assessment, is constructive if given supportively and warmly. The third robber was supportive towards positive assessment and had returned to the man after a while.

Less successful learners are unaware of the translation and memorization strategies they use. Though, in the learning context, these are unavoidable strategies even today. The individual learners today are taught in regular class activities how to use a strategy and transfer it to new contexts. The *tamas* robber wanted to kill the man. The *rajas* robber had used a strategy to keep the man alive, while *sattva* robber had thought of a strategy to ensure his safe return. Learners who are under the spell of blind training without realizing the strategy being used are under the spell of *tamas*. Here the learning hinders the application of the strategies to new tasks. High performing learners use cognitive and metacognitive strategies. They use the strategies of *rajas* and *sattva*. The *sattva* robber had used a strategy whereby he could guess the outcomes of the *rajas* robber's strategy. He had scanned that the man will be free and can safely return home. *Sattva* and *rajas* together form the global style. Both of them had argued their reasons. *Rajas* had considered sparing the man's life, contrasting his views with *tamas*. *Rajas* has also used analytical strategy. *Sattva* did not speak this context. He had judged his actions in absence of *tamas* and *rajas*.

### **Task 9**

The above illustration be taken as an explanation in human learning and performance. Discuss in terms of implicit and explicit language learning.

#### **Your answer:**

Implicit learning is the learning of complex information in an accidental manner. This refers to acquiring skills and knowledge without conscious efforts and awareness. Explicit learning on the other hand is the learner's conscious efforts to master some material and solve a problem. The man in the illustration was unaware of the

consequences of travelling through the forest and therefore had to bear with the incidents. He had accidentally learnt about the incidents around him and was unaware of the robbers and had experienced their judgements implicitly. In the learning context, learners unaware of the learning strategies they use are less effective and experience negative feedback from the context. Negative feedback on errors can constrain what is learnable and therefore what is teachable. So the teacher needs to consider the 'relevant' and 'needful' instruction. Instruction with positive effects witness permeable developmental sequences. Let us look at the following illustration.

"Once a bird sat on the mast of a ship. When the ship sailed through the mouth of the Ganges into the 'black waters' of the ocean, the bird failed to notice the fact. When it finally became aware of the ocean, it left the mast and flew north in search of land. But it found no limit to the water and so returned. After resting awhile it flew south. There too it found no limit to the water. Panting for breath the bird returned to the mast. Again, after resting awhile, it flew east and then west. Finding no limit to the water in any direction, at last it settled down on the mast of the ship." (TGSR, 425)<sup>10</sup>.

The bird on the mast of the ship in ocean had blindly flown several times in the different directions in search of land. Without realizing where to find the trace of land, and finally being unsuccessful in the search, it had to settle down on the mast of the ship.

### **Task 10**

Can you relate the illustration with explicit knowledge?

**Your answer:**

The bird in the illustration, knew how to solve its problem, it had procedural knowledge. It had made conscious efforts to find the land. However it did not have declarative knowledge and knowledge of facts. Explicit knowledge is the knowledge that the bird was aware of. It knew it had to fly in search of land. It knew the reasons behind its flight. This is metacognitive knowledge. Metacognitive knowledge is explicit knowledge. This knowledge was not sufficient for the bird to achieve its goal. Similarly, explicit knowledge is not a sufficient condition for metacognition. Thus its procedural knowledge had again made it perch on the mast.

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## 4.5 Summary

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Today the reality of a number of teaching situations is that teachers are users of carefully manipulated ideas of good teaching. The illustrations in the unit are included for sustaining the ideas within and interpret the language learning landmarks in discussion. Those persistent concerns of the teaching activity which cannot be properly judged were the main concerns for the selections and those were put in the discussion with the objective of finding ideas for the language practitioner. However, with the purpose of confronting our question on teaching, we need to continuously look around for the answers and pondering on the illustrations from *Kathambrita* is searching within a fountain of knowledge. In other terms from the words from *Kathambrita*, it is the sun light which "is better reflected by water than by earth, and still better by a mirror" (265). The reference to the originals is for detailed study of the excerpts.

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## 4.6 Review Questions

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1. What is implicit and explicit language learning?
2. Distinguish between procedural knowledge and explicit knowledge.
3. Discuss language learning strategies.
4. What is cessation to learning?
5. What is self-reorganization?
6. Discuss the differences in U-turn and over-generalization.
7. Everything cannot be taught? Do you agree? Justify.
8. What is simplification in language learning?
9. Discuss different kinds of learners.
10. Discuss an activity on developing language naturally.

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## 4.7 References and Reading List

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## 4.8 Notes

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- 1 *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Trans. Swami Nikhilananda, Madras: Adhyaksha Sri Ramakrishna Math. 2016.
- 2 "ekṭa chagaler pale bagh poṛchilo. laph dite giye bagher prasab hoye chana hoye gelo. Baghṭa mare gelo, chanaṭi chagaler sange manuṣ hate laḡlo. tara o ghas khaye bagher chana o ghas khaye. tara o 'bhya bhya' kore. krame chanaṭa khub baro holo. ek din oi chagaler pale ar ekṭa bagh ese parla. se ghaskheko baghṭake dekhe abak! takhan douḡe ese take dharle. seṭa o bhya bhya kartte' laḡlo. take ṭenehinṇe jaler kache niye gelo. balle, dekh, jaler bitar tor much dekh — ṭhik amar mata dekh. ar ei ne khanikṭa mansho—eiṭe kha. ei bole take jor kore khaoyate laḡla. se kona mate khabena—'bhya bhya' karchila. rakter asvad peye khete arambho karle. natun baghṭa balle, 'ekhan bujhichis, ami o ja tui o ta; ekhan aye, amar sange bane chale aye." (*Kathamrita*, 249)
- 3 "ek dese anabriṣṭi hayeche. caṣira sab khana keṭe dur theke jal anche. ek jan caṣar khub rok ache; se akdin pratigna karle jatakhan na jal ase, khanar sange ar nadir sange ek haye, tatakhan khana khuṛe jabe. edike snan khabar bela holo. grihini meyer hate tel paṭhiye dilo. meye balla— 'baba! bela hayeche. tel mekhe neye phela.' se balle, 'tui ja amar ekhan kaj ache.' bela dui prahar ekta halo, takhan o caṣa maṭhe kaj karche. snan karar namṭi nei. tar stri takhan maṭhe ese balle, 'ekhano nao nai keno? bhat juṛiye gelo, tomar je sabi barabari! na haye kal karbe, ki khe deyei korbe.' galagali diye caṣa kodal hate kore taṛa karle; ar balle, 'tor akkel nei? Briṣṭi haye nai. caṣ-bas kichui halo na, ebar chele-pule ki khabe? na khey sab mara jabi! ami pratigna karechi, mathe aj

jal anbo tabe naoya-khaoyar katha kabo.' stri gatik dekhe douře paliye gela. caşa samasta din hařbhanga parisram kare sandhyar samaye khanar sange nadir jog kore dile. takhan ekbare base dekhte laglo je, nadir jal mařhe kulkul kore asche. tar man takhan santa ar anande purńa halo. baři giye strike d'eke balle, 'ne ekhan tel de ar ektu tamak saj.' tarpar nischinta haye neye kheyeye sukhe bhnos bhnos kore nidra jete laglo! ei rok tibra bairagyer upama.

arek jan caşa—seo mařhe jal anchila. tar stri jakhan gela ar balle, 'anek bela hayeche ekhan eso, eta barabařite kaj nai'; takan se besi uccabacya na kore kodol rekhe strike balle- 'tui jakhan balchis to cal!' se caşar ar mařhe jal ana halo na!. eti manda bairagyer upama" (*Kathamrita*, 57)

- 4 "kona ek bane ekři sadhu thaken. tarn anekguli sişya. tini ek din sişyader upadesh dilen je, sarbabhute narayań achen, eři jene sakalke namaskar karbe. ek din ekři sişya homer janya kat ante bane gichlo. eman samaye ekři rab uřhlye. 'ke kothaye acha palao—ekři pagla hati jacche.' sabai paliye gelo, kintu sişya palala na! se jane je, hatio je narayań, tabe kena palaba? ei bale dařniye railo. namaskar kore stab-stuti karte lagla. edike mathut cenciye balche 'palao, palayo'; sişyaři tabu nařlona. seşe hatiřa sunře kore tule niye take ekdhare chunře phele diye calegela. Sişya khatabikhata hoye o achaitnya haye paře raila. ei sambad peye guru o anyanya sişyera take asrame dharadhari kore niye gelo. ar ouşadh dite laglo. khańikkhań pare cetana hole oke keu jignasa karle 'tumikeno hati asche sune cale gelena?' se balle, 'gurudeb je amaye bale diyechilen je, narayańi manuş, jib-jantu sab hayechen. Tai ami hati narayań asche dekhe sekhan theke sare jai nai.' Guru takhan ballen, baba, hati narayań aschilen baře, ta satya; kintu baba, mahutnarayań to tomaye barań karechilen. Jadi sabai narayań tabe tar katha bisvas karlena kena? Mahut narayańer ka-tha o sunte haye." (*Kathamrita*, 21)

- 5 "ek mařhe ek rakhall garu carato. Sei mařhe ekři bhayanak bişakta sap chila. sakalei sei saper bhaye atanta sabdhane thakta. ek din ekři brahmachari sei mařher path diye aschilo. rakhallera douře ese balle, thakur mahasaye! odik diye jaben na. odike ekři bhayanak bişakta sap ache. brahmacari balle, 'baba tahok; amar tate bhaye nai, ami mantra jani.' ei katha bale brahmacari sei dike cale gela. rakhallera bhaye keu sange gelana. edike sapřa phańa? tule douře asche, kintu kache na aste aste brahmacari jei ekři mantra paře amni sapřa kencor matan payer kache paře raila. brahmacari balle, 'ore, tui kena parer hinsa kare beřas; aye toke mantra deba. ei mantra japle tor bhagabane bhakti habe, bhagaban labh habe, ar hinsa prabitti thakbe na.' ei bale se sapke mantra dila.

Sap̄ta mantra peye guruke prañam karle are jignasa karle, 'ṭhakur! ki kare sadhana karba balun.' Guru ballen, 'ei mantra jap kar, ar karo hinsa korona.' brahmacari jabar samay balle, 'ami abar asbo.' ei rakame kichudin jaye. rakhalera dekhe je sap̄ta ar kam̄rate ase na! d'hyela mare tabu rag hayena, jena k̄cor matan hoye geche. ekdin ekjan rakhāl kache giye lyaj dhare khub ghurpak diye take ach̄re ach̄re pheledile. sap̄tar mukhdiye rakta uṭhte laglo ar se acetan hoye paṛlo. naṛe na, coṛe na. rakhalera mane karle je sap̄ta mare geche. ei mane kore tara sab cale gela. Anek ratre saper cetna halo. se aste aste atikaṣṭe tar garter bhetar cale gela. sarir curñā-naṛbar sakti nei. anekdin pare jakhan asthicarmasar takhan bahire aharer ceṣṭaye ratre ekbar carte asto; bhaye diner bela astona, mantra laoya abdhi ar hinsa karena. maṭi, pata, gach theke paṛe geche eman phal kheyē prañdharāñ karto. pray ekbatsar pare brahmacari sei pathe abar elo. esei saper sandhan karle. rakhalera balle, 'se sap̄ta mare geche.' brahmacari kintu okatha bisvas halona! se jane, je mantra o niyeche ta sadhan na hole dehatyag habena. khūnje khūnje sei dike tar deoya namdhore d'akte laglo. se gurudeber aoyaj sune garto theke beriye elo o khub bhakti bhabe prañam karle. brahmacari jignasa karle, 'tui kemon achis?' se balle, 'agne bhala achi.' brahmacari balle, 'tabe tui eta roga haye gichis kena?' sap̄ balle, 'ṭhakur apni ades karechen—karo hinsa korona. tai pataṭa phalṭa khai bale bodh haye roga haye gichi!' or sattvaguñ hayache kina, tai karu upar krodh nai. se bhulei gichlo je rakhalera mere phelbar jogaṛ koṛechila! brahmacari balle, sudhu na khaoyar darun erup abasta hayena. abasya aro karañ ache, bhebe dekha. sap̄tar mane paṛlo je rakhalera achaṛ mere chilo. takhan se balle, 'ṭhakur mane paṛeche baṭe, rakhalera ekdin achaṛ mere chila. tara agnan jane na je amar maner ki abastha; ami je kahake o kam̄raba na ba konarup aniṣṭa karbo na, kemon kore janbe?' brahmacari balle, 'chi! tui eto boka apnake rakha karte janis na; ami kam̄ratei barañ karechi, phōs karte naye! Phōs kore tader bhaye dekhas nai kena?' duṣṭa loker kache phōs kare tader bhaye dekhate haye, pache aniṣṭa kare; tader gaye bhis d'halte nai, aniṣṭa karte nai." (*Kathamrita*, 22-23).

- 6 "ek mar pac chele. baṛite mach eseche. ma macher nana rakam byanjan korechen—jar ja peṭe saye! karo janya macherpoloya, karo janya macher ambal, macher caṛcaṛi, mach bhaja, ei sab korechen. Jeti jar bhalo lage. Jeti jar peṭe saye" (*Kathamrita*, 18).
- 7 "man je range chopabe sei range chupbe. jeman dhopagharer kapar. lale chopao lal, nile chopao nil, sabuj range chopao sabuj. je range chopao sei rangei chupbe." (*Kathamrita*, 37).

- 8 "manuṣṅuli dekhte sab ek rakam, kintu bhinna prakriti. Karu bhitar sattva guṇ besī, karu rajo guṇ besī, karu tamoguṇ. Puliguli dekhte sab ekrakam. Kintu karu bhitar kṣīrer por, karu bhitar narikel chai, karu bhitar kalayer por." (*Kathamrita*, 40).
- 9 "ekṭi lok baner path diye jacchila. eman samaye take tinjan d'akat ese dharle. tara tar sarbasya keṇile. ekjan chor balle, are lokṭake rekhe ki habe? ei katha bale khaṅa diyekaṭte elo. takhan ar ekjon chor balle, na he keṭe ki habe? eke hat-pa bhendhe ekhane phele jao. takhan take hat-pa bendhe oikhane rekhe corera colegela. kichukhsaṅ pare tader madhye ekjan phire ese balle, 'aha, tomarki legeche? eso ami tomar bandhan khule dii.' tar bandhan khule diye chorṭi balle, 'amar sange sange eso, tomaye sadar rastaye tule dicchi.' anekhsaṅ pare sadar rastaye ese balle, 'ei rasta dhore jao, oi tomar baṅi dekha jacche.' takhan lokṭi chorke balle, masai amar anek upakar karlen, ekhan apnio asun, amar bari parjanta jaben.' chorballe, 'na, amar okhane jabar jo nai, pulis ṭer pabe.'
- samsari araṅya. ei bane sattva rajastama tin guṇ dakat, jiber tattva jnan keṇ laye. tamoguṇ jiber binas karte jaye. rajoguṇ samsare baddha kare. kintusattvaguṇ, rajastama theke bacaye. sattva guṇer asray pele kam-krodhei sab tamo guṇ theke rakhsa haye. sattva guṇ abar jiber samsar bandhan mocan kare. kintu sattva guṇ o chor, tattva jnan dite parena. kintu sei param dhame jabar pathe tule dey." (*Kathamrita*, 71).
- 10 "ekṭa pakhi jahajer mastuler upar base chilo. jahaj ganga theke kalapanite paṛeche tar hus nai. Jakhan hus hola takhan d'anga kondike janbar janya uttar dike uṛe gela. kothao kul-kinara nai, takhan phire elo. abar ekṭu bisram kare dakshiṅ dike gela. sedike o kul-kinara nai. takhan hapate hapate phire elo. abar ekṭu jiriye eirupe purba dike o paschim dike gela. jakhan dekhle kona dikei kul kinara nai, takhan mastuler upar cup kore base raila." (*Kathamrita*, 295).

# Module-2 : Pedagogical Innovations

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## Unit 5 □ Pedagogic Innovations in English

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### Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Objectives
- 5.3 The Teaching Profession
- 5.4 Developments in the teaching profession
- 5.5 Teaching of English in India
  - 5.5.1 The Early years
  - 5.5.2 The First Innovation
- 5.6 Stages of Development of English Language Education
  - 5.6.1 The Second Innovation
  - 5.6.2 The Third Innovation - New Method
  - 5.6.3 The Fourth Innovation - The Reading Method
  - 5.6.4 The Fifth Innovation
  - 5.6.5 The Sixth Innovation
- 5.7 Summary
- 5.8 Review Questions
- 5.9 References

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### 5.1 Introduction

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We are on our way to becoming teachers. Therefore we need to know something about Pedagogy. What does this word mean? Would you like tell us? Write your answer in the space below:

**Your answer:**



The dictionary defines pedagogy as follows: 'the study of teaching methods'. If you go into the origin of the word, 'paed' means something connected with children - paediatrics is the science of treating children. Similarly, pedagogy, means knowing how to teach children or youngsters. When we teach adults, we don't use pedagogy, we use something else called 'andragogy'. This is just for your conceptual understanding of the term.

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## 5.2 Objectives

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What are we going to discuss in this unit. We will discuss pedagogic innovations in English. Let us be very brief for the next three units are specific and deal with five different experiments carried out in different parts of the country. After going through this unit you will be able to:

- ◆ Understand the development of language teaching across the globe
- ◆ Appreciate the evolutionary processes of this development
- ◆ Become familiar with different types of teaching
- ◆ Understand the characteristic features of different approaches to teaching.

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## 5.3 The Teaching Profession

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We know the meaning of the word 'pedagogy'. There is a second word 'innovation' as part of the title of this unit. Is this an unfamiliar word? Perhaps, not! Innovation refers to a new way of doing things. We as human beings are always innovative. Have we not made several changes in our life? We need the most fashionable type of clothes, and these fashions keep changing faster than the clothes get old. We are interested in eating or tasting new types of food, try new vehicles, or redesign our houses etc. All these constitute innovations. If we get easily bored with old things and old ways of doing things, we should also get bored with old ways of teaching and innovate new ways of teaching. Aren't we justified in doing that?

This unit largely looks at what innovations have come up in the field of English Language teaching over the years. Let us try and understand what we already know about teaching before we proceed further.

**Answer the following questions.**

You have been to a primary school, a high school and a college before taking up this course. In all these places you have been taught by your teachers. Did all the teachers teach you the same way? The answer obviously is 'no'. How was the teaching different at different levels? Do you remember something? Please note down your points here in the space below:

**Your answer:**

There cannot be definite answers for this question. Each one of you may have had a different experience.

Teaching has been a very old profession. We often say 'mother is the first teacher'. If we believe in this statement, then, we should also accept that teaching is the oldest profession. The day the first women became a mother, a teacher was born in her (she became a teacher). So there cannot be any profession older than that of teaching.

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## **5.4 Developments in the teaching profession**

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Has teaching remained the same over centuries? Once again the answer is 'no'. The teaching methods are closely linked to a variety of factors such as the environment where learning happens, the social structure, the learner background being the most important of these factors. These three factors are closely interrelated and keep changing from time to time. Therefore the teaching methods also have changed.

Let us take some examples. There was a time when no texts or books were available for writing had not been discovered. All teaching was merely oral transmission - or the students listened to the teacher, repeated what s/he said and memorised. With the discovery of writing systems, texts or books for independent reading were available and it was possible for one to understand the same text in different ways. This led to discussion, and provided a platform where the teacher and the student could be on the same platform. This was an innovation. This is an example from very ancient days. Let us consider modern period.

Teaching has a history of more than three thousand years in the world history. There have been great teachers both in the Indian and the Western world. We have in India names like Vasishtha, Vishwamitra, Shankaracharya, the Buddha, Guru Gobind

Singh, Chaitanya Prabhu, Ramakrishna and others. In the Western world we have people like Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Pythagoras, Archimedes Jesus Christ and Confucius from China and Shinto from Japan and Mohammed the Prophet from Macca. There could be many more. And you may add those names to this list.

We do not know how these great teachers taught their students. But we know the developments in the modern times. We shall focus on that and in particular we shall focus on the teaching of English in India. So let us begin.

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## 5.5 Teaching of English in India

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During your school days, you have read Indian history and about the British invasion of India. Do you remember some details from that course? When did the British come to India for the first time? Any guess?

**Your answer:**

### 5.5.1 The Early years

It was in the year 1600 CE that the British came to India under the leadership of Robert Clive. Their purpose of coming to India was trade, but soon this changed to invasion. They gradually captured the small princely states with their gun power and spread themselves to establish monarchy. India became part of the British Empire by the beginning of the 18th Century. This is an important aspect to note.

Normally, people tend to pick up the language of the rulers with the intention of getting close to them and curry favours. Many Indians learnt English for this purpose. However, as the Empire extended, the British wanted a large number of people to man their offices. Importing people from Britain for the jobs of clerks and peons was expensive. So the officials thought of introducing English education in the Indian sub-continent.

It was the year 1835. William Bentinck, largely known as a benevolent Governor General was the Head of the State of India. Lord Macaulay, an officer in his court, was his confidant. He presented his views which have subsequently become famous as 'Macaulay's Minutes.' The contents of this document were in the form of a set of reasons for introducing Western Education largely to prepare personnel 'who could

think and work like the British' for the East India Company. Complementing this was a letter written by Raja Rammohan Roy who also requested the Governor General to introduce Western Education which would inculcate 'scientific temper' among the students. Such education would broaden the horizons of learning and knowledge at large. Both the requests were conceded and the result was the introduction of English Schooling system in India.

What do you think happened next? Would you like to make a guess? Write your response.

**Your answer:**

### **5.5.2 The First Innovation**

Do you know the most recent development (in 2019) in the Indian Education scene? New National Education Policy has been adopted. This is called an Education Commission? There have been several education commissions earlier which have brought about several changes in our education system. Can you name some education commissions that you are aware of?

**Your answer:**

University Education Commission, (Radhakrishnan Commission), School Education Commission (Mudaliar Commission), Kothari Commission, NPE 1986 etc. We may not discuss these commissions here, but you will benefit to know about their recommendations and perhaps your course in Methods and Concepts will discuss this in detail.

The result of Macaulay's Minutes and Raja Rammohan Roy's letter was the setting up of an education commission under the chairmanship of Charles Wood. (By the time the recommendations of the committee were submitted in 1854, Bentinck was no more.) The report of this commission is called Wood's Despatch and the recommendations are fairly significant. This was the commission that recommended the establishment of grants-in-aid (salary and service protection to teachers),

encouraging girls education, separate curriculum for rural and urban schools, introduction of English medium only in urban schools (to ensure availability of facilities for proper instruction) etc. Most of these had far reaching impact.

The subsequent benefits were establishment of schools run by the government and taking over the administration of the existing universities in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. English education became a reality in a formal way for the first time in India. This was perhaps the first innovation.

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## **5.6 Stages of Development of English Language Education**

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Let us take a closer look at the development of English language education in India in different stages. Each stage was conceived as an innovation, and rightly it was so. How was English taught during the early years?

### **5.6.1 The Second Innovation**

You must have come across the term The Grammar Translation Method which was very popular. This method was initially used in German Schools and with England becoming a highly industrialised nation, several migrant workers moved to England from Germany, France and other countries of Europe. These migrant workers had to learn English for their survival. So a method of teaching was developed which became popular as the Grammar Translation Method. The name should suggest how the teaching could have happened? Would you like to share your views on this? Please write down.

**Your answer:**

Let us briefly go into some of the features of this method. We know every language is governed by its own grammar. This grammar is distinct. Grammar can be conceived as a set of rules or concepts. Rules and concepts need to be understood to learn a language. A teacher has to explain the rules or concepts using the target language. If this is done, the learner will be at a loss. To overcome this hurdle, the teachers explained the rules and concepts using the learners' mother tongue. The teacher gave all the examples in the target language or the language to be learnt. This helped the learners understand the concepts better.

To help learners practice the language, passages from classical texts were given and these had to be translated into the mother tongue and vice versa. (For example, a student from Germany translated an English text into German and from German to English). Such translation helped the learners to become familiar with vocabulary in the target language, its grammatical structures and also the skills of reading and writing. This seemed to be very sound and was used for a very long period of time. This method which was popular in Britain was also used in the Indian schools to begin with. This method is in use to teach classical languages like Sanskrit and Persian even to this day.

Suddenly, some educationists thought that languages are not learnt through translation. Learners can learn a language best when they are given adequate exposure to it. This sounded very true and so a change in the methodology was brought about. The new method was called the Direct Method.

### **5.6.2 The Third Innovation - New Method**

The Direct Method (also called the New Method or the Natural Method) had a very different approach to language teaching. The learners were completely insulated from using the mother tongue. They were exposed to a lot of reading and listening. A teacher would come into the class and lecture on a classical text the learner had to read in an uninterrupted manner for an hour or so. This lecture was a source of exposure to language. The learner had to go back and read the original text and understand it and write a summary of the book as an assignment. This developed good listening, reading and writing skills. Speaking skills were partially developed. A later date linguist compared this to a 'linguistic swimming pool'. A swimming pool has a deep end and a shallow end. A beginner swimmer is obviously allowed to wade in the shallow end, get confidence before going to the deep end. The Direct Method believed in pushing the learner into the deep end and allow him/her to struggle and survive. In the bargain, several learners could die of asphyxiation or suffocation. In the language class, such exposure led to frustration resulting in non-learning of the language. That a few learners were able to cope with it is no proof of its success.

The Direct Method was short lived. But one of the classic techniques of this approach has survived to the present day -Lecturing. Around this period (end of nineteenth century) the science of linguistics began to make its impact. The understanding of language and language learning was undergoing certain changes. Linguists believed that grammar was an essential part of the language, speaking is as

important as writing, and someone who learns language needs to be proficient in all the four skills Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing (LSRW). So once again there was an attempt to change the methodology. But this did not happen overnight and it took a long time.

### **5.6.3 The Fourth Innovation - The Reading Method**

After several deliberations, linguists believed that language can be both complex and simple depending on the contexts and the user. Often, it is the simpler form of language that is used in daily life and it is more useful to teach that variety rather than stick to the more complex variety. This was a sound principle which is followed to date. What makes a language either simple or complex? The vocabulary and the grammar components are responsible for this. Every language has several thousand words as part of its vocabulary. But we operate with just a few words in our daily life. We are familiar with those words that are most frequently used. Is there a measure to see how frequently a word is used? This happens through a process called frequency count. Lorge and Thorndike used this process as early as 1905 and made a list of 5000 most common/frequent words. Subsequently in 1935 two other linguists Ogden and Richards thought 5000 was too large a number and reduced it to a mere 800 words. This list was called BASIC (British, American, Scientific, International, Commerce) English. To these 800 words, Ogden and Richards thought an additional 50 words from the specialised field of study could be added. '850 words' was all one had to learn. This was an experimental study and the results were not very encouraging. A few years later in 1953, Michael West who was working as a School inspector in Dacca came out with a list of 2000 words based on a corpus of ten million words. These words were organised systematically in the form of a book called The General Service List of English Words. This book is a relevant document to this day. This was a highly pragmatic proposal with methodology of teaching words suggested within.

The words were divided into six plateaus (levels) to correspond with six years of learning English in the school (classes V to X). For each level books were written using the vocabulary specified at the level (500; 750; 1000; 1250; 1500; 2000). These books were called graded readers and these are in use in certain parts of the globe to this day. At the end of each lesson, a learner was given feedback on the number of new words learnt and the total vocabulary acquired at that particular stage. This was a piece of dedicated work and a good contribution to the Indian ELT scene.

The method recommended by West was called the Reading Method. He had his strong conviction. He said, written language is less likely to be faulty in comparison with the spoken language. Reading is an independent activity which can happen even in the absence of a teacher. Reading provides adequate exposure. A graded reader reduces the pressure on the learner by allowing him to interact with familiar words and encountering a new word occasionally. The list can go on.

Reading Method did not become popular among the teachers as new texts could not be produced with graded vocabulary. In the meantime, linguistics sciences had conceived a new type of grammar called the Structural Grammar. This was supported by the theories put forth by Behavioural Psychologists (Skinner et al) who firmly believed that all learning is 'conditioning'. It is best to learn one thing at a time. (One thing at a time, and that done well, is a very good rule as many can tell.)

#### **5.6.4 The Fifth Innovation**

Structural Grammar claimed that English has a finite number of structures. These could also be subject to frequency counts and it was discovered that just about 60 to 80 structures (of the total of about 250 structures) are adequate to operate in a language. These structures were also sequenced in order of their frequency and it was thought each structure could be learnt independently using drills. This method was called 'Pattern Practice' and the entire approach was called 'The Structural Approach'. This approach became very popular among the teachers and the learners. Learning was seen as something tangible. Learners could produce automated answers and the teachers had to just accept or reject the answers. The method is said to be popular in some of the rural areas even at the present time. Teaching meaning was completely ignored in this approach.

Some innovative teachers who saw the futility of this approach, attempted to teach the structures with meaning or as they occur in contexts. The interesting discovery was that the structures do not occur in isolation in language use. They always occur in clusters and each cluster accounts for a situation. This discovery resulted in bringing about another change and the new approach was called 'The Situational Approach' to language teaching. The basic tenets of the approach are, life is a series of situations or contexts. We negotiate through these situations using language and such language is essential and needs to be taught. Several course books were produced following this approach and are in use to present day.



### 5.6.5 The Sixth Innovation

The next major innovation was the Communicative Language Teaching. Communicative Language Teaching is an approach that was ushered in as a result of research in sociolinguistics. In 1963, Dell Hymes coined the term 'Communicative Competence'. He defined it as a combination of linguistic competence and social competence. In simple words, it is not enough to know the correct grammatical sentence, it is also important to know how to use it in social contexts. We should be aware whether the use of such a sentence is polite, impolite, embarrassing, harsh and hurtful, relevant etc. We do not speak to elderly the same way we speak to our peers. This is part of our social competence. We know a grammatically correct sentence from a wrong one. If the sentence (utterance) we use is correct both grammatically and socially, we have the right communicative competence. E.g. you don't address your father or mother by their first name.

Communicative language teaching also believes that language is best learnt when it is used. (This is a further development to exposure). To use language we need a partner. Therefore, it is desirable to organise pair and group work to facilitate use of language by learners.

This approach also believes that though grammar is essential, it is not always important in communication. Meaning is more important. Sometimes, when children talk ungrammatical sentences, we understand them and don't punish them for using wrong language. Similarly, in a classroom, a teacher needs patience to allow the learner to come up with correct sentences. Incomplete sentences, one word answers are as acceptable, as well constructed grammatically correct responses.

This approach believes that language is both organic and dynamic. This means that all languages are living entities. They have life. Because they have life, they keep changing and cannot be consistent. If we understand this, we develop a sense of tolerance. Further implication of this statement means that if language has life, language should also possess qualities of auto-repair. What does this mean? As a child, while playing have you fallen down and have had a wound? Did you care for this wound? The wound healed on its own because your body has the capacity for auto-repair. It can repair itself. Similarly, while learning a language, we make errors. These errors are like wounds. If we do not pay too much attention to them (like ignoring the wound while playing) and continue to use the language, the errors take care of themselves.

The Communicative approach to language teaching started around 1975. In India, there have been various experiments since 1980s and it has come to be accepted as a system since 1991. We shall look at these modifications in our next unit.

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## 5.7 Summary

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Before we close, let us quickly summarise what we have discussed in this unit.

1. We began with an attempt to understand the term pedagogy and that it necessarily addresses the learning in children.
2. We also learnt that the term that refers to learning by adults is called 'andragogy'.
3. We said human being by nature is innovative and hence there have been several innovations and teaching is no exception.
4. Teaching is an old profession, but in this unit we are concerned with teaching English in India.
5. We found that the western education was ushered in by Sir William Bentinck the Governor General of India.
6. Wood's Despatch of 1854 is an important document in the history of English education in India.
7. English language teaching in India has seen the following methods to date:

The Grammar Translation Method; The Direct Method, The Reading Method, The Structural Approach, The Situational Approach and the Communicative Approach.

In the next three units we shall see some of the recent innovations with reference to the teaching of English in India.

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## 5.8 Review Questions

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1. How old is language teaching? What is the proof of this?
2. Has teaching been the same all through the ages? Why not?
3. How did the teachers teach before writing was discovered?
4. Explain the terms pedagogy and innovation in your own words.
5. What prompted the British rulers to introduce English education in India?
6. What was the first strategy used to teach English in India?

7. What are some of the principles of Reading Method?
8. Why is the Structural Approach very popular among the teachers?
9. What are some of the weaknesses of the Structural Approach?
10. How is Communicative Language Teaching different from the Structural Approach?

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## 5.9 References

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## Unit 6 □ The West Bengal Experiment

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### Structure

#### 6.1 Introduction

#### 6.2 Objectives

#### 6.3 English Language Teaching Projects

#### 6.4 The West Bengal Experiment

#### 6.5 The Cascade Model

#### 6.6 Communication Oriented Structural Teaching- COST

#### 6.7 Summary

#### 6.8 Review Questions

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### 6.1 Introduction

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This unit is called the West Bengal Experiment. This must really excite you for it tells you something that happened in your state and it is part of an innovation in English Language Teaching. In order to understand this, you need to have some background. We will provide you with it, but before that let us know how well you know your state.

#### **Activity 1** Answer some of these questions.

- a. Name a few people who have been very influential in promoting English language education in your state?
- b. Here are a few names. Do you know their contribution to the promotion of English in your state?

Rajaram Mohan Roy

Rabindranath Tagore

Michael MadhusudanDutt

Sukanta Choudhari

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar

William Carey

Shashi Bhushan Chatterjee

S N Mukherjee

You can find out about the contribution of each one of these people from your friends, parents, neighbours or through a good source like the encyclopaedia or the internet. Each one of them has contributed in a mighty way towards the improvement of education in the state and in particular encouraged the study of English.

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## 6.2 Objectives

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At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- a. Understand the development of English Language Education in Bengal
  - b. Various projects that were undertaken in the state
  - c. Assistance received from sources outside India
  - d. Bodies responsible for promoting school education in the state
  - e. Salient features of West Bengal experiment
  - f. Perspectives on the project today.
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## 6.3 English Language Teaching Projects

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Now let us talk about the required background knowledge. Have you at any time visited the British Council in Kolkata? What does this office have? Why is there a British Office in India? You may ask yourself some of these questions when you see this office.

British Council has several offices in the country. It is part of the diplomatic establishment and primarily has focus on promoting British culture and studies in India. The personnel in this office offer help in training our teachers, provide them with scholarships to study in Britain, invite eminent scholars from Britain to give talks, conduct workshops and also offer consultancy services in matters related to academics. These offices have been established on a mutual agreement.

For a long time, the British Council was the main source of all ELT references in India. We used to have streams of experts coming from Britain to interact with teachers and students in different universities and also provide assistance in research projects. Their visit and upkeep was taken care of by the British government through an office called the ODFD (Overseas Development Funding Division).

During the early and mid-eighties of the last century, the British Council was

more active than it is at present. They funded long-term projects called KELT Projects (Key-English Language Teaching Projects). These projects were normally spread over two or three years depending on the magnitude of the project. West Bengal Secondary Education Board was one of the beneficiaries of this scheme during 1982-85.

What happened during this project? A survey conducted in the secondary schools of West Bengal revealed that the proficiency of English attained by the learners was far below the expected standards. We will not quantify this by giving figures in terms of the number of words each learner knew on an average and the ability to speak, read, understand and write in English. This weakness was related to the use of course books in use.

The West Bengal Government (The Board of School Education) in collaboration with the Institute of English, Kolkata, launched a project to develop new course books. The British Council offered to help the state in this project and provided the necessary funds through ODFD and the entire project was conceived as a KELT Project. The British Council also made the services of a senior educationist David Carver to monitor the project. This is the essential background information to the West Bengal Experiment.

### **Activity 2**

With the information provided, we would like you to take up a task and write a small report.

- a. Visit the offices of the West Bengal Secondary Education Board and meet special officer for English. Try and get as much information as possible from the person about the British Council.
- b. Visit the Institute of English (Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Marg, next to Kalighat Metro Station). Meet the officer in charge and collect as much information as possible on the history of English Language Teaching in West Bengal.
- c. Visit the British Council and meet the Manager, English Studies. Try and find out his/her duties and responsibilities and check if there is any help being offered to the school students and teachers at present.
- d. Go to a good library and try and get all the course books that have been used in the state during the last fifty years.

Collate all this information and produce a report which can be submitted to the NSOU.

Next we will see how significant the West Bengal Experiment was in the larger context of Indian ELT scene.

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## 6.4 The West Bengal Experiment

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In the previous unit we have discussed what the term innovation means, and how English Language Teaching developed slowly but steadily in India over a period of nearly 200 years. The last of the innovations we talked about was the ushering in Communicative Language Teaching. We will briefly look at this approach here and then relate it to our topic.

Communicative Language Teaching simply believes that language is meant for communication. This is based on the premise that all human beings are social animals. What does this mean? A social being is one who cannot live without friends and companions. A human being needs someone's company to talk, to share happiness, sorrow, a living space, pleasures, and pain almost everything. This sharing demands language. The language used in such social communication is not necessarily accurate in terms of grammar and pronunciation. This is the language of the world. In classroom, we teach a language that is highly structured and artificial. There is a great divide between the language we learn and the language we need to use in the world outside. Is this the right thing to do as teachers? The answer is obvious and it is such thinking that made some thinkers look for a new way teaching language and this was Communicative Language Teaching (CLT for short).

CLT believes that a classroom should provide opportunities to the learners to interact in the class. They should be made to talk. If we want someone to talk just like that, nobody will do that. We need to create a purpose and unless a purpose is created we cannot talk. On this do a thinking exercise.

**Activity 3** Make a list of all the occasions when you talk to someone. Are these situations prompted by a reason, or do you talk to someone without a reason? Share your thoughts here:

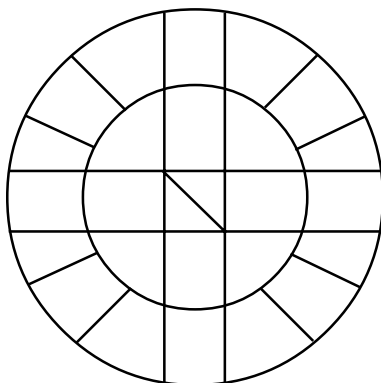
Your response:

We cannot use any aspect of language without a purpose. If this is the case, we need to create a purpose in the class to help our students communicate or interact with each other. This can be done using three simple strategies. They are information gap, opinion gap and cognitive gap. For each of these we can have activities and these activities normally happen in pairs and groups that facilitate interaction. (Please refer Paper 2 Module 1 for such activities)

West Bengal Experiment began with the premise that 'the learners at the school level do not see a purpose for learning language (English). They memorise the lessons and mechanically reproduce the answers without understanding the lesson. This is not helpful in making them use the language'. This is indeed true not only of West Bengal but of most other parts in India. To overcome this, an attempt was made to produce different types of textbooks which made the learners think and not read the lessons mechanically. Let us look at some examples.

Suppose somebody asks a child to repeat all the letters of the alphabet, the child does it easily. The child begins with A and before you have realised it, the child would have come to Z. As the child is reciting the letters in a sequence, just stop the child and ask a question: 'What letter comes after 'p'?' The child will not be able to give an immediate answer. The child will either start reciting all the letters beginning from A either aloud or softly before uttering the correct answer which is 'q'. This is the result of mechanical learning or rote learning.

West Bengal Experiment broke this tradition and taught the letters of the alphabet in a different way. Look at this picture.





It is a cart wheel. There are 26 boxes in this wheel, and each box can be filled with a letter of the alphabet randomly as shown here. The learners can be given one more cart wheel which is either fully blank or partially filled and the children can be asked to fill in the blanks. They could be asked utter the sound of the letter they fill each time they copy. This work can also be converted into a pair work, one child filling in the letter in the new wheel and the other child reading out the correct letter and helping the friend to get everything right.

This is a simple task. But think of how thinking is given a lot of importance and the mechanical way in which we teach the letters of the alphabet is given a go bye.

The West Bengal Experiment produced a series of course books called Living English starting from Class V to Class X (Six in all). These books were supplemented with audio cassettes which had well sung rhymes, stories, puzzles and a few other tasks to engage the children listen to English, understand the instructions and act accordingly. This was a great success.

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## 6.5 The Cascade Model

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The Project did not end with the production of new textbooks. To help teachers use these books, a special teacher training programme was also organised across the state. This was planned meticulously and the model used is called the 'Cascade Model'

A word about cascade model may not be out of place. When a change is brought about in the education system, and there is a need to train teachers, the onus of training teachers rests with a few experts. The few available experts cannot reach out to the large number of teachers spread across the state. So new techniques will have to be devised and cascade model is one of them.

In this model, we identify three tiers (levels) of teachers. The expert trainers are at the top of the model who will train a small group of highly competent teachers. They are called the master trainers. Master trainers form the second level of trainers. They learn how to train others from experts and pass on this knowledge to the next level. The master trainers train the actual teacher trainers who are also competent teachers or senior teachers with a large experience in teaching the subject. These are the third level of trainers. The trainers train their own colleagues or other teachers.

Let us look at it from a different angle. The Experts are available in the state

capital and the master trainers who are drawn from district headquarters are invited to undergo training in the state capital. The master trainers could be just about a hundred in number. The master trainers will conduct their training programmes at the district level and in each centre nearly a 100 trainers will get trained (This works out  $100 \times 100 = 10,000$  trainers at one go.) Each of the 10,000 trainers will in turn train about 50 teachers at the taluk or block level and in one course nearly 50,000 teachers will get trained. Cascade model facilitates reaching out to a large number of teachers in a short period of time. However, the training will be effective and have the necessary impact when there is follow up work to monitor the impact of training received.

When the training was offered, the teachers attending the training programme were seasoned practitioners and it was very difficult to bring about an immediate change in their teaching behaviour. They were used to teaching English using the Structural Approach - making children repeat a sentence in chorus and work on substitution tables. At best the children would memorise the lessons in the textbook and reproduce the answers that were given by the teacher in the class. The teachers did not want to change. They did not want to develop materials. They were not ready to accept multiple answers for the same question. The objections were numerous.

Prof David Carver, who was the chief resource person, took this up as a challenge. He was specially brought in to monitor the project from the Murray House College of Education, Edinburgh - one of the oldest colleges of teacher education in the United Kingdom. David Carver was a good teacher educator and more than anything, he had a humanitarian approach. What does this mean?

A trainer, who adopts a humanitarian approach, sympathises with the teacher-student. He/she understands the problems of the teacher-student and attempts to negotiate the methodology to suit the learner. This has a great advantage and builds confidence in the learner who readily accepts the new ideas.

Carver realised that the teachers love using substitution tables. He said, we will work with these tables, but not one, but three tables and a few pictures all put together. So he developed a series of new materials (similar materials were earlier produced by Keith Johnson) as shown below:

Picture of a girl (Kamala) Sitting next to a window	Picture of a boy (Arif) running on the road	Picture of an old man (Paul) walk- ing by a river	Picture of a woman (Shreya) standing by door
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Who is	standing	by the	door?
	sitting near	the	window?
	running	next to	a river?
	walking	along	a wide road?

Is	Arif	walking by the river?
	Paul	standing near the door?
	Kamala	running along the road?
	Shreya	sitting by the window?

Look at the pictures and answer: 'Yes, he/she is' or 'No, he/she isn't'

Who is	walking by the river?
	standing near the door?
	running along the road?
	sitting by the window?

Look at the pictures and answer the questions in the box. You may work in pairs.

What is given here is just a sample of the large number of activities and exercises that were designed as part of the Experiment for inclusion in the books Living English. David Carver declared at the end of the project 'What is needed in India is not a radical change, but a gradual shift. We will call this Communication Oriented Structural Teaching -COST for short.' This was a great success.

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## 6.6 Communication Oriented Structural Teaching (COST)

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The entire project spread over three years was helpful in producing good textbooks and audio cassettes for use in the schools. They were introduced with great enthusiasm and the teachers accepted the new materials and the ways of teaching. But the textbooks were withdrawn and once again the old textbooks were reintroduced as the government fell, and the new government was not in favour of the new books that were introduced.

### **Activity 4**

Take a look at the sample materials provided above. How well can you use these materials in the classroom? Can we have pair work using these materials? How can we do this?

**Your answer:**

The above materials are seemingly structural. But they very smoothly move into the realm of communicative language teaching by promoting interaction. The tables and pictures can be separated. Students can be divided into pairs. One pair partner can have the picture and the other have the table and they can discover the sentences and pictures. Alternatively, one student can have the sentences and the pictures, while the other has one set of question which can be either answered with 'yes' or 'no' or can be answered with a proper noun.

### **Activity 5**

A variety of manipulations are possible with an imaginative way of using these materials. Do you think these materials should be brought back to the schools in the state? Give a few reasons.

**Your answer:**

Finally, it needs to be said, West Bengal was perhaps the first state in the country to introduce Communicative Language Teaching at the school level. During mid-80s

no other state had even thought of this when West Bengal took the initiative. This was due to a bold initiative taken by some dedicated teachers.

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## 6.7 Summary

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Let us now conclude this unit with a brief summary of what is discussed. We began discussing some of the features of Communicative language teaching. We said:

CLT believes in learners producing their own answers.

CLT does not believe in memorisation.

CLT believes that language is best learnt when it is used.

CLT believes that language is best used while interacting with others.

A classroom should provide scope for interaction.

Pair work and group work can enhance interaction.

A purpose needs to be created to promote interaction.

Information gap, opinion gap and cognitive gap are three strategies to create a purpose.

West Bengal Experiment was funded by the British Council.

The Experiment developed coursebooks and trained teachers.

It is commonly known as COST.

The new books were withdrawn with the change of government.

So we will move on to Unit 7 where will discuss two other innovations that took place a little before the West Bengal Experiment took place, but not at the school level.

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## 6.8 Review Questions

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- a. What is an innovation in language teaching?
- b. Why do we need innovations?
- c. Give some of the principles of Communicative language teaching.
- d. What are some of the duties of the British Council?

- e. What is the purpose of a textbook in the classroom?
- f. How does teacher training help the teachers?
- g. What is a cascade model of teacher training?
- h. Why are teachers reluctant to accept change?
- i. What does COST stand for?
- j. How successful is the concept of COST?

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## **Unit 7 □ Loyola College and SNTD Experiment**

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### **Structure**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

#### **7.2 Objectives**

#### **7.3 The Loyola College Experiment**

##### **7.3.1 The Background Information**

##### **7.3.2 Approaches of Autonomous Colleges**

#### **7.4 The SNTD Experiment**

##### **7.4.1 The Text Book**

##### **7.4.2 Learning with a text book**

##### **7.4.3 Assessing a Text Book**

##### **7.4.4 Learning Without a Text Book**

#### **7.5 Summary**

#### **7.6 Review Questions**

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### **7.1 Introduction**

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What have we been discussing in this module? Innovations are some new experiments which have been unending endeavours of the human beings. In the previous unit we learnt about an initiative taken by a few teachers in the state of West Bengal to bring about a change in English Language Teaching at the School level. That it was not sustained is a different point. What needs to be appreciated is the initiative taken and the claim to the status of being pioneers in the field. In this unit we look at two more pioneering efforts but at the first year degree level.

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### **7.2 Objectives**

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At the end of this unit, the learners will be able to:

- a. Understand the importance of innovations in education.
- b. Understand the concept of autonomy granted to institutions

- c. Analyse a textbook and assess it for its qualities
- d. Perceive the role of textbooks in academic institutions
- e. Realise the possibility of having source books in place of course books.

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## 7.3 Loyola College Experiment

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We will discuss two experiments that took place in two different cities of the country. Both were independent and also very different in nature. One of the experiments focussed on promoting the principles of communicative language teaching while the other had as its focus, developing learner autonomy by making learners proficient in reading skills. We will discuss these concepts while describing the experiments.

Experiment 1- Loyola College Experiment: To understand this experiment, we need a little bit of background information. We shall discuss this before going to talk about the experiment.

### 7.3.1 The Background Information

University Grants Commission is a regulatory body that governs all the Universities in the country. It is also a financing body and therefore has the right to monitor the functioning of Universities. In the early days, we had just a few Universities and there were quite a few colleges which were affiliated to them. The colleges were bound by the syllabus drafted by the University granting them affiliation and also all the students had to pass the examination which was administered by the university. This ensured more or less similar teaching practices and standards of education across the university.

There were certain colleges which were academically capable of putting in better work. Teachers and the administrators in such colleges felt a little frustrated. The only reward they had was in securing the maximum number of ranks in the annual examinations conducted by the University. This was no compensation. Some of these colleges wanted to become autonomous.

What is an autonomous college? Autonomy means independence. A college that is autonomous can frame its own syllabus and conduct its own examination. The syllabus and the examination will conform with the norms specified by the University that awards the degree. It thus enjoys a better reputation.



### 7.3.2 Approaches of Autonomous Colleges

In early 70s of the last century, the UGC recognised the fact that there were several colleges which were functioning markedly better and announced that these colleges could be granted autonomy after due process of inspection to ascertain the qualities. Loyola College, a Jesuit institution of great repute in Madras city (present day Chennai) was one of the first colleges to be granted autonomy. The principal of the college then was a reputed educationist by name Father Louis Xavier. He was a teacher of English and had a passion to bring about changes in the teaching of English. This was around 1975.

During these days, English at the undergraduate classes was compulsory and consisted of studying literature as part of language course. Every student in the undergraduate course had to study English for two years and the texts included a play of Shakespeare, a Victorian Novel, an anthology of prose, an anthology of poetry and a set of essays or non-fictional prose. The five texts were shared between the two years and the questions were largely content based. The learners were expected to answer questions such as appreciating a poem, character sketch of the personae in the plays and the novels, summaries of stories or essays in the anthologies or the prose pieces. Though this developed good reading skills, the competence to use English fluently remained a distant dream. Writing skills were neglected, this is because, the teachers in their anxiety to have better results for their own college, would often dictate summaries of all the lessons and provide notes which could be memorised and reproduced appropriately in the examination. The examination thus became a test of memory more than understanding and application.

Father Louis Xavier who was disturbed with this situation decided to bring about a change in the system. His college having attained autonomy, he had the opportunity of framing a new syllabus that had a special focus on writing. He sought help from his colleagues and also brought in a visiting scholar, Sarah Freeman from outside. Sarah Freeman analysed the situation and developed a coursebook called *Written English Communication*. This was perhaps the first interactive coursebook produced in India to develop good writing skills. The author of the book conducted a workshop to provide training to the teachers and acquaint them with skills of using the book. The devoted team of teachers under the able leadership of Father Xavier brought about a change.

Another skill that had not been taught, but somehow the students had acquired

was reference skills. Almost all students knew how to use a dictionary, make or take notes and prepare themselves for examinations. These skills were systematised and a new course called Study Skills was introduced with wide ranging topics such as dictionary skills, reference skills (using encyclopaedia, indices, catalogues etc.), information transfer (verbal to non-verbal and vice-versa), classification tasks, note making and taking skills etc. Coursebooks were also produced to teach this with titles such as How to Study, Study Skills in English etc.

Loyola experiment brought in two of these changes which have now become part of the curriculum in most undergraduate courses.

Let us check your understanding of what is discussed. The first question is simply a factual one. The next three are in the form of tasks and you should attempt these with greater seriousness.

### **Task 1**

What special advantages does autonomous status give to a college? More importantly, do students really benefit by studying in an autonomous college? How? (You may visit St Xavier's College in Kolkata which is an autonomous college and find out for yourself. St. Xavier's College is now upgraded as a University.)

### **Task 2**

Do you know of any college in your area that is autonomous? (These days there are many Engineering colleges that are being granted autonomy.) Visit one of these colleges and find out how their functioning is different from other colleges you have seen. (You may meet some students, teachers and if possible senior members of the faculty including the principal.)

### **Task 3**

If you were given a chance would you like to study in an autonomous college, why?

Answer these questions and when you come to the University for your classes discuss your answers with your friends and see how many points you have in common with your friends. Report your discussion to the teacher concerned.

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## 7.4 The SNTD Experiment

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Now let us look at the other experiment. This is called the SNTD experiment. SNTD stands for Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University. This University located in Mumbai was established in 1916 to promote Women's Education. Today it has several campuses and colleges across the country.

The present experiment we discuss was carried out in Mumbai by a professor of English - Prof Shirin Kudchedkar. The focus of the experiment was to motivate the learners to read on their own or develop good reading habits. Reading habits have been on the wane for quite sometime now. Though several reasons can be assigned to this, the prescribed text seemed to be the most problematic according to a survey conducted by the University. To overcome this problem, an experiment was conducted by the SNTD University under the supervision of Prof Kudchedkar.

### 7.4.1 The Text Book

What are our textbooks like? While discussing Loyal Experiment, we have already discussed this and given you some idea of the type of textbooks prescribed at the undergraduate level. Here is a way to understand what makes a textbook click. While evaluating a textbook, we have certain criterion set up by scholars like Cunningsworth, Mac Grath and others. Without getting into their format, let us analyse a typical book and see what makes it either acceptable or unacceptable to our learners.

In order to understand this, we need to have some knowledge of what a textbook is. There are various definitions given, and the one that is very appealing in the Indian situation is 'textbook is the only tool in the hands of a teacher'. This statement was made by Pit Corder in a conference when he visited some of the North-eastern states in India sometime in mid-80s of the previous century. The present situation is not so grim, and we may change this definition.

In order to produce a textbook, we need to have a syllabus. A classical definition of a syllabus is 'a specific list of teaching items'. The list is specific from two points of view - the level and the content. We may have an English textbook for class V and this cannot be the same as a textbook in Bengali. The two textbooks are produced based on two different syllabuses for the same level but with different content. Exactly similarly, we have a textbook in English for class V and also class VI. Here the levels are different but the focus of the content is not different. With

difference in level, there will also be a difference in the syllabus.

### 7.4.2 Learning with a Text Book

A textbook is a translation of a syllabus in the form of teaching materials. This is a good working definition for a textbook. We reinforce the idea that the textbook and the syllabus are very closely related and integrated. The items on a syllabus are said to be abstract. For e.g. if one needs to teach simple present tense with SVO pattern in class V the teacher with a syllabus will not be able to produce sentences in the class in proper contexts. The textbook provides a context in which the simple present tense is used either in the form of a story or a narrative to help learners grapple the item being taught. Look at the following examples and answer the questions:

- a. Govind is a farmer. He lives in Nandigram. He gets up early in the morning. He washes his face and prays to god. He has a pair of bullocks. He loves them and takes care of them.

He goes to his farm with the bullocks. He works till the afternoon. His wife Shreya brings him his food. Both of them sit under a tree and eat their lunch.

Shreya goes back home. Govind works in the farm till sunset. He goes back home with the bullocks. He feeds the bullocks. He washes himself and sings bhajans. His wife gives him his dinner. Later he goes to bed. He and Shreya are a happy couple.

- b. Govind is an agriculturalist. He is married and his wife is Shreya. Govind is an early riser and gets up with the sun. He has a pair of bullocks to help him plough the fields. Early morning, after freshening up, he goes to his farm with the bullocks. He toils till mid-day and his wife joins him with victuals for both of them to eat. They settle themselves under a tree and consume the food. Shreya returns and Govind continues with his chores. Late evening he gets back home with the bullocks. After making sure the bullocks have their feed, he freshens himself and prays to god. Shreya serves dinner and the two retire for the day after a while.

#### **Task 4**

If you are asked to choose one of these passages for teaching simple present tense in class V, which one would you choose and why?

### **Your answer:**

Both the passages use simple present tense and there are a few repetitions of the structure in the passage. This helps in practising the structure and also understand its use in context. The first passage is simple and uses words with which the learners in class V are familiar with. The second passage though it uses simple present tense and repeats it, there are a few sentences that are complex and some of the words are beyond the reach of the learners in class V. What does this teach us?

A lesson is considered either easy or difficult based on three factors:

- a. Use of vocabulary.
- b. Use of grammar with adequate repetitions
- c. Use of proper context/situation to use words and the structures.

### **7.4.3 Assessing a Text Book**

You may ask a few questions to yourself when you read a lesson to assess it:

- a. Has the textbook producer used words which are graded and are within the vocabulary range of the learners?
- b. Have the words been used in proper contexts?
- c. Has the grammatical structure been repeated a few times?
- d. Has the grammatical structure to be taught used in a proper situation?
- e. Has there been any concept or idea that is difficult for the learner?

The process of evaluating a textbook goes far beyond this. But for the present this is sufficient for you to get an idea of what prompted SNTD experiment. The textbooks in use at the undergraduate level were often dull and boring. The students were not happy with them, they found these books to be too difficult to follow, largely because the lessons were based on unknown themes, and written in difficult language using unfamiliar vocabulary.

Given this situation, the Department of English at the SNTD University thought of making the choice of textbook open. The students were free to choose their own textbooks.

## **Task 5**

You are a student. If you are asked to choose a textbook which you can study, do you think it would be easy for you to do so? What difficulties are you likely to face?

**Your answer:**

Let us make the situation a little easier for you. Have you visited a good restaurant? In a restaurant, you are presented with a menu card that lists a large number of food items that are available. You can order the food you like. However, this depends on certain conditions - how much money you have; how hungry you are; what food you like; if you don't have what you like, what is the best alternative etc. Depending on this you choose what you want to eat.

Now let us move into our experiment. I want you to learn English and at the end of the year, I want you to read and understand a passage on your own, I want you to summarise what you read for the benefit of others, I want you to compare what you have read with something else you have read earlier, I want you to modify the writing if possible, I want you to express an opinion on what you have read and discuss with your friends to establish your views.

### **7.4.4 Learning without a Text Book**

Think of the tasks that follow. In order to complete any of these tasks, what you need is not a specific textbook but any textbook. With this premise, the SNDT University developed a language syllabus and created a classroom library with quite a few books stored in for use. The teacher would not use any textbook. She would use the syllabus and focus on language development with illustrations drawn from various sources. The learners were asked to choose a book of their liking from the library and apply similar processes to understand and work with the text.

Like the menu card in the restaurant that lists many items of food, the classroom library has a large number of books. The learner is free to choose the book according to her needs and liking. The learner reads and shares her understanding with the rest of her friends in the class. This was a very successful experiment that lasted for a long time.

A simple strategy of making learning language without textbooks brought about changes in the syllabus, teaching methods, evaluation strategies, learning output and the quality of learning. This was unfortunately not continued beyond a certain period.

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## 7.5 Summary

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Let us now summarise what we have discussed in this unit.

We began with a revision of the concept of innovation. We said that every change in language teaching can be considered as an innovation. Later we looked at the type of dissatisfaction some people had with language teaching and their concern to bring about a change. There were two pioneers - Father Louis Xavier and Prof Shirin Kudchedkar. Both looked at developing language in a wholesome way but adopted two different approaches. In the course of describing these experiments we also looked at some aspects of communicative language teaching, importance of writing skills, the need for study skills, structure of a textbook and the importance of motivating learners to read.

In the next unit (Unit 8) we shall look at two more innovation that happened in two other parts of the country. This should make you aware that though innovations may happen in one part of the country, its implications can be far reaching or spread across the country.

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## 7.6 Review Questions

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- a. How are innovations important in the field of education?
- b. Are you aware of any innovations other than what is mentioned here? Mention them, and describe them briefly.
- c. What is meant by autonomy?
- d. Why did some colleges want to become autonomous?
- e. What are the advantages of being autonomous?
- f. What are some of the features of Loyola Experiment?
- g. What does 'study skills' involve? Have you learnt these in your college?
- h. What is the purpose of a textbook?
- i. How do we assess a textbook?
- j. Why did SNDT University decide to do away with the textbooks?
- k. Do you think this was a wise decision?
- l. Given a choice, would you like to teach your class without a textbook?

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## **Unit 8 □ Gujarat Experiment (TELE) and the Bangalore Project**

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### **Structure**

- 8.1 Introduction**
- 8.2 Objectives**
- 8.3 The Gujarat Experiment (TELE)**
  - 8.3.1 The Background Context**
- 8.4 English Training Programs**
- 8.5 The Reinforcement Program on the AIR**
- 8.6 Role of SCERT in Teacher Education**
- 8.7 The Bangalore Project**
  - 8.7.1 Pre-task, Task and Feedback**
- 8.8 Summary**
- 8.9 Review Questions**
- 8.10 References**

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### **8.1 Introduction**

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In the previous unit we looked at two innovations which were initiated to by individuals. The experiments were successful because of the cooperation of other colleagues and the students who worked with them. For any experiment to succeed, these are important features. In this unit, we will look at two more innovations which were conducted on a larger scale. In one of the experiment, the entire state was involved (like the West Bengal experiment you read in Unit 6) while in the other the British Council was involved (once again as in the case of West Bengal experiment.) We shall be as brief as possible in discussing the two innovations.

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### **8.2 Objectives**

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At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- a. Look at the concept of innovation further.
- b. Understand why cooperation among the members is essential in an innovative project
- c. Understand how mass media can be an instrument of innovation
- d. Appreciate the commitment required to work on an innovative project.



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## 8.3 The Gujarat Experiment (TELE)

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The Gujarat Experiment (TELE). The abbreviation TELE stands for Teach English, Learn English. This experiment was conducted in the state of Gujarat during the mid-80s of the previous century. To understand this, we need a little background information.

Gujarat state was earlier part of the Bombay Presidency and subsequently the state of Maharashtra. After sustained demand and public pressure, the state was divided into two based on linguistic factors. Areas with people speaking Marathi were given the Maharashtra state and areas with people speaking Gujarati was called Gujarat. Nehru, the then Prime Minister made this announcement and the two states formally came into existence on 1st May 1960. Bombay, the contentious area, remained with Maharashtra and Ahmedabad was made the temporary capital of Gujarat till a new capital city could be built.

The new state of Gujarat adopted the education policies that existed in the former Maharashtra State and the first Chief Minister of Gujarat J N Mehta wanted to introduce a popular measure and made English an optional subject at all levels of education. This dealt a death blow to the learning of English across the state for it was neither taught nor learnt in a formal way. This led to a situation when one could choose to graduate from a university without having to study English at any level. This was a major setback to a state that was vibrant economically.

There were attempts to rectify the position several times with little success. In 1985, under the then Chief Minister Madhav Singh Solanki, the state took a decision to reintroduce English from class V and soon changed it to class VI. This decision was made public without making adequate preparations to introduce English. However, the administration rose to the occasion and put things in place. TELE was one of the strategies to cope with the situation, which we shall describe here.

### **Task 1**

#### **Check your understanding:**

Have you listened to any programme in English on a radio? Do you have difficulties in understanding what is said? Give some reasons and examples.

**Your answers:**

### **8.3.1 The Background Context**

When English was introduced in class VI in Gujarat, the existing situation in school education (in the government run, Gujarati medium schools) was as follows. A child entering school was introduced to English in class VI. This learning continued for three years up to class VIII. In class IX and X, English was studied only by a few students who opted for it, and in class X the marks scored in English did not add to the total percentage and a failure did not necessarily disqualify the learner from going further. The same situation continued in the higher secondary schools, thus giving a free hand to the learners to ignore the study of English completely. In such a situation which continued for more than two decades, the teachers had almost stopped teaching English and had lost their own proficiency in English. But they had retained their jobs as a special cadre of teachers of English did not exist at the school level, and these teachers were asked to teach other subjects.

When a decision to introduce English as a compulsory subject was taken (making it part of the curriculum) there was a need to train a large number of teachers. The figure given out by the state at that time stood at 22,000. All these teachers had to be trained within a period of six months, new textbooks had to be produced and provision made in the time table to accommodate six extra classes a week had to be thought of. This seemed an almost impossible task. Some of the people involved did think of cascade model, but given the Gujarat topography and the ethos, this seemed difficult to work.

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## **8.4 English Training Programs**

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A major English language teaching institute, H M Patel Institute of English Training and Research, that existed in the state was asked to undertake the responsibility of training the teachers. The then director, Prof S S Jain took up the challenge taking his colleagues into confidence. In a discussion with the state education department, cooperation from the SCERT and the All India Radio was solicited. This was granted almost immediately. The three bodies (HMPIETR, SCERT and AIR) together planned and executed the TELE.

The entire experiment happened in short phases. Initially, the teachers teaching in colleges of teacher education (with English as their special methodology) were invited to the H M Patel Institute for a week-long training. These were master trainers and they in turn trained very senior and competent teachers of English at the college and higher secondary level to become trainers who in turn trained the actual teachers at the school level. (This is in many ways similar to the West Bengal experiment).

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## 8.5 The reinforcement program on the AIR

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The training offered over a short period of time was thought to be either insufficient or incomplete. There was a need to reinforce the training received periodically and update the knowledge of the teachers. SCERT and the AIR were harnessed to help offer the follow-up and reinforcement programmes. The AIR agreed to provide two 30 minute slots a week for broadcasting programmes with a focus on teaching English. The SCERT agreed to disseminate information on the title of the broadcast, the focus of the lesson to be taught and the type of preparation required in the class to receive the broadcast. This was well coordinated by conducting regular meetings twice a year to plan the entire schedule for the following fifteen to twenty weeks. (These were the number of working weeks available in a period of six months.)

The training programmes which were planned and executed by the H M Patel Institute were sustained over a period of time. The training materials were centrally produced and distributed to all the centres in the state and the training itself was monitored initially.

The reinforcement programme on the radio had the following structure. The broadcast had a primary focus on the teacher. The objective was to help the teacher to teach a specific lesson and the radio provided a demonstration lesson. The thirty minute broadcast was divided into five parts as shown below:

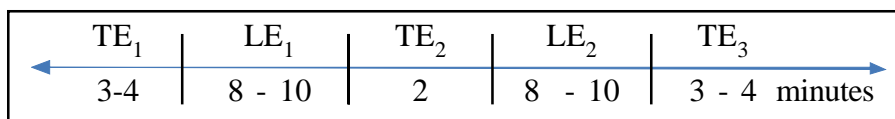


Figure 1: Structure of TELE programme

Let us try and understand this structure. The entire broadcast spread over 30 minutes was divided into five sections as shown in the figure 1 above. The terms TE refer to Teach English, and LE refers to Learn English. The TE portions were addressed directly to the teachers while LE portion was addressed to both the teachers and the learners.

The first TE was in the form of an introduction to the whole lesson (or the broadcast). This part had two teachers in conversation (a senior teacher and a novice). The novice before going to his/her class shares the plan of the lesson with the senior teacher and checks whether he/she is on the right track. The objective of the lesson, the skill to be developed, the title of the lesson from the textbook and the method used to teach are explicitly mentioned. It was thought of introducing this part in the form of a conversation rather than in the form of a lecture or a talk to show the involvement of teachers and the type of help one can receive within the school from the senior teachers. This was brief and lasted for about three or four minutes of the broadcast time.

The LE<sub>1</sub> part was a simulated class. The presenter in the studio would have a small number of students (not exceeding six due to space constraints in the recording studio) and would conduct the class with the lesson in focus. The methods mentioned in TE<sub>1</sub> would be demonstrated and as far as possible, efforts were made to keep the class interactive.

TE<sub>2</sub> was a brief talk by the radio teacher to reinforce the listeners by recapitulating the techniques used and reiterating the focus of the lesson.

LE<sub>2</sub> continued the lesson with learners practising the language taught in a variety of situations and the teacher offering corrections or suggestion where needed. The teacher would also signal the end of the class by wishing the children and giving them homework based on the lesson taught.

TE<sub>3</sub> was once again in the form of a conversation between the two teachers (who we met in TE<sub>1</sub>). The novice teacher shares with the senior teacher the success story and also asks about the possible alternatives to teaching the same lesson. During this conversation, the topic of next broadcast would also be mentioned for the benefit of the listening teachers.

The broadcast time was fixed between 2.00 and 2.30 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. During this time, care was taken to organise the time table in such a manner that the class in question had an English session with facilities to receive the broadcast. (Though this was desired, it was later found that many schools did not

comply with this requirement.) But the feedback received from the teachers was very positive and one impact study was also conducted the results of which were found to be significant at 0.01 level.

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## 8.6 Role of SCERT in Teacher Education

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The SCERT had another role in creating the support system. The SCERT had a publication called Jeevan Shikshan which was published every quarter and distributed to all the schools across the state. Certain issues of this periodical carried a detailed outline of each broadcast with the entire transcript printed in the journal. The teachers could read these issues and prepare themselves to receive the broadcast. The write up in the periodical also gave suggestions to the teachers on classroom arrangement, use of blackboard, sentences to be written on the board for practice, possible diagrams that could be drawn to teach vocabulary etc.

The success of this programme largely depended on the collaboration of the three organisations involved. This programme was sustained over a period of ten years and later withdrawn in preference to the new medium television. Let us check your understanding before we move to the other innovation.

### **Task 2**

Do you think using radio was a good decision to reach out to all the teachers? What alternatives can you suggest?

If you were a teacher in Gujarat during 1985, how would you have reacted to compelling you to listen to radio and learn how to teach?

**Your answers:**

We shall now look at what is popularly known as the Bangalore Project. This experiment is also known by several other names such as - Communicational Project, Procedural syllabus etc. We shall refer to it as the Bangalore project throughout this unit.

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## 8.7 The Bangalore Project

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As the name suggests, this project was based in the city of Bangalore. There is an institute called the Regional Institute of English (South India) which is well known

for offering quality in-service training to the teachers of English at the school level. The main person behind this project was Dr N S Prabhu, who at the time of the project was working for the British Council in Madras. (Today's Chennai)

Dr Prabhu, as an English Studies Officer at the British Council had visited several schools in South India and discovered that the learners were not taught English the proper way. They were allowed to memorise the textbook lesson and reproduce it in the examination without understanding the content. This saddened him and wanted to improve this situation by developing a new strategy for teaching English. He specifically wanted to try his new methods in corporation schools of Bangalore, Madras and a few rural schools in Andhra Pradesh. In all four schools were chosen for the purpose.

Having made a survey, he postulated a hypothesis as follows: 'Form is best learnt when the learner's attention is on meaning.' This was his belief and has a lot of commonality with the principles of communicative language teaching. In his hypothesis, the word 'form' represents 'knowledge and use of grammar' which is an essential factor in learning language. But while teaching language, if we concentrate on teaching form, not much is learnt. The form is not internalised. In order to help a learner acquire the grammar, best it is to allow the learner to use language in meaningful contexts, allow him/her to express, provide a context for such expression or create a purpose. Once this is done, the learner puts in effort to use language thus acquiring grammar.

This is a good theoretical proposition. But how do we practice this in a classroom situation? Prabhu built a large number of tasks (a little more than 200 tasks) which could be used in the classroom. These tasks were taken from different fields of life and were graded according to the learner level and interest. (The students chosen for the project were in class VIII). Each task was set in three phases - the pre-task, task and feedback. Each of the phases had a specific focus.

### **8.7.1 Pre-Task, Task and Feedback**

The pre-task was an important phase. It introduced to the learners the relevant language required to complete the task. Such familiarization automatically reduced the difficulties in coping with the task and allowed the learners to interact with the peers. The task was the actual learning phase and during the feedback the learners were told about the level of success they had achieved without emphasizing much on the errors they had made.

Here is a sample task chosen from the experiment which was later published in the form of a book *Second Language Pedagogy*.

The task provided here is categorised under 'Information Transfer'. What does this mean? Let us understand this term a little clearly. We use language for communication. Communication can be divided into two parts - expression and comprehension. Both these parts can either be verbal or non-verbal and it is easy for us to transfer one form to the other. Let us represent this diagrammatically for easier understanding.

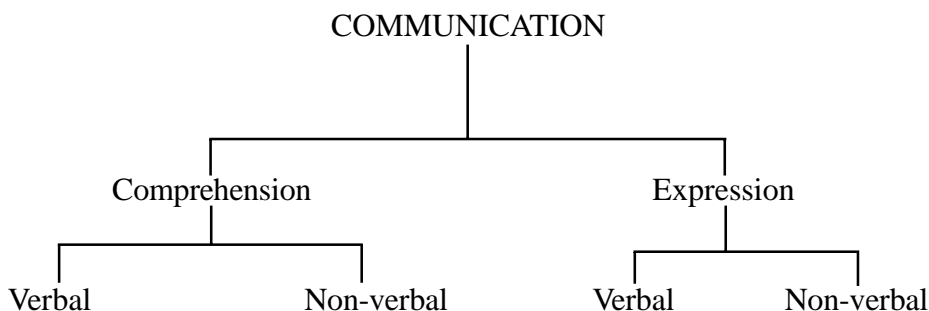


Figure 1: Divisions of Communication

An example will help us understand this concept better. In our life we see a picture or a painting and appreciate it. We understand the artist's intent and share it with our friends. The picture is a non-verbal expression of the artist and our understanding is also a non-verbal comprehension. But when we discuss its meaning or beauty with friends we express ourselves verbally. In this case a non-verbal expression receives a non-verbal comprehension and a verbal expression in the form of appreciation.

Let us take another example. Today is the first of the month and I have got my salary. I have the following expenses to meet every month in the same ratio. Let us look at the expenses.

- |                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| a. House rent:          | 20% |
| b. Grocery              | 12% |
| c. Milk                 | 05% |
| d. Fruit and vegetables | 08% |

e. School fees etc	10%
f. Transport	10%
g. Miscellaneous	05%
h. Electricity, newspaper etc.	15%
i. Savings	15%

These expenses can be projected in the form of a graph or a pie chart depending on our facility. The information given above is verbal while the graph or pie chart will be non-verbal. This shows that the same information can be presented either verbally or non-verbally.

Prabhu believed that such manipulations are an essential part of our communication and his tasks were based on such manipulations. Here is a sample task from the book mentioned earlier.

- a. Pre-task:** The teacher calls the attention of the class and gives instructions. I will give you a set of directions. You have to follow the directions and do likewise. Class show me your right hand.

Place your right hand on the desk.

Place your left hand on the top.

Now relax. Open your notebooks.

Draw a straight line. It should be horizontal

Draw another straight line which is vertical

Call the horizontal line AB

Call the vertical line CD.

Now work in pairs and compare the lines you have drawn with your friends. See if your answers are the same or different. Talk about it.

- b. The task:** In your note books draw a small horizontal line of 6 cms in length.

About half a centimetre below it, draw another line parallel to it and is of the same length.

Call the first line AB. Call the second line CD. Write C below B and D below A.

Join AD. Mark a point between B and C. Call it E



Draw a short horizontal line of 1 cm from E. It should move away from B and C. Call this short line EF.

Join BF and CF.

What do you have on your paper.

- c. **Feedback:** Did you get the picture of a pencil on your paper. If you have got it, you are good. Your picture should look like this:

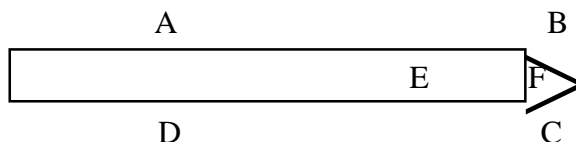


Figure 2

Some of you may have got EF wrong. You could have got F inside and not outside. You should be able to get it right the next time.

This is one of the early tasks and as the course progresses the tasks become complex allowing the learners to think, participate in discussion and also complete the task. In the course of this, they also learn language.

Why did Prabhu call it communicational project and not communicative project? The explanation given by him is as follows. Communicative language teaching has fulfilling learner needs as one of its tenets. However, these needs are identified by the teacher who is an outside agency without allowing the learners to express their needs. Therefore, Prabhu says, we need to allow learners to give us adequate information on what they need. The pre-task helps us diagnose the weaknesses of their language use and helps the teacher build or choose a task according to the learner needs. The learner communicates the need and the teacher provides a lesson to fulfil these needs and hence the approach is called communicational. Because of this the entire project was also called CTP - Communicational Teaching Project. With this we come to the end of this module. Let us now summarise the points discussed in this unit as well as the entire module.

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## 8.8 Summary

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In this unit we have discussed the details of two innovative projects. In the first project we saw how radio was harnessed to reach out to a large number of teachers. This was used as an instrument of reinforcement to the initial training offered to them in person. The second innovation was directly addressed to the needs of the students.

Special materials in the form of tasks were developed with appropriate strategies to help them develop proficiency in English.

**Summary of the module:** This module has a focus on Pedagogical innovations. We began the unit by arriving at a clear understanding of the term innovation. We also said, 'man is by nature innovative, and teaching has been no exception.' In the light of this statement, we looked at the number of changes that have taken place in the teaching of English since its introduction in mid-nineteenth century. Subsequently, we moved to the specific innovations in more recent years. All these innovations have student development as their focus. The West Bengal experiment had a focus on school learners from class V to IX. The major attempt was to wean the learners become slaves to memorisation and start using the language cognitively. Loyola experiment helped students gain proficiency in writing and get a hold on study skills. The SNTD experiment helped learners take to reading more easily and independently. Finally we had a quick look at the Gujarat experiment where radio was used as an excellent outreach instrument to train teachers, and the Bangalore project helping students to become fluent users of English. This should motivate you to take up innovations with your students and perhaps this may have a national relevance tomorrow.

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## 8.9 Review Questions

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- a. How often do we use radio and television in our class for teaching?
- b. Suggest some ways of using radio broadcast for teaching English?
- c. What does TELE stand for?
- d. Why was this essential in Gujarat?
- e. Did the teachers of English in Gujarat get benefitted by this project?
- f. What mode of training was used to train a large group of teachers in a short period of time?
- g. Was radio an instrument of training or reinforcement?
- h. Why is the Bangalore project called the Communicational Teaching Project?
- i. What is the underlying principle that guided the Bangalore project?
- j. What does information stand for?
- k. Do you think the type of tasks suggested are useful today?

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## 8.10 References

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3. West Michael, (1953). *A General Service List of English Words*. London, Longman.
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# Module 3 : Peer Teaching-1

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## Unit 9 □ Principles of Microteaching and Peer-teaching.

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### Structure

- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Objectives
- 9.3 Sub-skills of Teaching
- 9.4 Practice Teaching
- 9.5 Microteaching
- 9.6 Stages in Microteaching
- 9.7 Peer Teaching
- 9.8 Components of Sub-skills of Teaching
  - 9.8.1 Questioning
  - 9.8.2 Explaining
  - 9.8.3 Narrating
  - 9.8.4 Describing
  - 9.8.5 Illustrating
  - 9.8.6 Stimulus Variation
  - 9.8.7 Reinforcement
  - 9.8.8 Blackboard Work
  - 9.8.9 Classroom Management
- 9.9 Lesson Plan
- 9.10 Summary
- 9.11 Review Questions

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## 9.1 Introduction

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This unit is a very important unit in any course on teacher education. This discusses a strategy adopted to train teachers. Though this strategy is dated, it has its values and it is worth discussing it as well as learning from it. To begin with let us discuss what 'microteaching' means. If you analyse the word for its components, you should be able to arrive at its meaning. Will try and define what your understanding of the term is by looking at the words 'micro' (small) and 'teaching'?

Your answer:

Micro means small. It can also mean condensed or something that has been compressed without losing the quality of the original object. You have micro models of cars - these look like big cars and function like them, but they are very small in size. In a similar manner, if teaching behaviour can be condensed such that the class size, teaching time, teaching content are all present in the process but in smaller doses, we have microteaching. The question that should arise in your mind is 'Is this possible?' To clarify and suggest a possible way of doing this is the aim of this unit.

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## 9.2 Objectives

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At the end of this unit, you will be able to

- a. Understand the concept of microteaching as a training strategy
- b. Analyse the various components of teaching skills
- c. Look at each skill discretely and analyse it further for its constituents
- d. Observe a class and offer constructive feedback
- e. Plan a micro-lesson which will ultimately help you plan your regular lessons.

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## 9.3 Sub-Skills of Teaching

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You have looked at various language skills. Each skill has a set of sub-skills. The sum total of the sub-skills, helps you master the main skill. Like listening, speaking, reading and writing, teaching is also a major skill. It has a large number of sub-skills. We need to understand what these sub-skills of teaching are. You have been a teacher or at least you have observed your teachers teach in the class. If you are asked to identify the sub-skills of teaching, can you do it?

## **Activity 1**

Based on your observation, make a list of things that the teacher does while teaching?

### **Your answer:**

Look at this. In your class has there been a day when the teacher has not done some of the things mentioned below:

- ❖ Questioning
- ❖ Narrating
- ❖ Explaining
- ❖ Describing
- ❖ Illustrating
- ❖ Stimulus variation
- ❖ Reinforcement
- ❖ Black board work
- ❖ Classroom management
- ❖ Integrating/consolidating

The list which mentions the sub-skills of teaching is in fact, not full. You can add many more things to this list. A teacher, while teaching in the class does all these things and switches from one to the other easily and he/she looks like an excellent performer. You admire such a teacher, don't you? How has your teacher acquired all these sub-skills? Let us see how we can do this.

Here is an analogy from a film based on Microteaching produced by NCERT. This film begins with the visuals of a trained dancer who gives a performance. Later, the film shows how the dancer was trained. Dancing involves the movement of hands, facial gestures, movement of the legs, and coordinating all this with expression of emotions and posturing body in different angles. This is a difficult task. A dance teacher focuses on helping the learner practice the movements of the hands first, and then the steps (legs), later showing various expressions on the face, movement of body parts etc. in isolation. Later the learner is allowed to combine these movements to get the dance right.

Now let us get back to teaching. A teacher is expected to use a variety of sub-skills to teach. If the teacher is made to practice each sub-skill separately and later coordinate them, perhaps we can train a good teacher. This entire process is based on the beliefs of a group of psychologists called Behavioural Psychologists. B F Skinner was a leading exponent of this science and he believed all learning is a matter of practice and conditioning. By conditioning, we can help a learner get rid of 'bad habits' (wrong learning) and cultivate 'good habits' (correct learning). Why should we do this?

You are a student teacher or a person who is undergoing training to become a teacher. As part of your course, you are expected to get practice in teaching. You have no experience in teaching.

### **Activity 2**

If you are taken to a school, and allowed to teach in a real class what is likely to happen? Do you have something to say here, please do:

#### **Your answer:**

As a trainee, you are likely to face the following situation. You can be taken aback by the size of the class; you may not be able to manage the entire time (40 minutes); you may be nervous because the content of the lesson is much more than you can handle etc. This is true of most students under training. Are there ways by which these problems can be overcome?

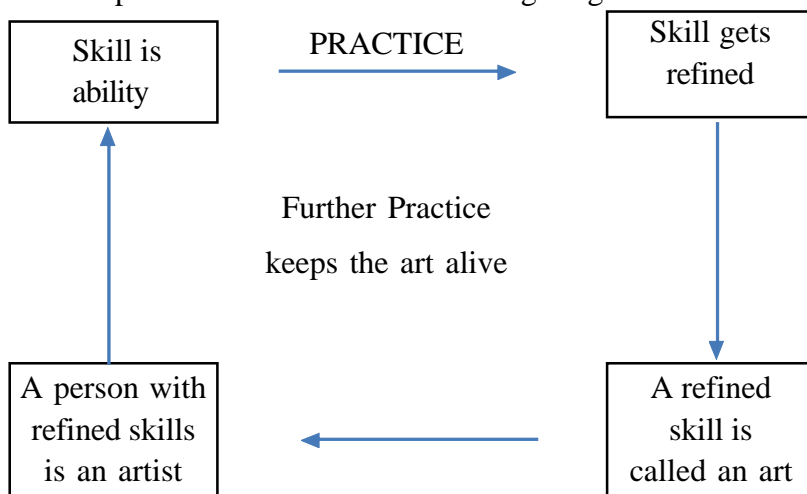
Imagine a situation as follows:

- a. You are asked to teach a class with just 10 or 12 students;
- b. All the students are familiar to you (perhaps your own classmates);
- c. You are expected to teach for a short period of 8 to 10 minutes only;
- d. You are allowed to teach a lesson of your choice;
- e. You are allowed to revise the lesson if you go wrong while teaching; etc.

Does this seem to be a more welcome situation? This is exactly what microteaching does. It provides you with ample practice in each sub-skill.

Why do we need so much practice? Is it not boring? Just take a look at this situation. You have several skills of which you can feel proud of. What are these

skills? You may be able to sing, dance, paint, stitch, knit, cook, swim, play a variety of sports and games etc. How did you learn all this? With practice! Any skill becomes better with practice. Look at the following diagram:



*Fig 1: Place of Practice in refining the skill.*

The diagram clearly shows that with practice a skill can become better - you know practising to sing makes one a better singer or for that matter any skill. A good singer or a dancer is called an artist. A good teacher is also an artist - do you agree with this? If we consider teaching as a set of skills, and we refine these skills, a teacher is also an artist. Teaching which has many sub-skills, when mastered thoroughly, will render a good or a refined teacher. A teacher who can consolidate the sub-skills appropriately into teaching is indeed an artist. We love to watch such teachers teaching. Let us see how we can practice this, and in the course of our discussion, we will also look at another term called peer-teaching.

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## 9.4 Practice Teaching

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In your class where you are being trained as a teacher, you have 60 students. We will divide your class into five groups with 12 members in each group. Let us call these students A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K and L. Each group has 12 student teachers. We will further divide this group into 3 groups of 4 each. So we will have three groups ABCD, EFGH, and IJKL. We will assign them roles and later see what the responsibility of each group is. Look at the following diagram.



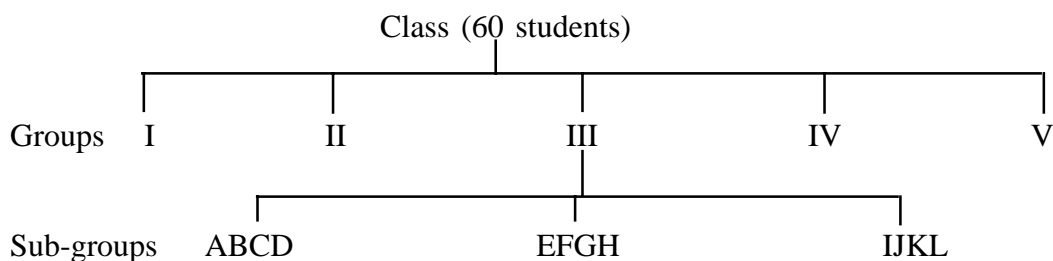


Fig 2. Diagrammatic representation of dividing the class.

We have to assign a function to each group and all groups should perform all the tasks. What are these tasks? We shall first look at some of these details, look at the meaning of peer-teaching before concluding our discussion on the topic.

When you are being trained to become a teacher, you need to have practice in teaching, you should have a proper understanding of student behaviour - their problems etc. and also observe somebody's lesson to give a feedback. All these three tasks - teaching, observing and giving feedback are crucial.

Microteaching aims to provide ample practice in all these three aspects. Every student teacher behaves as a teacher, a student and also an observer. This demands a lot of planning.

## 9.5 Microteaching

In our class we have five groups. Each group will have a supervisor who is also your teacher. The supervisor will help you become familiar with the skills you need to practice, and also provide sufficient guidance to prepare your lesson plans. Your supervisor will divide you into three groups (as mentioned earlier) and assign each group a specific task for the day. He/she will also ensure that all the groups get equal opportunities to each task. Look at the following table.

Students	Responsibilities Or Roles	Responsibilities Or Roles	Responsibilities Or Roles
ABCD	Student	Teacher	Observer
EFGH	Teacher	Observer	Student
IJKL	Observer	Student	Teacher

Table 1: Possible way of dividing students in groups and sub-groups.

Microteaching happens in cycles. What does this mean? I am a student teacher. I am not familiar with the intricacies of teaching. I need a lot of practice. I need help and guidance at each step. To facilitate all these, microteaching is designed in the form of cycles.

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## 9.6 Stages in Microteaching

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Every episode of teaching begins with planning. Microteaching is no exception. Your supervisor assigns you a skill and helps you identify materials to practice the skill. For example, let us say you have chosen narration as the skill. The best material for this will be a story. How to narrate a story?

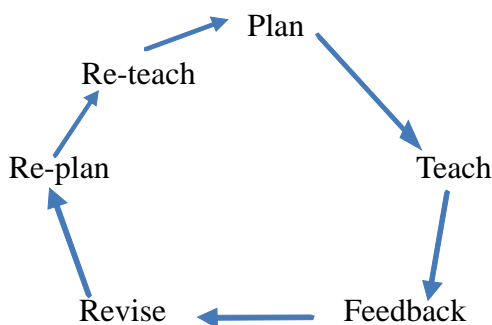
Planning is the first stage of the cycle. You plan the lesson, share it with your supervisor, who corrects it and you refine your plan.

The next stage is for you to teach. When you teach you have a set of just four to ten students with you (four from the student group, three from your own group, and three from the observer group). You teach the lesson you have planned for a maximum of eight to ten minutes.

In the third stage, your observers will provide you with feedback. They will point out all the errors you have made and also mention the positive points. Your classmates who acted as students will also provide you with their feedback. The supervisor will add his/her comments at the end.

In the fourth stage, based on the feedback received you will re-plan your lesson (revise your plan) and re-teach the same lesson. This way you stand to gain. You get to know your weaknesses and also you are given a chance to overcome your weaknesses.

Let us put these stages in the form of a diagram.



*Fig 3. Microteaching Cycle*

This cycle will repeat itself for each sub-skill and you may repeat it if you feel dissatisfied with your own performance.

Feedback given by your observers may be biased. Though observers are your classmates, they may not be objective. Or, when some points are made about your teaching behaviour, you may not believe what others say. To provide an objective overview, it is also possible to video-record your performance and play it back to you. This will reinforce the comments given by the observers and you will be able to see for yourself your own performance and improve it the next time.

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## 9.7 Peer Teaching

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Now let us come to discuss the term peer-teaching. The new word here is 'peer'. What is the meaning of this word? Just look up a dictionary and note down the different meanings of the word.

Your answer:

The dictionary offers two meanings. The first meaning refers to the word as a noun and denotes a person of similar background as you, enjoying the same social status.

The second meaning is that of a verb and denotes an action of looking at something closely. Which of the two meaning will be appropriate here? Perhaps, both. You will teach someone who is in your class (same social status) and he/she will look closely at your lesson closely. A practice of teaching someone who is like you, and also the practice of looking at an event (your teaching) closely constitute peer teaching.

The word 'peer' also means, a friend, an equal, someone in who we can confide, someone who will offer you help etc. Since you teach your friends to get help from them this entire process is called peer teaching. Peer teaching or micro-teaching demands a lesson plan. In the next section we will discuss the details of planning a micro-lesson.

Lesson plan for a micro lesson: In order to plan your lessons for microteaching, you need to know each sub-skill of teaching thoroughly. Knowing a sub-skill means knowing its components and how they are related to each other. Such knowledge helps us in developing a lesson plan and also practising the same.

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## 9.8 Components of Sub-skills of Teaching

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Here is a table that gives you the components for each of the sub-skills. Take a good look at these components, and keep track of them. We will explain these terms with reference to each sub-skill as they are described. You will find the description immediately after the table that follows.

SI. No.	Sub-skill	Components
1	Questioning	Grammaticality, Appropriateness, Distribution, Rephrasing, Handling, Appreciating
2	Explaining	Grammaticality, Appropriateness, Length, Relevance, Feedback/verifying
3	Narrating	Choice of story, Tone, Loudness, Gestures, Grammaticality, Involvement, Appropriate beginning and Conclusion
4	Describing	Choice of topic, Language, Grammaticality, Use of proper words Involving learners, Questions and responses
5	Illustrating	Understanding of the topic Appropriateness, Level of the learner Mode of illustration Verbal/pictorial
6	Stimulus variation	Types of stimulus, Choice of teaching aids, Appropriateness, Time of exposure to the aids, Handling, movements, Gestures, Change in the voice, Feedback

7	Reinforcement	Summarizing, Involving learners, Types of summaries, Probing questions, Clarification, Illustration, Using positive verbal reinforcement, Non-Verbal reinforcement, feedback
8	Black board work	Neatness - lettering, line, errors in writing, Organization, Number of erasures, Method of erasing, Use while summarizing
9	Classroom management	Seating, Instructing, Discipline, Giving feedback, Using teaching aids, Summarizing/repeating
10	Integrating/ Consolidating	Appropriate use of sub-skills, sequencing of sub- skills.

Table 2. Components of different sub-skills.

### 9.8.1 Questioning

Questioning is an important sub-skill of teaching. You must have noticed in your classes that every teacher who comes into the class keeps asking questions. The questions that are framed need to have a set of qualities.

- ❖ They should in the first place be grammatically correct. In English, the grammar of a question is different from the grammar of a statement. We should be aware of this.
- ❖ They should be appropriate. This means that the questions should be based on the passage/text that is taught. They should be framed in such a manner that the learners should be able to answer them.
- ❖ They should be distributed well. This means that no section of the class should be ignored. There should be plenty of questions and all learners should have an opportunity to answer them.
- ❖ Sometimes the questions that we ask may not be understood. In such a case, we should not simply repeat the question loudly. Instead we should rephrase the question or simplify it in such a way that the learners are able to understand and respond.

- ❖ Handling questions is another quality a teacher should develop. It is not appropriate to identify a learner and then ask the question. Instead, the question should be thrown open to the class, and based on how many learners are ready to respond, the teacher should choose a learner to respond. Besides this, when a learner responds with an inappropriate answer, the teacher should be able to take such an answer and manipulate the learner to arrive at the correct answer.
- ❖ Appreciating is also an essential part of questioning. When learners respond to the questions, they expect a word of praise or appreciation in return. A teacher should be sensitive to this and learn to say 'good' 'well done' or 'keep it up'.

### 9.8.2 Explaining

Explaining is another common sub-skill of teaching. Most teachers resort to this when they have a difficult concept to put across to the whole class particularly so, when the class is large. While explaining the teacher needs to take care of the following components:

- ❖ Grammaticality: This has already been explained, and it is important for us as teachers of English to use our language correctly.
- ❖ Appropriateness refers the correctness of explanation: A good teacher organizes the matter systematically in such a manner that it becomes easy for the learners to remember the contents.
- ❖ Length is also a part of appropriateness. Some teachers have the habit of explaining things far too long. This tends to make the class boring and the learners lose interest in the class. A teacher should take care to avoid lengthy explanations.
- ❖ Relevance refers to the choice of the concept and the technique. Certain concepts cannot be explained, they need to be illustrated. Has the teacher chosen the right topic/concept for explaining or not is seen here.
- ❖ Feedback/verification: Having explained a concept it is the responsibility of the teacher to verify whether the concept has been understood properly. This can be done using some techniques like questioning or summarizing or re-explaining by the students followed by appreciation.

### 9.8.3 Narrating

This skill is employed by teachers at different times. Language teachers need to possess this skill to tell a story, or an anecdote as an illustration for a point. Narrating makes the class interesting and it is a very effective technique to motivate the learners. The following components are part of this skill:

- ❖ **Choice of story:** This is an important aspect. Before narrating a story or an incident make sure that what we narrate will interest the learners. This should be theme and age appropriate.
- ❖ **Tone:** Narrating is a technique that will gain in value if the right tone is adopted. We should be able to modulate our voice and bring life into our narration. We may need to shout or whisper as per the needs of the story.
- ❖ **Loudness:** This quality is not necessarily restricted to narration. It is a general quality, and a good, clear and loud voice is an asset to any teacher. This does not mean that a teacher should shout in the class, but he/she has to use a voice that reaches out to all the learners without much difficulty. While narrating, loudness is important for the learners may lose interest in listening if the voice is soft and monotonous.
- ❖ **Gestures:** Spoken language used for communication without proper gestures (body language) is dull. However, the gestures we use are specific to culture and the meaning the words convey. While narrating a story or an incident, taking care of gestures is very important.
- ❖ **Involvement:** While narrating a story, we should get involved in the plot of the story. This can be done by expressing right emotions that are appropriate to the theme of the story we are narrating. Such involvement motivates the learner to listen to the narrator (teacher in this case).
- ❖ **Conclusion:** This is an important part of narration. Very often, when we narrate a story or an event the conclusion is missing and this leaves the listener uncertain of what happens next. If the narration is a problem solving task or an open-ended story, an exception can be made and no conclusion given. Otherwise, conclusion is an essential part of all narration.

### 9.8.4 Describing

This skill is also a very important and commonly used skill by almost all the

teachers. Describing becomes essential when we are talking about a person, place, object or an event or a procedure. Describing is not exclusive to English classes, but also employed in content classes. Components of this skill are discussed below:

- ❖ **Choice of topic:** We have talked about this component while discussing narrating. The principles applied are the same, and it is more relevant to factual descriptions. Descriptions should be properly organized and should reflect the logic of the visual object, person, place or event we are describing. Similarly the order of events forms part of the organization while describing events and procedures.
- ❖ **Language:** While describing, the language used has to be simple and provide factual details. Simple present and past are best suited to describe events or objects, persons and places. While describing places present is better suited than the past.
- ❖ **Use of proper words:** We should be careful with the choice of our words while describing. This is particularly true when we are describing objects that learners are not familiar with. We should also exercise great care while describing people, in particular if the people we describe are living.
- ❖ **Questions and responses:** This component is useful not only with this skill, but also with the skill of narration. Questions help us receive a feedback on whether we have described something or narrated a story properly. Question could be either from the listener (learner) or the speaker (teacher).

### 9.8.5 Illustrating

Illustrating is also an important skill in teaching. Illustrations can be of many types. It could be either verbal or pictorial or using a model, real objects or visual medium. Illustrating is helpful while teaching vocabulary or difficult concepts. Illustrating of emotions can also happen through demonstration. Components of this skill are:

- ❖ Understanding of the topic is very essential to illustrate the concept or word we are teaching. A wrong illustration is going to damage the learners for life and therefore we need to be careful while selecting the type of illustration and see that it coheres with the topic we are teaching.
- ❖ Appropriateness is also important while illustrating. There are certain objects that are too obvious which need not be brought to the class for illustration.



There may be ethical reasons as well that restrict us from bringing in some objects, or showing pictures in the class for illustration. We have to use our discretion before deciding how we illustrate a particular concept or word.

- ❖ Level of the learner should be borne in mind while illustrating a concept. This is what we have said while discussing 'appropriateness'. Ethics matter greatly while illustrating and particularly so when we consider the age of the learner.
- ❖ Mode of illustration: While introducing this sub-skill we have said that illustration can be of many types: Verbal - or provide meaning of a word using it in a sentence; or describe a simple object or mention its use.

Pictorial - we may illustrate the object using pictures, and the pictures can be drawn on the board, or shown on a chart, or a medium like computer, slide projector, OHP or a video clipping on a television.

Real objects or models can substitute pictures and charts.

- ❖ Visual/pictorial this has been discussed and subsumed in while describing other components of this sub-skill.

### 9.8.6 Stimulus Variation

Stimulus Variation is a skill every teacher needs to become familiar with. This skill is employed to ward off the boredom from the learners. If we subject our learners to a spell of continuous listening, or continuous reading, or writing they feel bored and exhausted. Their attention needs to be diverted from one source of information to another. They may listen for a while, then see something, (perhaps what is written on the board) such that what they listen gets reinforced by what they see and vice-versa. This skill has the following components:

- ❖ **Types of stimulus:** In a normal class we have two types of stimulus - either listening or seeing. Listening pertains to listening to the teacher or fellow learners, while seeing pertains to reading what is written on the board, observing a demonstration, watching a visual clip on a video, looking at a chart or a picture etc. These two stimuli reinforce each other and enhance the learning quality.
- ❖ Choice of teaching aids refers to the types of visual aids that the teacher can use in the class. The teacher himself/herself can be the first teaching aid, with good blackboard work, or other teaching aids. The choice of teaching aids depends on their size, versatility, usefulness and more than anything the

pragmatics. We need to exercise great caution in choosing our teaching aids. It is best to use teaching aids that are made by the teacher and are low in cost.

- ❖ Time of exposure to the teaching aids is an important caution that we need to exercise. There are occasions when the teacher either over exposes or under exposes the teaching aid to learners. We should also practise to show the teaching aid and match our explanation or description that is appropriate.
- ❖ Handling a teaching aid is not very easy. One of the reasons we should choose the right teaching aid is to be comfortable in handling it. We should be able to hold the teaching aid in such a manner that the whole class can view it. It is best to hold the teaching aid parallel to our face or next to our face without covering it. (If we cover our face with the teaching aid, we will not be able to see our learners, and it may cause for problems of discipline.)
- ❖ Feedback on the teaching aid used needs to be obtained and this also accounts for stimulus variation as a new voice is heard (other than the teacher's voice).

### **9.8.7 Reinforcement**

Reinforcement is a skill that every teacher needs to employ periodically. However, we need to know that repeating is not the only reinforcement strategy. Here are the components of this skill:

- ❖ Summarizing is a good skill that every teacher needs to possess. This is one good way of reinforcing learning. Summaries can be in the form of a narrative or can be points put up on the blackboard.
- ❖ Involving learners is another good reinforcement strategy. When teacher teaches a lesson, several concepts are introduced. A teacher can take a pause after explaining a point, and make one or two learners repeat what they have listened/learnt for others to listen to. This repetition is better than the teacher repeating the points often.
- ❖ There can be different types of summaries, and this is particularly true when we take notes. Summaries can be provided by the teacher orally, or in the form of hand-outs which have salient features or the synopsis of the lesson. A synopsis can be provided either at the beginning or the end of the lesson depending on how the teacher wants to teach the lesson.
- ❖ Probing-questions or some rhetorical questions that the teacher can use in the

course of teaching. Some of these questions can be content based and require elaborate answers while some of the questions can be in the form of 'Have you understood?' 'Are you with me?' 'Do you have any questions?' demanding implicit responses from the learners in the form of a nod of the head, or yes/no appropriately.

- ❖ Clarification is an extension of the probing questions. However, the difference is that the questions in this case can emerge from the learners seeking clarifications on the subjects taught, and the response may come from either the teacher or other learners.
- ❖ Illustration is another reinforcement strategy that has been discussed in detail.

### **9.8.8 Blackboard Work**

Blackboard is a ubiquitous aid available in almost any classroom and perhaps the most easily available teaching aid for a teacher. However, not every teacher can use it effectively, and it is necessary to learn some techniques of using it properly. Components provided for this skill help you in doing so. Let us take a look at each one of them closely:

- ❖ Neatness of writing on the board is an important component of using the blackboard. What is written on the board, every learner in the class should be able to see and read without any difficulty. To do this, one needs to be aware of the size and shape of letters, the strokes that form the letters and the right space that we need to leave between words and sentences. We should also pay attention to the space between lines.
- ❖ Organization of writing on the blackboard is equally important. This refers to how we use the space available on the board. It is best to start writing from the top left hand corner of the board and end at the bottom right hand corner, just as we do on a normal paper. The writing should be in the form of points for recapitulating the points at the end of our teaching.
- ❖ Number of erasures should be kept to the minimum as this is likely to disturb the learners. Besides this, matter once erased cannot be retrieved, and since blackboard is a good summarizing device, erasures should be kept to the minimum. This comes with practice.
- ❖ Method of erasing is also a technique to be learnt by every teacher. This has two reasons. The first reason is to erase the board in such a manner that the board becomes really clean. Secondly, the dust should not fly across the

classroom making it an untidy place. If one erases the board from top to bottom in single strokes, the dust gathers at the bottom of the board, and leaves it clean for other teachers to use it properly. Practice makes it perfect.

- ❖ Useful in summarizing: This point has been made clear while discussing the number of erasures.

### **9.8.9 Classroom Management**

Classroom Management is more than a single skill and involves aspects such as psychology, teachers' attitude, levels of tolerance etc. The components that we need to discuss are:

- ❖ Seating arrangement in the class is an important aspect of classroom management. Learners can be made to sit in a variety of ways and you will learn more about this in your classes on education. However, if the monotony of seating can be altered as frequently as possible that brings newness to the class.
- ❖ Instructing or giving instructions is another aspect of classroom management. The language of instructions given to learners should be simple, direct and effective. Learners need to be instructed about the type of work they need to do either for learning processes or behaviour in general.
- ❖ Discipline is a principle that should be maintained in the class, and a teacher is largely responsible for this. Discipline does not restrict itself to maintaining silence. It relates to promoting participation in the learning process, making a constructive contribution to the classroom processes. A teacher can imbibe this either by practice, encouragement, show of affection, and also using proper instructions and a bit of punishment.

The other components of classroom management are giving feedback, using teaching aids and summarizing appropriately. These have been discussed earlier as part of other skills.

It is one thing to learn about all these skills in isolation and use them in the course of Microteaching, and another thing to learn to integrate them for real teaching. Integration of skills happens with time and at the end of microteaching sessions you will have a macro lesson which you will teach with your peers. Another way of learning to integrate is by observing your teachers who use all the micro skills every day in their classes.

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## 9.9 Lesson Plan

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While developing a lesson plan, the first thing you should learn is to state your objectives properly. In the lesson plan, you should mention exactly what you do and what you expect your learners to do. Besides these, you should also indicate the materials you want to use for teaching. These are provided in columns and a format of the lesson plan below.

### Suggested format for a Micro Lesson Plan

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Roll No: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Skill: \_\_\_\_\_ Components: \_\_\_\_\_  
Objectives: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Talk	Learner Talk	Materials Used

### Supervisor's comments:

The plan format is self-explanatory, and your teacher will provide you with model lesson plans before the microteaching sessions begin. We hope this has been helpful to you, and we wish you happy teaching.

We will close the unit here and in the next unit (Unit 10) we shall discuss a few more strategies used for training teachers.

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## 9.10 Summary

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Let us check our understanding so far by summarising what is discussed. We have looked at teaching as a set of sub-skills. It is possible to provide practice in each sub-skill separately to help one gain a mastery over the larger skill. (Learning how to dance is a good example). This process of identifying sub-skills and offering practice in each of them is the first principle of microteaching. If student-teachers are allowed to teach their classmates (peers), for a short duration a lesson of their choice, it provides them with greater confidence. This is the second principle of microteaching.

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## 9.11 Review Questions

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- a. Do you consider teaching a skill the same way the language is?
- b. What are the sub-skills of teaching?
- c. Does a teacher under training need to be trained in developing each sub-skill?
- d. What are some of the sub-skills of teaching?
- e. While training in each sub-skill, what is the first step we need to take?
- f. Mention some of the components of the sub-skill narration?
- g. What are the advantages of micro-teaching?
- h. Why is micro-teaching called peer teaching?
- i. How do we organise students for peer-teaching?
- j. What strategies can we adopt to make our observation objective?
- k. How do we integrate the skills learned during the peer teaching?

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## Unit 10 □ Teacher Training Strategies

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### Structure

#### 10.1 Introduction

#### 10.2 Objectives

#### 10.3 History of Teacher Training

#### 10.4 The Craft Model

#### 10.5 The Applied Science Model

#### 10.6 The Reflective Model

##### 10.6.1 Reflective Teaching

#### 10.7 Summary

#### 10.8 Review Questions

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### 10.1 Introduction

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Teacher training is an interesting word that has undergone a few changes in the last four decades. Are you aware of other terms used in place of teacher training? Please note down your answers here:

**Your answer:**

Look at the following terms: Teacher training, Teacher Education and Teacher Development. Do these three phrases mean the same thing? They are often used as synonyms or one in the place of another. In understanding these terms, we also get to know a little about the history of teacher training.

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### 10.2 Objectives

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After going through this unit the learners will be able to

- a. Understand the concept of teacher education from a historical perspective
- b. Distinguish the terms training, education and development
- c. Associate the terms with respective schools of thought

- d. Realise the importance of teacher autonomy.

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## 10.3 History of Teacher Training

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When did teacher training begin? It is fairly a recent phenomenon. Teaching was thought to be the job of a scholar. It was a job where one who knew shared the knowledge with someone who didn't have the knowledge or needed it. It was thought to be a simple job. Teaching itself was largely didactic - the learner listened to the teacher and followed faithfully the teachings either by memorising the steps or simply following them (craft model). However, not all teachers did their job the same way. Some were exceptionally good, and some were difficult to understand. To standardise these practices attempts were made in different parts of the world, and schools that were popularly known as 'normal schools' were established to train teachers. The earliest record of such a school in India was in the year 1793 in Serampore in West Bengal. But most of the details of how this school functioned is lost to us.

We have talked about Wood's Despatch in Unit 5 of the previous module. This seminal document recommends the need for training teachers to improve the education standards in India. Based on this recommendation the first college of education was established in the city of Madras (Saidapet Teachers' College) in 1856. The college is in operation to date as the oldest college of teacher education in India. Once the teacher education was formalised, the training strategies were also refined and with experience.

In hind sight, we can now look at the entire process of teacher training and build theories pertaining to it. Scholars have identified three different strategies of teacher training and we shall look at them in some detail.

The three models of teacher training are as follows:

- a. The Craft Model
- b. The Applied Science Model
- c. The Reflective Model.

### **Activity 1**

Before we discuss these models, would you like to share your views on these terms? What does each term mean to you? You may note down your answers here:

**Your answer:**

Let us look at these three models one after the other.



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## 10.4 The Craft Model

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The first one is the Craft Model. All of you are familiar with the word 'Craft'. What does this word mean? It is the same as skill. We have looked at the word skill several times and we know a skill gets refined with practice. (see unit 9). What are the skills that can get refined with practice? Almost, any skill! Look at your handwriting. It was never like this when you began to learn writing. You practised writing over a long period of time. You looked at your parents, other elders around you, and your teachers and tried to imitate them while writing. You learnt how to hold a pen, you gained control over the movement of your hand, you could make the strokes properly depending on the language you were writing (you don't write English and Bengali the same way, do you?) and today, you have achieved a style of your own. People, who know you, can identify your writing easily. You learnt to write as a craft.

There are several professions which are skill based. A potter can make pots easily. His son/daughter who sees him making pots, tries to imitate him and in the bargain learns how to make a pot. Several professions have been handed down like this from ages. Potters, smiths, carpenters, farmers, cobblers and even lawyers and musicians have inherited the profession of their parents by sheer imitation. If this is the case, can teachers' children also become teachers by imitating them? With enough exposure, practice and the right aptitude this should not be impossible. Can we have teachers children becoming teachers?

This model can be accepted, if we consider teaching only as a skill without any knowledge going into it. Does teaching demand knowledge? We do not need to answer this question. The answer is obvious. If we believe that teaching is merely a set of skills to be practised and refined, then Craft model is a good strategy. This provides for Teacher Training. Training refers to providing practice based on a model.

There is an inherent weakness in this model. I may be very good for acquiring a skill. But if I do not understand why I am doing it, perhaps, I cannot improve on what I am doing. Let us take an example to illustrate this. The mechanic, who can repair your scooter, does it because of sheer practice. He may be able to locate a fault and set it right. But he cannot tell you what measures need to be taken to prevent it. Exactly, similarly, a person selling medicines in a medical store is aware of the usefulness of medicines, but he cannot diagnose your problem and prescribe a drug to cure it.

## **Activity 2**

If I learn to teach using craft model, I keep teaching the same way all through my life without ever showing signs of improvement. Is this desirable? Let us have your opinion on this.

Your opinion:

Of course, the model is not totally bereft of truth. Teaching is certainly a skill and a lot of practice is required to learn how to teach. One grows with experience, but it is not confined to being a skill alone. It goes further and depends on knowledge. If this is the case, we need to think of an alternative model of teacher training.

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## **10.5 The Applied Science Model**

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This is a very interesting label. Do you know the term 'applied science'? All knowledge is divided into two parts - the first is called the 'fundamental science' and the second one 'applied science'.

## **Activity 3**

What is the difference between 'fundamental science' and 'Applied Science'? Are they totally different from each other? Would you like to share your thoughts on this?

Your views:

Fundamental science and applied science are complementary to each other. This means, they cannot live without each other. Applied science depends on fundamental science to invent something. Fundamental science depends on the experiments conducted by the applied scientists.

Fundamental science is also called 'theoretical science'. This branch, constructs a hypothesis, or comes out with a concept and provides new knowledge to the world. For example, the production of electrical energy is a case in point. When this was discovered by Benjamin Franklin while flying a kite, little did the world know about its multiple uses? Today, because of the efforts put in by applied scientists like Thomas Alva Edison, we are rendered into a state when we cannot live without electricity. A fundamental scientist discovers something and an applied scientist shows us how to use this knowledge or apply it to make our lives more comfortable.

What has all this to do with teacher training? Discovery of knowledge is not confined to science alone. There can be discoveries in psychology, sociology and any branch of knowledge. Teaching is also a branch of knowledge that largely belongs

to the fields of psychology and sociology. If we want a teacher to do something - e.g. write on the blackboard, there is a reason. This reason can be found in the knowledge shared by allied subjects. Why should my handwriting be neat, why should my writing be organized, why should I not erase the board often etc., etc. such questions can be asked endlessly by a student-teacher. A trainer simply cannot say, 'This is what all teachers have done, so you better do it.' That would be an inappropriate answer.

Teaching goes beyond skills. It has a set of sound principles which need to be understood. For example, 'a child feels happy if the child is praised'. This is a piece of knowledge. Do I use it in my class? If in my class, I appreciate children for good work, I have applied the knowledge I have in my class. Such practice is labelled as 'applied science' model.

Let us go a little further. How does science work? Scientific research is described as 'discovery processes'. There are a few steps we need to understand here. What does discovery process mean? Look at the following illustration.

I am a new comer to a town. I do not know anyone. I go for a walk in the evening and meet about 15 people. Since I am a stranger, nobody wishes me nor recognize me. I conclude that the town is an unfriendly place.

Let us analyse this situation. The context is a stranger in a town. He/she wants to find out how good or bad the town is. He/she comes across a few people. The person does not greet anyone. He/she observes nobody greets him. So jumps to the conclusion that the town is unfriendly. What are the flaws here?

- a. The person is an outsider. He does not put in any effort to establish contact with the people of the town.
- b. In a town, fifteen people is a very small part of the population.
- c. The time evening, is perhaps the time when everyone is returning from work and not in the best of moods to interact with a stranger.
- d. There could have been some incident in the town warning people from interacting with strangers.

The new person arriving in town has hurriedly arrived at a conclusion.

In scientific terms we say, that the person who wanted to know the town, formed a hypothesis 'This town has friendly people'. He collected data to prove his hypothesis. The data showed that his hypothesis was wrong, so he arrived at a conclusion.

In science, if this happens, we revise our hypothesis, gather more data, verify the hypothesis and reconfirm if our earlier conclusion was right.

So this person needs to go out once again into the town, meet more number of people, perhaps take the initiative to greet and see if others respond. Once he does this, he may gather very different data and come out with a different set of results.

Formulating a hypothesis, gathering data, analysing it and verifying it with the hypothesis is called 'discovery processes'.

In teaching, we often do this. A child does not understand what I teach. I begin to analyse why the child is not able to understand. I formulate a hypothesis which could be - the child is dull; the lesson is difficult; my teaching pace is rather fast; my questions are difficult to understand; I need to use proper teaching aids; I need to change the lesson; I need to make the child sit in a different place; I should talk to the parents; I should report to the Headmaster etc. I can have several hypotheses. I will observe the child for a few more days and reduce the number of hypotheses to either two or three. I read books about this problem and bring about modifications in my lesson and teaching strategy. If I do this, I use what is called the discovery process to teach and the model of teaching is applied science model.

Can we train teachers in this way? The answer is 'yes'. All teacher training programmes have two components - the professional component and the proficiency component. Both are very vital to teacher training and are normally shared in the ratio of 50:50. Some institutes may vary it according to the intake. Let us see what these components mean to us.

Professional competence refers to the imparting of teaching skills. This includes theories of learning, (also called dynamics of learning), knowledge fields such as psychology of learning, needs analysis, curriculum design and a variety of other factors along with teaching practice.

Proficiency component on the other hand helps the teacher become familiar with the content of what he/she is expected to teach. A teacher of English cannot teach English, if his/her own proficiency in the use of language is weak. Similarly, a teacher of history should be proficient in history, a mathematics teacher in mathematics etc. On a teacher training course, a trainer should provide enough opportunities to the trainee to gain proficiency in the content. This could be in form of gaining clarity of concepts and be sure of being able to help learners overcome their difficulties with the content of the subject.

The applied science model develops the professional competence by providing adequate inputs in theory of learning and also helping the learners assimilate this knowledge in their own practice. Does such knowledge make us good teachers? Is there something more we need to become good teachers? This is what we need to look at?

#### **Activity 4**

In your opinion, what may be the weaknesses of applied science model of teacher training? Note down your points here:

Your views:

I may have good knowledge, and I may use the skills to teach very well. But, I always feel I have learnt everything, I am perfect and there is nothing more for me to learn. Will this be right thing for me to do as a teacher? What do you think? Why don't you write your views on this?

Your views:

A good teacher is one who is forever a learner. In other words, a sense of complacency should never come to a teacher. Today, we have a concept called Continuing Professional Development (CPD), which means that we learn to teach till the last day of our life. This is indeed true. How can we do this? Let us take some examples from our life.

Long ago, there was a particular mode of communication called writing letters. One would write a letter, put it in an envelope (or an inland letter) and seal it before dropping it off in a post box. The letter would then be collected, transmitted to the place of the receiver and be delivered to the right person. This system is slowly fading out. But this was one of the popular and favourite modes of communication. Sometimes, one would write a letter, seal the letter in an envelope, post it and then suddenly remember that an important point that had to be included was not written. There was no possibility of going back to the box, retrieving the letter, opening the seal and rewriting the whole letter again. One would have to write a fresh letter and this was laborious process on the part of the writer and could cause confusion on the part of the receiver who would receive two letters with different contents. How could a situation like this be saved? Today, we have changed from writing letters to sending e-mails. We often press the send button without making sure that the necessary files are attached. Most of you might have done these yourselves.

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## 10.6 The Reflective Model

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The person who writes the letter could have read it a few times before posting to ascertain all the points were included. He could think about it for a while before sealing the envelope. Such revising and thinking could save a lot of trouble. Similarly we could revise our email once before clicking the send button and ensure the attachment is in place. One more word for thinking, especially about the job we have just completed is called 'reflection'. We shall look at one more strategy of teaching called 'reflective teaching'.

### 10.6.1 Reflective teaching

The illustration provided above should have given you some idea of what reflective teaching means. None of us can be perfect. There can often be drawbacks or weaknesses in our work. It is always nice to share our work with others or reflect on what we have done. This will help us improve ourselves and perform better each day. This should be the goal of our teaching and teacher training.

What are the ways in which we can reflect? We have an exercise called 'remembering exercise'. Have you heard of this? It is a simple task. Every evening, before you retire for the day, just spend a few minutes thinking about all the things that you have done. Try and recall if you have forgotten something that had to be done. Take it up or put it on your 'to do list' for the next day. This will save you from a lot of embarrassment and disappointment.

This remembering exercise is essential aspect of our teaching job. Each time we finish a class, we should look for the reaction of our learners. Were they happy? Did they appear cheerful? Did they ask questions/respond to questions? Was there unnecessary noise in the class? Try and ask yourself these questions at the end of each class. The answers you get will help you assess your class either as successful or not so.

There is another way in which we can measure the success of our class. As I get out of the class do I feel happy or disappointed? If I feel happy or satisfied, the class I had was a successful one. Otherwise, it was wanting in quality.

Once you have an idea of how many successful classes you have had and how many were not so, you can analyse these classes for what you did. In successful classes, you were perhaps well prepared, you were in a good mood, you liked the topic you were teaching, you could respond to most of the student questions (because

of your preparation) etc. A not very successful class could be because you were not well, perhaps you were in a bad mood because of a quarrel you had with a colleague or at home etc. It could also be because you did not find time to prepare for the class, you made spelling errors while writing on the board, or forgot a few points you had to mention while teaching, or you could not think of the right examples. This can happen to almost all of us at some time or the other. These are our failures, and all of us have faced failures. How we tackle with the failure and make sure it does not recur accounts for reflection.

Try and restrict your reflection to aspects such as the materials used in the class for teaching, strategies used to teach, larger classroom management, time organization and other related aspects. These are crucial to teaching and if you are able to identify the weaknesses in these aspects, you should also be able to overcome those weaknesses and become a better teacher.

Reflective teaching is an attempt to improve oneself constantly. There are various strategies for doing this. Keeping or maintaining a copious diary is one of them. Your diary entries could have your lesson notes and the end results. If you examine these entries over a period of time, you will have adequate material to improve yourself.

Reading and updating ones knowledge is another strategy of reflection. When we read, we become aware of our shortcomings. Let us look at a new term in this connection. This is called 'Loop Input Strategy'. (This term was given to us by Tessa Woodward.) Let us try and understand this in simple terms. Look at the following situation.

I want to be a teacher of English. But my own proficiency in English is not very good. I need to learn English and also become familiar with methods of teaching English. I have little time to do both. Can I achieve both these at the same time? The answer is 'yes'. I need to learn English as well as become familiar with methods of teaching. If I choose to read a book on methods of teaching English written in a fairly accessible manner, I will learn the language as well as become familiar with methods of teaching. This is a two pronged strategy, and such strategy is called 'loop input strategy'. In fact, this is what we are trying to do for you. We are helping you cope with training materials in as simple a language as possible so that your English proficiency gets better with your professional knowledge.

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## 10.7 Summary

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Let us now conclude the unit with a quick revision or consolidation. We began

the unit with a mention of three phrases - Teacher Training, Teacher Education and Teacher Development. Can you relate these to the strategies that we have discussed?

Teacher Training which is at the bottom of hierarchy was interested in developing teaching skills. So this was a product of Craft Model.

Teacher Education aimed at providing the student teachers with associated knowledge along with skills. The student teachers were expected to apply this knowledge to their work. This subscribes to Applied Science Model.

Teacher Development induces in the teacher a desire to improve. It cultivates in the teacher a better attitude of tolerance (I am a learner, I make errors, my learner can also make errors), and an openness to learn from others. This comes through in the Reflective Model. Today, we call good teachers 'reflective practitioners'. What would you like to be? Just write a line here in conclusion.

Your response:

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## 10.8 Review Questions

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1. Teaching is an old discipline. How old is teacher training?
2. What were the reasons for training teachers?
3. When did the teacher training as a discipline began in India?
4. How many models of teacher training are you familiar with?
5. To which of these models does the training you have received belong to?
6. Which of the three models is best according to you? Give reasons
7. What are the principles of Applied Science model?
8. Do you think this really works?
9. What does reflection mean?
10. Have you reflected on your teaching?
11. Has such reflection helped you become better?



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## **Unit 11 □ Observation as a Learning Strategy- Lesson Planning**

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### **Structure**

#### **11.1 Introduction**

#### **11.2 Objectives**

#### **11.3 Integrated Strategy in Teacher Training**

#### **11.4 Practice Teaching**

#### **11.5 Lesson Plan**

##### **11.5.1 Objectives**

##### **11.5.2 Materials**

##### **11.5.3 Strategies**

##### **11.5.4 Steps of Progression**

#### **11.6 Format of a Lesson Plan**

#### **11.7 Summary**

#### **11.8 Review Questions**

#### **11.9 References**

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### **11.1 Introduction**

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In the previous two units you have looked at some aspects of teacher training. In Unit 9, we had a detailed discussion on Microteaching/Peer teaching. In Unit 10, we looked at terms called Teacher Training, Teacher Education and Teacher Development. We also related these terms to three models of training - viz. The Craft Model, The Applied Science Model and The Reflective Model. We provided some examples to illustrate each of these models and finally left you with question to answer. Hope you have answered it.

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### **11.2 Objectives**

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After going through this unit, the learners will be able to:

- a. Understand the integrating strategies for teacher training,
- b. Appreciate the need for planning a lesson,
- c. Understand the different parts of a lesson plan,
- d. Draft a detailed lesson plan for teaching in the class.

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## 11.3 Integrated Strategy in Teacher Training

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We will continue with training strategies and look at one more strategy which is an integrated strategy. This is applicable to all the models and depends on one's ability to grasp concepts and critique them. This is called the Observation Strategy.

When we think of observation, I am reminded of a verse in one of the Indian languages which reads as follows when translated into English:

We learn a few things from others, who are knowledgeable,  
A few things are learnt by doing or experiencing,  
And a few more, by observing others doing it.

Sarvajna: A medieval Kannada poet.

To me the last line is quite important. We learn something by observing others. This ties up with the idea of the Craft Model we discussed in the previous unit. But this goes far beyond that.

Teacher Training is a complex process. It has three major components - Theories of teaching/learning; proficiency in the content subject and practicum or practice teaching. We shall confine ourselves to the last aspect in this unit.

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## 11.4 Practice Teaching

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Practicum or practice teaching is an integral and important aspect of any teacher training programme. In the old dispensation, we had each student teach 40 classes in the course of one year training. Since 2015, when the duration of the programme was increased to two years, the practicum component also got a boost and the students are required to teach nearly a hundred lessons over a period of four months. What does practicum constitute? Let us take a look.

Practicum has three different parts to it:

- a. Theories of teaching/learning (Theories related to classroom strategies),

- b. Lesson plans - their structure and rationale,
- c. Observation - how and what of it,
- d. We shall discuss the last two components in this unit without ignoring the first component.

**Note:** It may not be out of place to mention here that, the first of the components deals with classroom strategies. This includes classroom management, using the blackboard, explaining, describing, narrating, questioning, stimulus variation etc. These are sub-skills of teaching and we have discussed these in detail in Unit 9. You may take a quick look at it and revise your knowledge of classroom strategies.

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## 11.5 Lesson Plan

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The second component of Practicum deals with Lesson Plan and we shall look at it in some detail. We will begin by answering the question, 'Why do we need a lesson plan?' In response we can mention that a lesson plan is like a route map for teaching a lesson in the class. It helps us get a clear idea of the work we need to do within the stipulated time allotted to us (about forty minutes). This is a complex task and demands good planning and preparation in a systematic manner which is also acceptable to others. A lesson plan has various parts to it. The major parts are:

Objectives

Materials

Strategies

Steps of progression

Each of these terms is very meaningful and need to be understood properly. Let us look at them individually with some illustrations. This is important to understand and appreciate the role of observation.

### 11.5.1 Objectives

**Objectives:** This is a technical term and it has a few synonyms. It is also referred to by two other terms aims and goals. We have often heard people talk about 'aim in life' or 'goals in life'. Some of us are clear about this, but many are not. A lesson plan should have a goal or an aim and should be expressed as its objective.

Let us introduce two new terms 'entering behaviour' and 'terminal behaviour'. These are terms used by Behaviour psychologists while talking about a mode of

learning called Programmed Learning. These terms are useful in lesson planning as well. Let us imagine the teaching of a lesson as a journey. Every journey needs to begin somewhere and end elsewhere. Similarly, a lesson should take you from one point of learning to another point of learning which is perhaps higher or better. It is in this context the two terms mentioned gain significance. Entering behaviour suggests the knowledge a learner possesses at the beginning of the lesson, while the terminal behaviour indicates the improvement that is desired in the learner at the end of the lesson. An objective is a claim made by a teacher about the achievement at the end of his/her class. Such claims should be modest and not ambitious. You will understand this point when you look at the illustrations given later.

Let us illustrate this. At the beginning of my class, my learners do not know how to distinguish between disyllabic words that can be both nouns/adjectives or verbs by placing stress on the correct syllable. This is their entering behaviour. At the end of my class, the learners will be able to pronounce words like CON-tent and con-TENT without confusion and also use them properly in sentences. This will be their terminal behaviour.

The illustration given above is very narrow. This is something that can be achieved in a class session of 50 minutes duration. But how do we state this in our lesson plan? Look at the statement of objective to capture the above lesson.

At the end of the lesson, the learners will be able to:

- a. Look at disyllabic words with contrastive stress,
- b. Understand the significance of stress in relation to grammar and meaning.
- c. Identify and pronounce correctly disyllabic words stressed on the first syllable,
- d. Identify and pronounce correctly disyllabic words stressed on the second syllable,
- e. Use disyllabic words in utterances and pronounce them properly according to their grammar and meaning.

I have written five different statements to suggest one objective. Take a look at each of these statements. Do you see some relationship between each of them? They are arranged hierarchically. Each objective leads to the next one, in other words they are like steps on a staircase. We should learn to write our objectives in this manner.

There is one more point we would like to suggest to you while writing objectives. These objectives should have three qualities. They should be in the first place practical

(achievable), the improvement or learning should be observable and finally the change should be measurable. These terms are easy to understand and let us spend a little time understanding them.

A classroom session we said was a journey which has a starting point and a destination. There needs to be some distance between these two points which can be perceived as near or far (observable) and also measurable in certain units such as meters, kilometres etc. The distance between the two places must be conducive to reach in a certain period of time (practical). This refers to the three aspects mentioned above.

Similarly, when we teach a lesson, the learning that we propose to do should be achievable or practical. I cannot go to a primary class and hope to teach a poem full of symbolism. In this class we may teach some simple words, a few simple poems or a story which interests children. This is practical or a possible objective.

It should be possible for us to observe what the children have learnt. At the beginning of the class they were not able to read the poem properly. At the end of the class they have become familiar with it and can read it. This can be observed by an outsider.

Finally, how well they are able to read the poem can be measured. At the beginning of the class they had errors of pronunciation, now they have overcome it to a large extent. Their spellings were bad, now they are able to spell eight out of ten words correctly. These are some measures that can be seen by the teacher as well as an observer.

There is another way of looking at the objectives. They can either be behavioural or cognitive. Look at the five statements we have made. They begin with words like 'understand'. These are cognitive for they involve a certain amount of thinking. But if I say they can 'identify', this can be more of a mechanical work and this refers to behavioural objective. Every lesson should have some behavioural and a few cognitive objectives.

### **11.5.2 Materials**

The next aspect of lesson plan is materials. The objectives give us the reason to teach and answer the question - 'Why am I teaching this lesson?'

In order to teach a lesson, I need some material. The word 'materials' is very comprehensive and we need to understand it in a narrower sense. It includes all of curriculum, syllabus, textbooks, exercises, teaching aids etc. Here we are concerned

only about the specific lesson or part of it that can be taught during one classroom session. What lesson am I going to teach? How much of it am I going to teach? What questions shall I ask? What illustrations can I give to help learners understand the lesson? How much blackboard work will I do? Do I need some teaching aids? etc. Answers to these questions help us decide on what the term 'materials' constitute in a lesson plan.

To teach (or achieve the objectives stated in the lesson plan), a teacher needs some materials. Perhaps much of it will emerge from the textbook lesson. A teacher has to make a realistic estimate of how much of the lesson can be taught. Let us take an example. 'Shubha' is a popular story by Tagore which is anthologised in most of the school textbooks. The story runs to about seven printed pages. If one is teaching this story to students of class IX, one cannot read the whole story in one class session of 45 minutes. Perhaps we may need three to four sessions. How much of the story can I teach, is a major decision that the teacher has to take? Based on this, he has to think of revision (which could be introducing the words, and familiarising the learners with some grammar used in the passage). The teacher will also have to think of questions to be asked at various stages, at the beginning to revise the previously learnt part, checking comprehension to progress with the lesson, drawing learner attention, providing parallel illustration from the neighbourhood, inculcating social values etc. How can all these be done?

When we think of questions in the lesson plan, as teachers, we also need to think of the answers to each question we ask. Often, in our enthusiasm, we frame a question that cannot be answered and it can happen that the teacher himself/herself is not able to answer the question. This can lead to embarrassing situations. To avoid this, a good teacher always answers all the questions before entering them in his/her lesson plan.

Teaching Shubha may not need any special teaching aid, but certain lessons that introduce new concepts, or strange objects may need the teacher prepare teaching aids. If the objectives answer the question 'why to teach', the materials go one step further and suggest 'what to teach?'

### **11.5.3 Strategies**

Having looked at the objectives and materials, we shall now move to the strategies. Strategies represent the methods we employ to teach. This largely answers the question 'how to teach?' We shall take a quick look at some strategies. What are the

various sub-skills of teaching you are familiar with? Remember the unit on Microteaching. We discussed ten sub-skills. You may employ all of them or some of them depending on your need. The lesson we have taken as an example now is 'Shubha' a short story by Tagore. To teach a story we need the techniques of narration, explanation, illustration, questioning, description, stimulus variation etc. You may need these at various points of time in the lesson. Lesson planning helps you decide which strategy to use when and for how long. Since we have discussed this earlier, we will not spend much time here but move on to the next point Steps of progression.

#### **11.5.4 Steps of Progression**

Steps of progression, is concerned with organising the plan for others to understand how you teach. A lesson plan has to be written and presented in a manner that someone who looks at it gets a fairly clear idea of how the lesson progresses in the class. Let us look at some of the crucial events that take place in the class and the order in which they occur.

A class begins with the teacher entering the classroom and wishing the children. The teacher prepares the class for the lesson by narrating some event or asking a few questions. This is the first step called Preparation. This helps build a rapport with the class and it also motivates the children to receive the lesson that is going to be taught.

The next stage of the lesson is called Presentation. This happens to be the major part of the class where the actual teaching happens. The teacher may explain new things, introduce new words, show how a grammatical structure is formed etc. The teacher has a major role to play and the learners may interact in the process.

The third stage is called the Practice stage. Here the teacher provides some tasks or exercises to assess whether the teaching has been successful. This gives the teacher an opportunity to assess whether there is a need to teach the lesson once again either wholly or in parts. In the practice stage, learners are more active with the teacher offering guidance from time to time.

The fourth stage is the Production stage where the teacher helps the learners use the language learnt to express their own experience or relate it to their life. For example, after reading the story 'Shubha' can the learners talk about some people in the neighbourhood who are challenged. Do they express their sympathy for them and treat them with respect? Can they find some names which do not suit the person and his/her behaviour? e.g. what does the name 'Sunayana' suggest? What do you expect

in such a person? If one mentions the name of Bhima, what image is formed in your mind? etc.

The final stage is the evaluation or consolidation stage. Here the teacher concludes the lesson, assesses the learners for their learning, provides them tasks or assignment and helps them prepare for the next class. This also helps the teacher receive the feedback on his/her teaching and help him/her in preparing for the next class.

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## 11.6 Format of a Lesson Plan

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A lesson plan is a comprehensive document that includes all these aspects and produced in a proper form. Here is one format suggested for your reference. There could be many other formats as well.

*Page 1*

Name of the Institution	
Class:	Date:
Period:	Topic:
a. Title of the Lesson	
b. Major skills taught	
Learners' Previous knowledge	
Overall Objectives of the lesson	
Summary of all stages	List of teaching aids used

*Page 1 of the lesson plan sheet*





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## 11.8 Review Questions

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- a. What are the different sub-skills of teaching?
- b. What are the three important aspects a teacher should bear in mind while teaching?
- c. How are strategies related to the sub-skills of teaching?
- d. How important in planning before going to a class?
- e. What are the different components of a lesson plan?
- f. How are objectives stated in the lesson plan?
- g. What are the three important features of objectives?
- h. What does progression or steps in teaching refer to?
- i. Are the five parts of progression related to each other?
- j. Is it possible to pay attention to one and ignore other parts?
- k. Is it necessary to prepare a plan using a format?

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## 11.9 References

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## Unit 12 □ Observation and Observation Protocol

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### Structure

- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 Objectives
- 12.3 Observation and Learning
- 12.4 'Why' and 'who' aspects of Observation
- 12.5 'What' and 'how' aspects of observation
- 12.6 Observation Skills
- 12.7 Format of Observation Record
- 12.8 Summary
- 12.9 Review Questions
- 12.10 References

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### 12.1 Introduction

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In Unit 11 we spoke of an essential aspect of teacher training which deals with developing a lesson plan. A broad framework of the lesson plan was suggested and this can be modified suitably for different lessons. Adequate help can be taken from the other two units on Microteaching and Teacher Training Strategies. In this unit we shall discuss in some detail the importance of observing a peer-lesson and aspects that we can learn from such observation. We will also suggest some dos and don'ts while observing a lesson.

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### 12.2 Objectives

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After going through this unit, the learners will be able to:

- a. Understand the importance of learning through observation
- b. Observe a lesson systematically and make notes
- c. See the rationale for observing a lesson
- d. Critically look at a lesson and provide constructive feedback.

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## 12.3 Observation and Learning

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In the previous unit we quoted from a medieval Kannada poet called Sarvagna. One of the ways of learning he suggests is to observe others (experts) and do likewise. This is something we often do in our life. Take a while to observe small children (aged four or five years old) and see how much they try to imitate the elders around them. They do this unconsciously, and we as adults may need to do this consciously. If you are a teacher, just take a critical look at your own teaching. You discover that you are imitating some of the best teachers you have had in your life. There is nothing wrong in this, for it is an established mode of learning, especially when the learning is confined to certain skills - e.g. children learn cooking by observing their mothers, we learn to draw pictures by observing our teacher drawing them on the chalkboard, we can attribute several actions of ours to such imitation. Teaching is one of them.

We have looked at a lesson plan. We know it is developed systematically by stating the objectives, previous learning habits, materials to be used, strategies to be adopted etc. If this is systematic, the observation also needs to be so. However, while observing we need to be a little careful. Look at the following short story and try to understand the implications of it.

Once upon a time there were two ants who lived on two small hillocks one by the side of the other. The first hillock was made of salt granules while the second one was made of sugar crystals. Every evening, the two ants would come down from their hillocks for a stroll and meet each other and exchange notes.

The ant who lived on the hillock made of salt granules often complained of inadequate food and the amount of problems he had. The ant from the hillock made of sugar crystals seemed to be always happy. Seeing his friend sad, the second ant invited the first ant to his home on the sugar hillock. A day was fixed for the visit.

On the day fixed for the visit, the ant from the salt hillock went to the sugar hillock. The second ant was happy to receive the friend and said, 'you may eat as much as you want. This hill is full of sugar which is sweet.' The first ant was happy and soon tried tasting sugar, but found it salty. However long the ant stayed here, it was never able to taste the sweet sugar. He complained to the friend, 'I am not sure what you are telling is true. I don't taste anything that is sweet. Everything here is as salty as it is on my hillock'. The second ant was surprised and looked at this friend closely. He discovered, the first ant was carrying a grain of salt in its mouth

which did not allow it to taste the sweetness of sugar.

Did you like this story? What does it teach us? In about two sentences write what you learnt from this story?

**Your answer:**

I do not know the source of this story. But I have always liked this while talking about observation. We will get back to this story in a while, and let us now look at some aspects of observation before looking at the relevance of this story.

The first question we need to ask is - why should we observe a lesson? Whose lessons do we need to observe?

Both these questions are very crucial to teacher education/development. Let us first take up the question 'why should we observe a lesson?' There can be several reasons for this and it depends on the role we play as observers.

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## **12.4 'Why' and 'who' aspects of Observation**

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If I am a teacher educator, I observe my student-teacher's lesson to offer feedback and suggestions. This is the most primary task of observation. In the course of my observation, I also get a feedback on what has been taught and understood. The observation may reveal incomplete understanding of certain concepts. This will make me aware of my own teaching and the course of action I need to take in successive classroom sessions. Observation to me is helpful in providing a feedback on my own teaching as well as providing further guidance to my student-teacher.

As a student-teacher, I may get to observe a peer-lesson or a demonstration lesson taught by my supervisor. There is a lot to learn from observing both the lessons. While observing the peer lesson, we get to learn how certain techniques work, and it is possible for us to make these techniques work better by reorganising them or modifying them. Our fellow student-teachers may go wrong in a few places and this works as a warning to us and helps us avoid committing the same error in our class. Observation also helps us understand learner behaviour, about their strengths and weaknesses. This awareness helps us plan our lesson accordingly. While observing a demonstration lesson taught by the supervisor, we get to learn how to use a set of techniques which we are aware of theoretically, and we get to see how they work in real classroom situations.

Basically, observation is a learning process and demands keen attention on the part of the observer. It also needs a bit of training and this training happens by observing. Let us now look at a few more facts about observation.

Having answered questions like why and who to observe, we shall move on to the next two questions what and how to observe a lesson. These are as important as the first two questions.

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## **12.5 'What' and 'how' aspects of observation**

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What to observe is a very difficult question for a novice. As a student-teacher, you are expected to teach a lesson either as part of peer-teaching or in a school. Your supervisor observes your lesson and gives you a written feedback. Have you looked at this feedback carefully? It is provided in a very systematic manner. It is based on what you have written in your lesson plan.

A lesson plan provides details of the class you teach, the time date etc. These are factual details or logistics to keep a record which can be verified. We are more interested in the rest of the things.

You begin with objectives and statement of previous learning. The supervisor is interested in the statement of your objectives. As your lesson progresses, your supervisor checks if all the objectives are addressed in your lesson. He/she also takes care to see whether the materials you have mentioned in the plan are suitable and whether you were able to use them properly using appropriate techniques. The supervisor does the job of a good checklist and says whether your lesson plan worked or did not. He/she does not stop with this. He/she will also provide you with some suggestions on how to make your successive lesson better - you may be asked to talk more confidently and loudly, use the blackboard better, give more opportunities for the learners to speak, be patient with unacceptable answers etc. Though these may seem as criticism or pointing out your weaknesses, they also have a positive side. They help you become a better teacher.

When your friend observes your class, your friend has no access to your lesson plan. His/her observation is open. The comments from your friend may restrict themselves to how well you taught, what were some of the weaknesses, and how he/she would have taught the lesson in your place etc. Your friend is likely to be less critical of your lesson than your supervisor. This is acceptable. You feel encouraged to receive comments from your friend and this can be partially reinforced by the comments from your supervisor. Both sets of comments are helpful in the process

of our growth and learning as teachers.

Now let us look at the question 'how to observe'. We would like you to look at the story of ants and read it once again. Does this story tell us something about observation or our behaviour? The story gives us one moral which stated idiomatically reads 'don't carry your baggage to the classroom when observing'. What does this statement mean? Don't carry your ideas and opinions. Look at the lesson as it is for its own merit or qualities.

The first ant carried a grain of salt when he visited the hillock full of sugar crystals. Because of that he could not taste the sugar. This is exactly what happens to all of us. We go to observe a class with some preconceived notions. For example, we may like the person who is going to teach; we may like the lesson he/she is going to teach; we may like the learners in the class where the lesson is being taught and various factors like this. Sometimes the factors could be negative as well. Depending on whether we like or dislike something will influence our observation. Our observation ceases to be objective. The point we are making here is we have to be strictly objective while observing somebody's lesson. How can we do this?

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## **12.6 Observation Skills**

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We should train ourselves to observe without being intruders. Here are a few points to keep in mind:

- a. This is possible if we enter the class before the student-teacher enters and sit in one of the corners where we may not be noticed.
- b. We should avoid taking notes vigorously making the student-teacher nervous.
- c. We should develop a checklist which helps us observe and tick the points rather than make elaborate notes. This has two advantages. In the first place it makes the work of noting down the points easy, and secondly, it saves time to observe which is the main task for which we are in the class.
- d. We should not interfere in teaching in any manner. This will again send wrong signals to the student-teacher.
- e. We should avoid talking to the learners in the class and draw their attention away from what is being taught.
- f. We should avoid making unnecessary movements or walk out of the class in between. This will again distract the student-teacher and may affect the lesson.

- g. To help the student-teacher become familiar and relaxed, we should observe a few classes without giving any comments. (This is familiarization technique.)
- h. The comments we give should be more in the form of suggestions to improve and should not damage the self-esteem of the student-teacher.
- i. The comments should be severely restricted to what happened in the class and not what could have happened. It should not transgress the limits of the lesson taught.

These are some guidelines to help you observe a class and be objective in your observation.

## 12.7 Format of Observation Record

We have answered four questions about observation. In order to facilitate observation we can have a format (comparable to the lesson plan). Such format will help us to be objective and also focus on the lesson being taught rather than divert our attention to other details. We shall provide a format which can be used in your classes.

### Observation Record

Observation Lesson No.

Date:

Class:

Name of the Teacher:

Name of the School:

Place:

Focus of the lesson: (tick as many as relevant)

Listening/ speaking/ reading/ writing/ grammar/ vocabulary/  
study skills/language activities and games

Topic or title of the lesson:

Objectives of the lesson:



1. How did the teacher begin the class?
  - a. By revising the previous lesson
  - b. By narrating a story/incident
  - c. By asking some general questions
  - d. By revising the vocabulary and grammar
  - e. Any other
2. How relevant was the revision to the lesson?
  - a. Highly relevant
  - b. Somewhat relevant
  - c. Just appropriate
  - d. Not relevant
  - e. Totally unrelated.
3. Give your reasons for the choice you have made to the previous question. (question number 2)
4. Were the objectives of the lesson appropriate? Yes/no
5. What materials other than the textbook did the teacher use?
6. Were these materials ready made or teacher made?
7. Were these materials appropriate for use in the class?
  - a. Suitable to learners needs
  - b. Suitable to the learners age
  - c. Suitable to the lesson being taught
  - d. Not suitable at all.
8. How active were the learners in the class?
  - a. Very active
  - b. Active
  - c. Some what active
  - d. Not at all active

9. Did the teacher ask many questions? Yes/No
10. How relevant were these questions?
  - a. Closely related to the lesson
  - b. General questions not related to the lesson
  - c. Difficult by relevant
  - d. Easy that could be answered by all just to motivate the learners
11. How many students answered these questions?
  - a. Almost all the students
  - b. A few selected students
  - c. Almost nobody answered
12. Did the teacher have some additional exercises for the students? Yes/No
13. How relevant were these exercises?
  - a. Closely related to the lesson
  - b. Difficult but relevant
  - c. Easy that could be answered by all just to motivate the learners
14. Did the teacher use the blackboard? Yes/No
15. If 'yes', how neat and organised was the work on the blackboard?
  - a. Very systematic
  - b. The handwriting was neat and legible
  - c. Contained a good summary of the lesson
  - d. Points elicited from the learners were put up on the board.
  - e. Used for purposes other than stated above.
16. Did the teacher encourage the students to answer the questions? Yes/No
17. How did the teacher handle the wrong answers?
  - a. By gently suggesting the correct answer
  - b. By asking the student to keep standing for giving a wrong answer.

- c. Asking the student to read the relevant portion from the lesson and revise the answer.
  - d. By simply ignoring the wrong answer and going to the next student for the correct answer.
  - e. By giving the correct answer immediately without giving other students a chance to answer the question.
  - f. None of the above but something totally different.
18. What is your overall impression of the class?
19. If you are asked to teach the same class what changes will you make. State your reasons.
20. Do you have any suggestions to offer to the teacher?

Observer's name:

Signature with date.

This is just a proforma, and like lesson plan which can change according to the lesson being taught, this can also be modified suitably to meet our needs. We shall now conclude this unit with a quick summary of the unit and the module.

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## 12.8 Summary

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In this module we focussed on teacher training modules. We began with a discussion of microteaching and peer teaching. We looked at some of the sub-skills of teaching which can be practiced by student-teacher using microteaching techniques. From here we moved to certain teacher training modules. We looked at the terms teacher training, teacher education and teacher development. We also looked at the Craft Model which can train teachers, Applied Science Model which can provide teacher education and the Reflective Model which helps the teachers to develop. From here we moved over to the concept of lesson planning and its importance in teacher education programmes. We looked at different parts of a lesson plan and discussed their uses. Finally we looked at the need for observing classes on a teacher education programme and some of the principles of classroom observation. The next module will continue this discussion further.

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## 12.9 Review Questions

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- a. What are the principles of observing a lesson?
- b. Why should lessons be observed?
- c. How can we train our students to observe the lessons?
- d. What care should be taken while observing a lesson?
- e. Do we always need a format/checklist to observe a lesson?
- f. What does 'do not carry your baggage' mean while observing a lesson?
- g. Should the lesson be observed only by the teacher?
- h. Is there any difference between teacher observation and peer-observation?
- i. What are the lessons one can learn from observing a lesson?
- j. Can observation be taught? How do we learn to observe a lesson?

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# Module 4 : Peer Teaching-2

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## Unit 13 □ Planning for peer-teaching lessons

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### Structure

- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Objectives
- 13.3 Peer-teaching lessons
- 13.4 Stages of planning
- 13.5 Theory and Practice
- 13.6 Roles of the teacher in peer-teaching
- 13.7 Summary
- 13.8 Review Questions
- 13.9 References

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### 13.1 Introduction

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Peer-teaching lesson - what does it mean? Is it planning for successful classroom activities? Or planning for the peers a course of study? A peer-teaching lesson is an opportunity to benefit from each-other's knowledge. It is a professional activity which requires preparing oneself for a competent job through learning. This unit is on these views with perspectives on how to prepare teachers as language educators. Planning for peer-teaching lesson is reflection of the teaching practices in the language classroom and focuses on how to explore what teachers think and do in the classroom To synthesize personal and shared knowledge professionally planning of peer-teaching is necessary.

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### 13.2 Objectives

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At the end of the unit, you will be able to:

- ◆ Become aware of the concept of peer-teaching
- ◆ Plan a peer-teaching unit and submit it for purposes of inspection
- ◆ Distinguish between theory and practise of peer-teaching

- ◆ Develop an annual plan according to repeated teaching experiences

For the planning a peer-teaching lesson, the teacher has to be systematic in scrutinizing the assumptions of how we as teachers work, develop our knowledge of the subject matter and knowledge of pedagogy. This is discussed in the following sections.

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### 13.3 Peer teaching lessons

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From the previous module we have learnt that in a peer-teaching lesson the teacher under training is sent to a class of 10-12 peers. These peers are all equal in competence and they play the role of students. Everyone in the class has a chance for teaching for 10 minutes; behave as a student and as an observer. The supervisor of the class ensures that everyone in the class gets all of these roles. Now, teaching students is not the same as teaching peer- like students. The teacher teaching a peer is more conscious and alert in his conceptual schema. He is more concerned on how the teacher activity is taken by the peers and what they think and believe about his practices. In peer-teaching lessons, there are frameworks for reflecting on our practice. These frameworks can be developed on:

- ❖ the subject matter
- ❖ the relationship with our learners

The first is to understand how the subject matter can be presented, the educational processes and interactions. The second is to question assumptions and practices that make our lessons easier for the learners, but are against our long term interests. The teacher has to upgrade the knowledge and translate it into practice. Our professional needs and interests change over time. Planning a peer-teaching lesson is a different kind of professional activity which requires a personal and on-going commitment. It is a learning taking the form of planning and reflection. So planning a peer-teaching lesson has three stages. Stage 1- Preplanning, Stage 2- Planning and Stage 3 - Reflection.

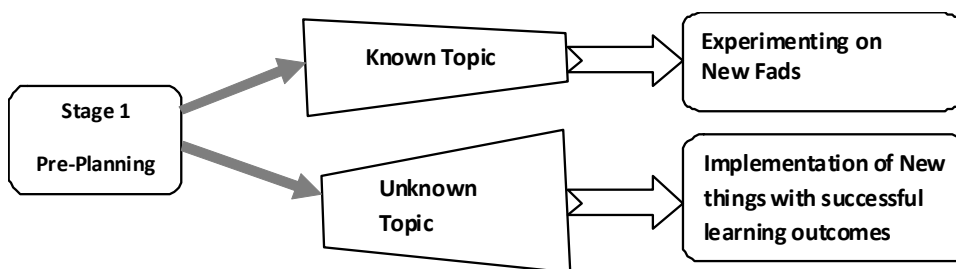
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### 13.4 Stages of planning

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**Stage 1 - Pre-planning:** In this stage, the teacher needs to prepare himself/herself to face the multiple cognitive and personality factors in the classroom, diagnose and utilize them to the fullest. The teacher needs to be very good in specialty. Pre-planning has two facets, a) preparing for known topic and b) preparing for unknown

topic. Sometimes the topic to be taught and the topics, on which others will teach, are known beforehand. If the topic is known, then, the teacher can manipulate on presenting information from several areas and on the class materials. We can try on new fads that will benefit our learners. When the topic to be taught is unknown, we may not have time to think on organization and application of the knowledge beforehand. We have to decide in the moment on organizing the information based on cognitive and personality combination present in the class. Then we do not play along and experiment with the class, rely more on new things, those, on which we have confidence. This is presented in the following diagram.



**Stage-2 Planning:** in the planning stage, the teacher can focus on attitude and self-image. This is about managing classroom interaction and relationships. Shifting our approach from amateur to professionalism, we can take from reading, observation, discussion with colleagues, writing and research. Now ask yourself - I am an academician? Or a professional?

**Your Answer:**

The academician is primarily occupied in thinking and researching. Research is refined thinking. The acts of an academician are evaluated in short term in an individual's publications. The long term evaluations are in thoughts and actions as an academician and as a professional. The professional is active in real-time action, trying to improve on action, and find out what works best. The short term evaluation for a professional is by the extent to which the individual can bring about valuable change. The long term evaluations are same as those of an academician. Therefore, when the teacher has been asked to teach a peer-teaching lesson on a known topic, the evaluations are as an academician, and when the topic is unknown, the evaluation is as a professional.

Now returning to the discussion on planning stage, the approaches for

professionalism develop in course of time. From where do we start? The values and goals which we could collect earlier from the influence of peers and colleagues can be worked on. This is for real-time change in the conceptions of teaching a teacher holds. How do we plan for this?

First, we are all professionally competent educators. So our planning starts with our interests and needs for principles, knowledge and skills. Let us take an illustration.

"After four weeks the Hallidayan framework was given to students to support closer textual analysis. It was intended as a resource for students to draw on when they wished to show how particular readings are warranted by the linguistic features of the text (Widdowson 1992: xiv). While earlier in the course we had looked at features of syntax such as pronoun usage, from week five we focused on, first, a wider range of interpersonal features which characterized the texts we had worked with early in the course, such as advertisements, manifestos, and speeches. We then moved on to attend to ideational features as evidenced through, for example, the nature of participants and processes in descriptive texts, and the representation of causation and agency in reported texts." (Wallace, 2001).

Can you relate to the principles, knowledge and skills mediating between the text and frame work from the illustration?

**Your Answer:**

The framework for teaching textual analysis covers a time span of six weeks, beginning with the principles of Halliday's functional grammar. The students had acquired the theoretical knowledge for four weeks. Here the teaching conception is on principle and knowledge. In the fifth week, the planning is based on the knowledge on the salient features of connotation and syntax learnt from an earlier course to revision tasks on texts with interpersonal features (advertisements etc.) and finally, for the sixth week, the ideational features are taught. So from the fifth week, knowledge and skills are in the conception.

The way of presenting the materials is to be kept in mind, with a goal of creating a classroom atmosphere conducive of learning. Next, the focus is on a flexible set of professional behaviours. For example, when there is a discussion on learning strategy, the teacher can explain, why it works, mediate it to the learners, and describe the way it works and what different learning strategies mean. And finally, a review on the language to be used for processing information, for critical thinking and personal



identity can be decided. A broad background knowledge with different pedagogical techniques for learners with different learning styles is the basis of the lecture to influence the class. The teacher needs to articulate the automatic and consciously designed activities to relate to the class response and innovate.

**Stage - 3 Reflection:** reflection in peer-teaching is drawing the received knowledge of the field and the experiential knowledge as the classroom practitioner. The teacher can illustrate learning sequences within the classroom as examples. These contribute in making the discussions lively, as well as balance between the received and experiential knowledge. For novice teachers, theory is authoritarian, the 'what' to teach comes first. For experienced teachers, 'how' to teach is important. Are you novice or experienced in teaching? and why ?

**Your answer:**

Reflection on practice has a number of aspects. It is a meaning making process that is systematic, rigorous and values professional growth of self and peers. According to Schon, 1987, reflection-in-action is what we do on our feet, in the moment. Reflection-on-action is informed by what we have thought about and learned from previous experience. Reflection enables us to keep on track, slow down, describe the classroom experiences (both from the students and the teacher), and interpret it in different ways. We can develop on conceptualizing the process and plan further. This is discuss in the next section.

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## 13.5 Theory and Practice

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Theory can be public and private. Eraut, 1994, makes a distinction between public and private theories. Received knowledge of a field, stated in published literature and research is public theory. Griffiths and Tann 1992, claim that, the distinction is between personal and public theories. All practice based on personal theories can be made public. Reflection on practice is essential for constructing personal theories.

Personal theories can be based on the following awareness of practice.

1. Making explicit the beliefs based on practice.
2. Making explicit the principles of practice.
3. Making explanations on classroom happenings.
4. An explanation of the classroom happenings.

So, we are trying to form a theory on our practices. But what is a 'theory of practice'?

"A personal theory of teaching practice is a teacher's union of theory and practice, both a way of conceptualizing and enacting teaching. It is an answer to the questions: how do I do my work as a teacher and why do I do it in this way?" (Moran, 2012: 2).

Why do we need a personal theory? What are the challenges in forming a personal theory?

**Your answer:**

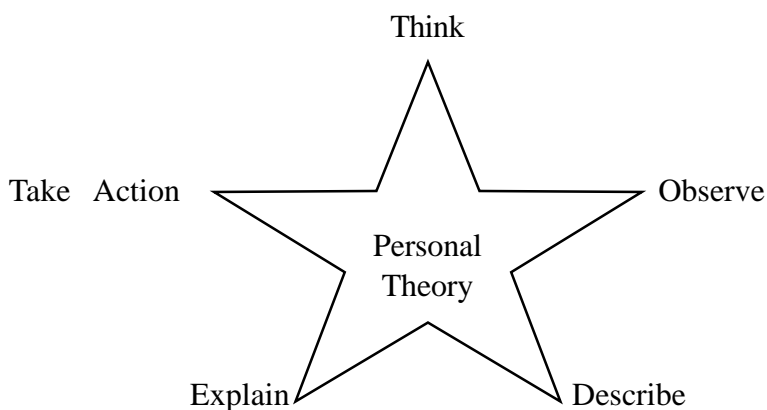
When we have need a personal theory of teaching we can call on theory in difficult situations and establish credibility with students. If we have a rationale behind our practice, we are better placed to communicate with our peers and students. Personal theory gives us an organizing vision in planning peer teaching lessons. It stabilizes us when the forces within the classroom are challenging.

Few years ago, I was teaching Immediate Constituent Analysis to you first year students. The concept was new, and had to be learnt through practice. The students were eager to learn, finding out that the analysis earns easy credits. Now, I needed a theory to make them learn. I could recollect that in my student days, I had learnt the theoretical concepts first and then worked on the exercises of my text book. But my students did not have time and interest in learning the theory. They were ready with their copies, with their questions (collected from previous year's papers and assignment). I had no choice. I did exactly what they wanted first, answering the questions. This had raised their consciousness on the need to learning theory. All the exercises that they would work on were applications of the theory. So, my students had turned to the learning materials giving up the vigor of working on the tasks right away. Since I had spent some time initially trying to focus on the theory, I had to keep two tutorials in place of one for completing the Units. I was driven in the moment, by my thoughts prior to the class I way I had learnt from my previous experience. This is an example of the notions, reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, discussed in the earlier section.

Can you give an illustration on what you did and why you did in your class?

**Your answer:**

Let us now, categorize this. First, we have to learn to see the presence of the reflection-in-action, and learn to describe and differentiate the experience from the flow of classroom activities. Next we can work on the multiple perspectives and think on multiple explanations. For instance, for reflection-in-action, things may not be in the order the teacher had planned, and may have to go for on the moment decisions for sake of the learners. Finally, we need to learn to take intelligent action. Thus, the framework is: systematic and rigorous thinking, learning observation skills, describe a context, generate explanation and learning to take intelligent action. This is represented as follows:



Professional commitment is a changing and ongoing process; experienced teachers have their own personal theories which are taken as examples and motivations for novice teachers. One need not have to spend lot of time for framing personal theory. Effective personal theories are also framed with short span of time. For this we need rich description and observation, along with systematic thinking. We will learn on observing and describing peer-teaching lesson in the next Units.

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## 13.6 Roles of the teacher in peer-teaching

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Teachers find themselves in different roles in peer-teaching lessons. These are

- ❖ tutor/lecturer
- ❖ story teller/ describer
- ❖ defender
- ❖ learner

❖ moderator

The teacher has to be systematic in planning a peer-teaching lesson. The approach can be learner-centered, which begins by the principles and knowledge in conceptual teaching and ends with a lively interaction. These roles have some degree of overlap as perceptions of each of these roles take into account a number of expectations from the class.

Roles to be investigated

Role	Questions to address
Tutor	— What would be the class content for teaching? — What resources would be used? — What will be the methodology?
Story teller/ Describer	— When illustration, examples would be used? — How to reflect on teaching strategies?
Defender	— How to defend teaching techniques? — How to respond to difficult situations?
Learner	— How to perceive weaknesses in teaching techniques? — How to respond to criticisms on strengths?
Moderator	— How to create a lively interaction? — What are the strategies on holding the discussion on the interest-level of the individuals?

The teacher can turn the lesson and the lecture to openness of discussion as a professional commitment. The teacher can discuss the comments and questions at the end with simplicity and speed look for opportunities for changing teaching conceptions. After the lesson, there can be a reflective plan. The teacher can make notes on the following:

1. At which moments in the peer-teaching lesson did you feel engaged? Why? What was happening?
2. At which moments did you feel distanced? Why? What was happening?
3. What action made you feel affirming and helpful?
4. What action that anyone took in the class was confusing? What was puzzling?

5. What surprised you the most? (This could be your reactions or reaction from the peers or anything else which occurred to you.)

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## 13.7 Summary

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Considering the teacher in the context of a peer-teaching lesson, a planning stage is necessary for gathering information for enlightening the lesson. This includes setting an objective, reflection on materials, review of strategies and interacting with peers. Teachers designing peer-teaching lessons, carefully consider their participants from the five roles mention above. Considerations of peers as individuals will pinpoint the relationship of teaching objectives to a selective comprehension system. This acts as a vehicle for interaction (feedback and response) of a specific kind within the lesson.

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## 13.8 Review Questions

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1. Define a peer-teaching lesson.
2. Why is planning important in peer teaching?
3. Discuss stage-1 in Planning peer-teaching with an illustration from your experience.
4. What is the major distinction between Planning and Reflection stage?
5. Can we reflect before planning? Why? Why not?
6. What are the principles in planning peer teaching?
7. What is a personal theory? Give two examples from classroom teaching.
8. How can a teacher develop skills of reflection-on action from personal theory?
9. Match the following:

a. Tutor	i. Working on the weakness in teaching techniques
b. Story teller	ii. Responding in Difficult situations
c. Defender	iii. Using Illustrations in class
d. Learner	iv. Deciding on the Methodology
10. In what role/roles would you like to see yourself as teacher? Justify.

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## **Unit 14 □ Developing observation protocol for peer teaching**

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### **Structure**

#### **14.1 Introduction**

#### **14.2 Objectives**

#### **14.3 Purpose and benefits of Peer Teaching**

#### **14.4 Procedures in Peer teaching observation**

#### **14.5 Implementing Peer teaching Observation**

#### **14.6 Methods of Data Collection**

#### **14.7 Summary**

#### **14.8 Review Questions**

#### **14.9 References**

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### **14.1 Introduction**

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In Unit 13, we have learnt on the basics of peer-teaching. This unit is structured on the procedures and systematic approaches of observation for peer teaching. Observation in language teaching is closely watching and monitoring a language lesson or part of a lesson to enable critiquing the same. We need to observe to gain an understanding of teaching a lesson, its various steps and the learning outcome including quality classroom interaction. To become aware of the actual happenings in a lesson observation and monitoring are components of assessment.

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### **14.2 Objectives**

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The unit addresses the following questions on Classroom Observations

1. What are the purposes of peer teaching observation?
2. What do we know about observation?
3. What criteria are used for observation protocols?
4. Who is involved in peer- teaching observation?

5. How observations are implemented?

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## 14.3 Purpose and benefits of Peer Teaching

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Observation is the action or process of closely observing or monitoring a process or someone at work. The purpose of peer observation is to collect information that can be in later used and discussed with the teacher both to provide a feedback and also help the teacher become better. Before the actual observation starts, there is pre-observation meeting between the peer teacher and the peer observer, where the observer discusses the focus of the observation and the procedures for recording observation. These are discussed in section 14.4. The peer teacher may suggest things to look for, such as the decisions the teacher would make during the lesson or the problems that may have occurred during the class. The peer teacher may also share the lesson plan with the observer. Before we proceed further, here is a task for you. Look at the following question and give your response:

### **Task**

Purposes for Classroom observation is:

- a) Investigation of instructional etiquettes for different learning contexts,
- b) Instructional practices for different groups of learners and
- c) Improvement of teacher's instructional practices based on class feedback.

Mention at least two other purposes of observation.

**Your answer:**

- d)
- e)

The observation method is described as a method to observe and describe the behaviour of a subject. It is a way of collecting relevant information and data by observing. Observation is a part of learning for teaching practitioners. Novice and experienced teachers benefit from observation. Novice teachers have the opportunity to observe more experienced teachers - what they do and how they do it while teaching a lesson. Experienced teachers benefit from peer observation. It is an opportunity to observe how the same problems are dealt with by peers. This leads to discovery of new teaching strategies and reflections on classroom teaching. For the teacher (of the observed lesson), the observer can provide insights on the lesson,



which otherwise goes unnoticed. The social benefits of observation according to Richards and Farrell (2005) is "It brings teachers together who might not normally have a chance to interact and provides an opportunity for the sharing of ideas and expertise, as well as a chance to discuss problems and concerns." The process begins with a series of observations on lesson structure, classroom management, student interactions, teaching materials, teaching techniques, teacher language, student language and types of teaching activities.

**Activity 1:** In the following vignette, discuss whether the observation benefit is feedback or self-awareness of one's teaching.

**Vignette 1:** 4th Grade Writing 1

A fourth grade writing teacher delivers a two-day lesson about parts of speech (nouns, verbs and adjectives) within subjects and predicates. As Ms. Yoon reflects on the lesson, she describes how she used different elements within the formative assessment cycle to close the gap. "On the first day of the lesson, I did a quick check of my students learning through an exit ticket. I realized that there were misconceptions about subjects and predicates that I needed to discuss with students. I adjusted the next day's lesson to include a different approach to identifying subjects and predicates. I did more re-teaching and scaffolding than I had planned to do, but the additional instruction supported students to meet the lesson goal." Even though Ms. Yoon had to make unplanned adjustments to her lessons, she closed the gap with her students and they are ready to move on to identifying prepositions within a sentence.

Teachers and students close the gaps identified through formative assessment and set new goals and criteria for success. The assessment cycle is a continuous process in the classroom.

**Your Answer:**

**Vignette 2:** 2nd Grade Reading 2

A second grade class transitions from the rug to desks and tables around the room. The class has just finished a mini-lesson on "summarizing," and will now practice reading and language skills in small groups and centers. For this rotation, Ms. London has purposefully grouped her students to ensure she can provide appropriate scaffolding when needed. Ms. London begins her second small group lesson by beginning with a review of the definition of "summarizing." As students read the text, she purposefully pauses to ask students to remind her what a summary is and to

provide her with a brief summary of what they read. She continues to reinforce the definition throughout the small group lesson by asking each group member to repeat the definition after they read. Once the center rotation is complete, Ms. London reflects on students' progress. "When my second group joined me at the kidney table, I asked them to define "summary." The group mostly talked about the summary example that I gave during the mini-lesson. They couldn't really define what "summary" meant. That let me know that they needed a bit more support." By breaking down the specific skill into smaller components, Ms. London is able to target instruction where her students need it most.

Instructional supports help students move easily from one idea to the next and rapidly close learning gaps. Teachers (or peers) scaffold new learning by focusing lessons on smaller segments of skills and knowledge. By scaffolding new learning, teachers are able to better determine exactly where students need help, where they succeed and which supports are most effective.

**Your Answer:**

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## **14.4 Procedures and methods in Peer teaching Observation**

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Usually one or two aspects of the lesson should be in the focus of the observer. Some aspects of the lesson are relatively easy to observe while others may not be observable to all and need inference. Student interaction and participation in activities are observable whereas the problems that the teacher encounters or the modifications in the lesson plan may not be observable and need inference.

The first procedure on effective observation is participant observation. The observer sits with the learners as a participant in the classroom. The observer may be silent throughout the lesson or may once or twice participate in the activities. The participant observer can create and change of the activities and is responsible with the success or failure of the class.

The second procedure is diary description. That is a linear descriptions or written narratives of all the events that happen within the classroom (with exclusions where necessary). The observer can also record the activities in audio/video files of 30 seconds to 3 minutes for debriefing. The class beginnings and classroom management procedures can be recorded in diary descriptions.

Field notes and checklists are other procedures in peer teaching observation. Brief

descriptions of the key events that occurred throughout the lesson are field notes. These include interpretations of events where necessary. Notes can be time-based i.e., made every five minutes using an observation or can be linked to the key activities occurring in the lesson. When there is little happening in the lesson, for example, learners are silently reading, then the observer can focus on the number of times the learners used their dictionary to check words.

Checklist is a structured list of items on features of a lesson that the observer completes during observation. It provides a systematic way collecting information on particular aspects of a lesson. It is thus, focused and easy to complete. Before we move on to the next section, look at the following Vignettes.

**Activity 2:** Discuss the observation procedure in the following:

**Vignette 3:** Observation Sheet: Use of Learning Aids and Manipulative<sup>3</sup>

COURSE NAME:

DATE:

Are audio-visual materials used? How?

Are demonstrations done? When in the lesson? How easy are they to see? Do they help make ideas clearer?

Are any models used?

Are charts/maps in evidence? Used to enhance the lesson?

Are there live/preserved specimens?

How effective do the materials seem to be? What evidence do you have?

**Your Answer:**

#### **Vignette 4: INTERVIEWING SCIENCE TEACHERS 4**

As a group we will come up with interview questions to ask the teachers you've observed this semester. You will submit the answers to us on disk or on e-mail so that we can compile the answers.

#### **THE SCHOOL:**

How many students? Teachers? Others?

How would you describe the school:

**THE STUDENTS:**

What are some ways you would describe the students:

What percentage of learners finish high school?

What percentage continue school after graduating?

Where do they live?

What is your perception of their life at home or in their neighborhoods?

What strategies do you use re: discipline/management that are most effective?

**THE CLASSES YOU TEACH:**

Number of classes and subjects taught (classes and preps)

Ability groups of your students?

**THE SCIENCE CURRICULUM IN THIS SCHOOL:**

Courses offered

Enrollment in those courses

Textbook(s) used

Any special courses offered

Enrollment of boys and girls in science courses

Changes in courses / curriculum during the past 5 years

**SCIENCE EDUCATION TODAY**

What do you see as important trends? Issues?

Changes in enrollments and/or enrollment patterns?

Professional organizations and their activities

**YOUR CONCERNS**

Facilities?

Materials?

Budgets?

Other concerns?

## LIKES AND DISLIKES

What do you like most about science teaching?

What do you like the least about science teaching?

**Your Answer:**

Vignette 4:

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## 14.5 Implementing Peer teaching Observation

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Implementation of peer teaching observation is done for improving classroom teaching practices. With observation briefings teachers can put to use valid and accurate information for growing professionally. Systematic observation feedbacks have contributed in understanding ones strengths and weakness in classroom instruction. It makes teachers aware of their practices and helps to bring the changes in instruction they desire. The observational feedback is not a guide according to which the teacher can change instructional practices. Rather it is used to reflect on instructional practices and discuss with peers to decide on actions.

Peer teaching observation puts the observer in the center of focus, embedding professional learning with clarity on teaching practices, learner specific needs and improving teaching and learning. It reduces professional isolation, and the observation process collects instructional information which the co-operating teacher could not have collected on his/her own. Focused data collection and analysis is the basis of teaching and learning. The behaviours which can implement peer teaching observation in classroom instruction are:

- a) The role of the observed teacher: an observed teacher is the leader of the observation process. The observed teacher equips himself/herself into professional learning, with an opportunity to participate in classroom data collection. The observed teacher is placed in a different position to adjust and alter to the learning need.
- b) Focus of the observation: The data collection can be narrowed to specific areas of teaching and learning. This gives the observed teacher scope for working on specific areas of the teaching learning process.
- c) Analyzing the data: depending more on visual and auditory data before conclusions. The data from a structured protocol is first shared and then discussed. Finally, the implications on instruction are discussed in improvement-oriented conversations.

- d) The teaching learning interface: The focus of classroom data collected from teacher-driven observation is the relationship between teaching and learning. The conversations after the data collection are on this interface and not on the individual teacher. The observations are the space for individual teachers to develop on their own learning.

The observed teacher is committed to improvements that would support student learning. Thus peer teaching observation is implemented by the observed teacher. The observed teacher or the 'lead' teacher specifies the data collection procedures by making use of field notes, checklists, and observation scheme and interaction analysis. Before data collection, it is necessary to identify one or two focus questions. The focus question is usually decided by the 'lead' teacher. The focus question can be narrowed down depending the teaching learning interface. The goal of the focus question is to learn something specific from the data collection on the student learning. After identifying the focus question, the next step is collecting data from observation. The goal of observation is to collect data on the areas that the lead teacher cares about and discover the classroom actuality. Before we move on to the details of data collection, let us work out on the following activity on classroom observation.

**Activity 3:** Match the following items in class observation to the column in the right.

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| a) Student interaction                | 1. The way the lesson opens<br>Links and transitions between activities<br>Number of activities in the lesson |
| b) Classroom Management<br>Strategies | 2. Time on task<br>Questioning Behaviours<br>Student-to-student talk  |
| c) Lesson Structure                   | 3. Setting up groups<br>Maintaining order<br>Time management<br>Seating arrangement                           |

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| d) Types of Teaching activities | 4. Use of text book<br>Use of other resources   |
| e) Teacher's use of materials   | 5. Whole class activities<br>Pair and group activities<br>Individual activities   |
| f) Teaching Strategies          | 6. Use of instructional language<br>Use of question<br>Feedback techniques<br>Explanation of Vocabulary and Grammar           |
| g) Students Use of Language     | 7. Presenting task<br>Organizing Practice<br>Teaching techniques  |
| h) Teachers Use of Language     | 8. Use of language in group work<br>Use of mother tongue during class<br>Problems with grammar<br>Problems with pronunciation |

**Your Answer:**

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## 14.6 Methods in Data Collection

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Ideally there can be two observers. One observer can collect data on the students and another observer on the teacher. This can lead to collective analysis of instruction and student learning. The observation in per teaching is focused on the lesson. The observer is not the evaluator but can be a participant, depending on the observation requirements. Observing the way an observed teacher performs in the class prepares other teachers for their practice teaching and in solving teaching problems for lessons. The process of observation follows certain methods: the participant as an

observer, the observer as a participant and the complete observer. If the participant is an observer, then the intentions of the observer is known to the class. The observer is someone from the class who observes the other batch mates in class. This may be applicable for sensitive situations but is limited. It has to be used in conjunction with other methods. For observer as participant and complete observer, there is peer teacher or trainee teacher as the observer. In the first case, the observer participates in the class activities for a few times but as a complete observer, the observer is silent all throughout the lesson. Data collection can be structured or unstructured. The structured observation for example, is a particular checklist on a lesson with the following aspects.

	Lesson Observation	Yes	Partially	No	
1	Teacher Activities	Teacher Instruction Teacher Questions Teacher one-to-one conversations with students	✓ ✓ ✓		
2	Student Activities	Student Questions			
		Student Responses: Student Volunteers Student responds when called for Student initiates a comment or question related to lesson Student initiates an unrelated comment or question			
		Student answers: Single word or phrase Answer with details to support answer Answer with explanation of thinking or processing			
		Student side conversations			

Many aspects of a lesson can be in the focus of an observation. The 'how to' dimensions of teaching include the following:

- ❖ How the teacher starts and ends a lesson
- ❖ How the teacher allots time within the lesson: at random or preplanned.



- ❖ How the teacher assigns activities to the learners
- ❖ How the teacher deals with withdrawn learners
- ❖ How the teacher asks question
- ❖
- ❖

Can you add two more points to this list?

**Your answer:**

If the observer wants to focus on the purpose of teaching then 'why' is emphasized. Student learning forms the basis 'why' teaching knowledge is used. Can you focus on the 'why' dimensions of teaching and frame five points for field notes? The first one is done for you.

**Your Answer:**

- ❖ Why the students use reference materials?
- ❖
- ❖
- ❖
- ❖

**Activity 4:** Develop a checklist on the following aspects of Interaction Analysis:

Clues on your answer:

Teacher movements: Teacher eye contact

Student movements: Student attention, Group dynamics

**Your Answer:**

Interaction Analysis				

Answer Key of Activity 3: a)-2, b)-3, c)-1, d)-5, e)-4, f)-7, g)-8, h)-6.

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## 14.7 Summary

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The unit is on the professional development for language teachers. Observation protocol for peer teaching is designed for regularly reviewing and updating teaching skills. The Activities are based on the theoretical approaches of observation protocol. The learners can design their own data collection procedures on the other aspects of classroom observation mentioned in the unit to pursue learning on the topic.

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## 14.8 Review Questions

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1. Why do we need observation in language teaching?
  2. How can experienced teachers benefit from observation?
  3. How can novice teachers benefit from observation? Give an example.
  4. Discuss one procedure in peer teaching observation.
  5. What are the stages in implementing peer teaching observation?
  6. What are the focus areas in collecting data on the lesson structure?
  7. What can be the focus areas in the data on students use of language?
  8. What is the distinction between field note and diary description?
  9. Explain interaction analysis.
  10. Collect data on types of teaching activities from your class.
- 

## 14.9 References

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## Notes

1&2 Formative Assessment in Practice. Teacher Vignettes from Three Districts. Written in collaboration with the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation. May 2016.

<https://images.app.goo.gl/s1tCoHNPDgys8NbL9>

3& 4 Classroom Observations - What will you look for?

<https://web.csulb.edu/~lhenriqu/300obs.htm>

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## **Unit 15 □ Discussing peer teaching lessons**

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### **15.1 Introduction**

### **15.2 Objectives**

### **15.3 Purpose and benefits of discussion**

### **15.4 Types of discussions**

### **15.5 Ideas within discussing peer teaching lessons**

### **15.6 Summary**

### **15.7 Review Questions**

### **15.8 References and Reading List**

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## **15.1 Introduction**

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We have learnt on observation protocols and its different data collection procedures in the previous unit. After the observation protocols, the next procedure is discussion on the data. Discussing peer teaching lesson is a confidential process through which two or more peers work together. They reflect on the observation, share ideas, teach one another and solve problems that may be encountered in the lesson.

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## **15.2 Objectives**

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After reading the unit you will be able to

- a) Understand peer teaching collaboratively
- b) Reflect on types of peer teaching discussions
- c) Learn the needs and benefits of discussing peer teaching
- d) Develop your own ideas on peer teaching

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## **15.3 Purpose and benefits of discussion**

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Peer teaching discussion is a developmental process and promotes professional development. It is the discussion on the observation by two or more teachers, usually the observed teacher and the observer teacher. It functions as a form of self-learning

for the professionals of the same field. Peer teaching discussions provide benefits for the observer teacher. The observer teacher has the satisfaction of helping a peer and at the same time re-energizes co-operative education. The observed teacher benefits from the constructive feedback of the observer teacher. In the process this leads to expanding teaching repertoire and gaining knowledge to achieve desired needs and aspirations.

Peer teaching discussion is an open forum for collaborative open-ended exchange of ideas with the purpose of furthering thinking, learning, problem solving and understanding pedagogic activities. Teacher thinking is integral to language teaching. The inner work of reshaping our thinking supports our outer work of classroom teaching. Teacher thinking in language teaching has two constructs; Decision-making and thought process. Decision-making refers to a situation in which a teacher wants to organize relevant information and assess alternative resolutions. The teacher may seek assistance of another teacher who is experienced and knowledgeable in the area. For example, a teacher might want to try to teach writing in digital media for specific kinds of communication. To learn how to implement the idea, the teacher seeks advice of a colleague, who advises on the process with feedbacks before it is tried out. Decision-making cannot be predicted and it is context specific. It requires examining and assessment by more knowledgeable teachers or by teachers who are involved with the academic recommendations for learners.

Thought process is the process of using one's mind to consider something carefully. This construct comes after furthering learning. It presupposes availability of knowledge and putting it to use. In the process two teachers are involved on refining their views on teaching. For example, while teaching reading, the thought process includes whether to teach the learners metacognitive procedures that organize reading strategies appropriate for the text or to differentiate learning strategies for each text type. We as teachers have surely been through decision-making and thought processes many times.

### **Activity 1**

From the following vignette discuss the Teacher Thinking processes.

Vignette<sup>1</sup>

*Teacher A has planned to teach Present Continuous Tense for English lesson that day. The class started at 2.15 p.m and ended half an hour later. However she*

*managed to enter the classroom at 2.20. Teacher A spent around 18 minutes talking in the class. Out of 18 minutes, 9 minutes has been spent explaining in mother tongue. Half of the time was spent using Bahasa Melayu. This also means that she has used 50% of the time during the teacher talk in mother tongue. It is found out through the recorded tape that teacher A code mixed her utterances in most of the time. In almost all her sentences half of each sentence was used in English and half of it in Bahasa Melayu. Let us see how she conveys message across in explaining meaning of words, first, at simple word level, followed by sentence level and after that how grammar was taught.*

Recycling...kitar semula

Empty can - tin kosong

**Your Answer:**

The teacher has adopted the GT Method for teaching English. She is mostly bilingual in the class. She is confident that use of MT would encourage learners. She finds that the learners readily comprehend MT but reluctant to do so in TL. It may also be a draw back from the teacher's perspective. 50% use of MT needs to be replaced by TL. Its use can be gradually reduced to 25% and then to 10% for the actual learning. The GT method is unsuitable in teaching communicative English.

Problem solving is a day-to-day educational practice. This is learner centered and needs careful monitoring and measures. These are shaped by meaningful experiences. Class experiences in a teacher's professional life shape the understanding and actions that may be put to practice at a later time. Observer teachers together with co-operating teachers, who are also learners of teaching make sense of the nominal elements of the profession. For this there has to be an understanding between them as well as understanding on the subject. Understanding how the teaching-learning interface occurs in a language classroom is a complicated, messy, conceptual and practical application. There is a starting point and an ending point, but to make a particular method work is a challenge for the teacher. Let us work out on the following student vignette.

**Activity 2**

Read the Student-teacher vignette 2 and state the understanding on pedagogic activities

*'I am taking a broad variety of classes. They are at a variety of times and even located on two separate campuses. One of my classes is in the evening. It is a bit closer to home and it is an easy drive, with easy parking, and a teacher who is truly a joy. Her positive, charming energy makes me want to be a better student and a better teacher. We have a relatively small class size. She takes attendance for each class and expects us to be present to learn. It is her classroom and her rules and I am cool with that expectation. Interestingly enough, my other professors are a mix of attendance taking and "your choice to show up and learn" approach. I appreciate and respect the different approaches.'*

**Your Answer:**

The Student is taking professional development course and is aware of the teacher activities within a class. There are reflections on the positive attitude of the teacher and how it motivates to be a better learner. There are also reflections on the approaches of other teachers of the course, with which the student can relate to. This is a quality of a good learner.

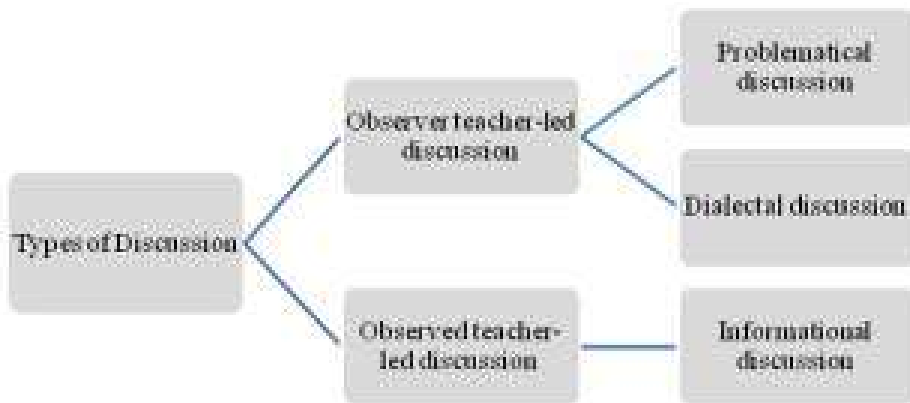
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## **15.4 Types of discussions**

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Data based discussion approaches are productive discussions which are structured and focused. These discussions are flexible to generate professional learning. Data based discussion are of two kinds: A) Observer teacher-led discussion and B) Observed teacher-led discussion. Observer teacher-led discussion can be of two kinds: Problematical discussion and Dialectal discussion. Problematical discussion is focused on solutions to simple and complex problems. This discussion is usually initiated by the observer teacher which is then substantiated, actualized and debated by the observed teacher. Dialectal discussion is on expressing, refining and comparing observed teacher's point of view and the observer teacher plays a dominant role. It is interpretation of the thoughts and ideas of the observed teacher. Informational discussion focus on controversial issues within an accepting atmosphere and the observed teacher has considerable freedom to bring up the topic he/ she wants to discuss. This is an observed teacher-led discussion. The focus of all the discussions is to develop/ change an attitude or idea and solve problem.

The relationship between the types of discussion is presented in the following flow diagram.

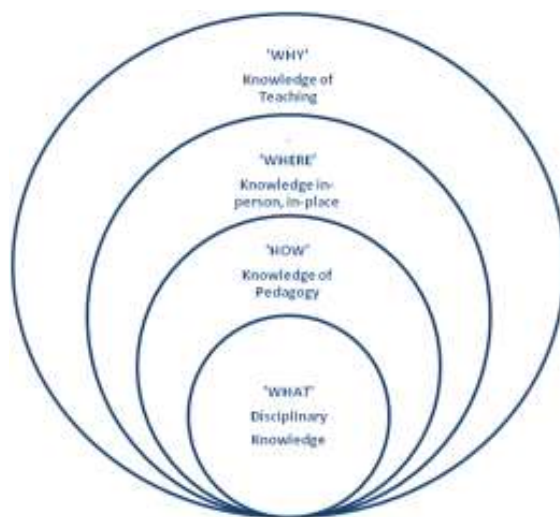



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## 15.5 Ideas within discussing peer teaching lessons

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Within the peer teaching discussions development of ideas about language teaching can be traced from the 1950s. There are four generations as patterns of ideas which describe the development on language teaching knowledge. The first two generations, i.e. 1960s and 1970s the focus was on the 'what' and 'how' aspects, what knowledge is needed to teach language and how is knowledge used. In the 1980s and 90s knowledge in person and in-place was marked with 'who and where' aspects discussing individuals personal experiences shape how the individual use knowledge in teaching. In the 2000s and 2010 the knowledge for teaching gained importance. 'Why and how' aspect of language teaching was in discussion. Why individuals with a common focus use knowledge in teaching in similar ways, which are modified as they come to the field.





### **Activity 3**

Read the Vignette3 on 'Being Observed' and identify the central ideas on language teaching.

*I remember in my TESOL class during university that one part of the class was to be observed by our TESOL instructor. Since I had never been observed before as a teacher, I didn't really know what to expect. All I knew was that my TESOL instructor would come in, sit in my class, and observe how I teach, interact with the students, and maintain control of the class. I knew I wouldn't be nervous when the instructor came because I typically don't get nervous in these types of situations. I also felt very confident that my instructor would not find much negative to criticize or comment on because that week I had planned a very good lesson as we were covering a great topic. The only thing I did not like about being observed was that when the instructor came, she was late and the only seat that was left was in the very center of the classroom. So much for trying to pretend she wasn't there! During the observation, I felt very confident that what I was doing seemed very professional and well organized. Also, my students were being "extra good" that day as everyone actively participated in the lesson and listened to my instructions the first time. After the lesson was finished, I felt very confident that my instructor liked what I did and that I really was capable of being an ESL teacher. Later on that week I went to my instructor's office to talk to her about my lesson and sure enough, she enjoyed observing my lesson and thought I did a very good job and had what it takes to be an ESL teacher. The whole experience of being observed really made me reflect on how I teach and also gave me the confidence to know that I am good at what I do.*

Jacob, Canada

#### **Your Answer:**

The observed teacher has focus on the question 'What accounts for differences in teaching?' The fact that the observer teacher was late and sat in the middle of the classroom was a bit tedious for him. This was knowledge in-person and in-place. This was also application of 'how' for the first time. The observer teacher was well organized and was confident on classroom interactions. This is application of knowledge of pedagogy.

#### Activity 4

Read the Co-operating Teacher's Post- lesson conversation<sup>4</sup> and discuss the ideas on language teaching knowledge.

'After the lesson I was a bit nervous to speak to my cooperating teacher because I wondered what she would say about the lesson. I felt the lesson had gone well, but you never know what another more experienced teacher will say about it. To my relief she told me that she was happy with the lesson in general and that it was delivered clearly with a specific direction that was in the lesson plan. She said that she noticed that I attempted to provide more learning opportunities for the students than when she had observed me the previous time and I agreed because the last time, I felt that I had difficulty putting myself in the shoes of learners of that age and of course little did I expect that I had overestimated their learning capacity. I guess this has something to do with my own experience when I was a student - my classmates and I understood what my English teacher was saying most of the time when I was a student. I suppose our better command of English helped. Now I told her that I intend to teach slowly whenever I introduce a new topic in order for students to build a strong foundation for the basics of the topic. I was very pleased that she noticed this change because she had written this on my observation sheet before and now she could see that I was following her suggestions. This time, however, she did suggest that I should try to liven up the lessons a bit as she said I seemed a bit tight. That is true, I guess, but I always feel a bit scared when she observes me and I think I am different and more relaxed when I teach the class by myself. She also suggested that I try to set more of a non-threatening learning environment for the class, and I should try to inject more humor into the lessons. I think this too is related to my nervousness of being observed by my cooperating teacher. Anyway, I will try to relax in my next observed lesson.'

Tung, Singapore

Your answer:

Focus	Pre-lesson	Lesson	Feedback	Key issue
Recommendations:				

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## 15.6 Summary

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Discussing peer teaching is a skill which develops with experience and practice. The observer teacher is a friend who can observe and talk about teaching critically. This leads to a clearer understanding of teaching. The job of this friend is to separate teaching into parts and discern how these parts work together.

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## 15.7 Review Questions

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1. What is 'discussion' on peer teaching?
  2. What do you think are the benefits of discussing peer teaching?
  3. What are different types of discussion?
  4. Illustrate different types of discussion.
  5. Discuss the first generation of ideas in language teaching.
  6. What was the idea behind language teaching in the 2000s?
  7. Discuss Activity 1 in terms of language teaching knowledge.
  8. Write a vignette on your class performance of a particular lesson.
  9. Write a vignette on class observation of your peer.
  10. Write a vignette on peer teaching discussion.
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## 15.8 References

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- Freeman, Donald. (2020). *Educating Second Language Teachers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Richards, Jack C. and Thomas S.C. Farrell. (2011). *Practice Teaching: A Reflective Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, Jack C. and Thomas S.C. Farrell (2005). *Professional Development for Language Teachers*. Strategies for Teacher Learning. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

### Notes

- 1 English\_vignettes\_from\_Malaysian\_classrooms <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/268226030>
- 2 Teacher goes back to school  
<https://www.teachthought.com/pedagogy/teacher-goes-back-school-a-vignette/>
- 3 <https://studylib.net/doc/8198687/classroom-observation>, page 105
- 4 <https://studylib.net/doc/8198687/classroom-observation>, page 100

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## **Unit 16 □ Values of constructive feedback**

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## **16.1 Introduction**

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Constructive feedback in ELT is providing comments and suggestions that result in a better teaching-learning process, and a positive outcome. Constructive feedback helps teachers and students to understand their strengths, the areas that need improvement and the resources at their disposal. All these affect their performance and motivation to work further. Constructive feedback enhances personal and professional growth amongst teachers. Feedback is a listening/viewing/reading activity and analysis of the discourse involved. Feedback provides appreciation and criticism and allows reflecting on what everyone can change and improve to perform better.

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## 16.2 Objectives

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After reading the unit you will be able to:

- a) Understand what it takes to bring people together and create healthy communication
- b) How to think on the best possible solution and better performance
- c) Learn to change focus and improve results

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## 16.3 Purpose of Constructive Feedback

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Constructive feedback is based on observation, which is information-specific and focused. It is a personal judgment on appreciation and criticism about a performance effort and outcome. Praise is a favourable comment while criticism is not a desirable comment. Giving constructive feedback involves five factors. These factors are:

### 16.3.1 Establishing trust

Within the peer teaching discussions each member of the peer group has a specific role to perform. These roles define the ways in which constructive feedback can be given and received. These roles are: Mentor and apprentice, trained teacher and uninitiated teacher. By establishing trust, the uninitiated teachers can benefit from constructive feedback. Novice teachers may come up with solutions on potential difficulties from constructive feedback.

### 16.3.2 Balance the Positive and the Negative

There is a fine line of separation between criticism and direct attack on the individual. Positive feedback provides comments about the past actions that were correct and can be repeated, whereas negative feedback has comments on the actions that are incorrect and need to be avoided. Successful teachers give five to six times more positive feedback against a negative feedback.

### 16.3.3 Observation and not interpretation

Creating a feedback culture motivates the teachers to learn. They are then aware of what is expected and how success can be achieved. Observation reinforces what is actually happening. Constructive feedback is based on what actually happened and not on interpretations of the actions.

### 16.3.4 Observation as a professional

Constructive feedback empowers the observer teacher to comment and the observed teacher to perform better. This may not be taken as a personal feedback and is effective at the professional level. In constructive feedback, peers, seniors, and colleagues are treated as individuals and the self-esteem of each individual needs to be guarded while offering the feedback based on observations.

### 16.3.5 Providing Consistent feedback

Consistent feedback encourages positive behaviour and better performance. The teachers feel valued and have opportunities to improve ineffective actions. It takes into account the routine daily actions and is not given at the extreme point. This reinforces stage-wise improvement.

### 16.3.6 Providing timely feedback

Constructive feedback is not review of extreme actions that require attention. This has to be in private to avoid being critical or causing embarrassment. Positive feedback can be public if it is appropriate and the observed teacher receives it for personal benefit i.e. to improve his/her performance.

#### **Activity 1**

Discuss the Purpose for giving Constructive feedback from the following Vignette1.

*I recently started working for a private language institute. When I started, I realized that most of the other native-speaking teachers and I were in the same situation - we had relatively little teaching experience and were fairly uncertain as to what being an EFL teacher really involved. We decided to pair up and take time to team-teach one of our classes a week. We met before each class and worked out who would teach each part of the lesson. While one taught, the other observed. After the class, we met to review the lesson and to compare notes on what worked and what didn't. It was a very useful experience and everyone thought we developed and improved our teaching as a consequence.*

#### **Your answer:**

In the excerpt, the observed teacher and the observer teacher had paired together for constructive feedback. In the process, they had established trust in each other and their observation. This made them receptive to the feedback given. They had also

gone for analysis on the observations as professionals. The feedback was on conducting class, review of lesson and teacher notes on the class. Since the teachers met before and after each class, the feedback was provided in appropriate time and this was a valuable input for professional development.

### **Activity 2**

Discuss the factors in constructive feedback from the following excerpt.

*Feedback is a two-way street. You need to know how to give it effectively and also to receive it constructively.*

*When you make a conscious choice to give and receive feedback on a regular basis you demonstrate that it is a powerful means of personal development and positive change.*

*Done properly, feedback need not be agonizing, demoralizing or daunting, and the more practice you get the better you will become at it. It may never be your favorite means of communicating with your team members, co-workers or your boss, but it does have the potential to make your workplace a much more productive and harmonious place to be in.*

**Your answer:**

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## **16.4 Types of Constructive Feedback**

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Constructive feedback can create thriving work environment if it is given in the most constructive way as possible. For this we need to learn about different types of constructive feedback. Feedback refers to past actions while feed-forward refers to future actions. Constructive feedback is of four kinds.

**a) Negative feedback :** Constructive feedback need not be positive always. Negative feedback which suggest corrective comments about past behaviour are constructive in nature. Negative feedback leads to developing behaviours which appear awkward in the beginning but leaves one feeling more valued in profession. E.g. 'You did not use the teaching aids properly', is a negative, but constructive feedback.

How can we make it positive? 'You used the teaching aids well, but there is a better way to use it, would you like to know, how?'

**b) Positive feedback :** That is affirming comments about past behaviour. This feedback confirms repetition of behaviour or action that was correct and has been praised. Positive feedback boosts morale and helps to overcome the hurts generated from negative feedback. E.g. 'You read the poem very well, and the students were interested in it.'

**c) Negative feed-forward :** or corrective comments about future performance. Negative feed-forward are comments on future behaviour that has to be avoided. They would be incorrect in future and should not be continued. Use of polite language is generally used for negative feed-forward. Improper language may change constructive criticism into destructive criticism. E.g. 'While narrating the story, you made several errors of grammar? You need to revise the use of tenses before you teach next.' We will learn on destructive criticism in section 16.6.

**d) Positive feed-forward :** in other words, affirming comments about future behaviour. These are comments on future actions that have to be taken. These are the 'do-s' in the teacher notes, positive feed-forward reflects an individual's success and positive behaviour. It is easy to give and increases self-esteem and confidence in teaching. E.g. 'You narrated the story well, but this could have been better if you had used some voice modulation.'

### **Activity 3**

From the following Vignette3 discuss the type of constructive feedback.

*In our EAP program ....a young.... teacher with little teaching experience was having trouble with some of his teaching assignments. I agreed to observe some of his classes and give him feedback and suggestions after each class. I also invited him to observe some of my classes and do the same. Through this process we began to explore alternative ways of approaching the materials, my junior colleague began to see how he could adjust his own teaching strategies, and he gradually became much more confident. We also ended up becoming good friends.*

#### **Your Answer:**

The vignette talks of exploring alternative ways of approaching the materials. This was necessary because some of the assignments were not working for the junior teacher. Thus negative feedback was in the likelihood. The excerpt also included positive feed-forward as the junior teacher could decide on adjusting his own teaching strategies.



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## 16.5 Procedures of Constructive feedback

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Giving a constructive feedback includes answering the question 'Why' it is needed. Feedbacks are usually given to improve a situation or an individual's performance. Feedback is a process that requires constant attention. When something needs to be said, one must say it. The individuals would then know where they stand. For maximum results, the approach may be positive and focused on results. Being harsh, offensive and critical leads one to unaccomplished results. The steps that are to be followed in giving a constructive feedback are:

**a. State the purpose**

The first step of a constructive feedback is stating the purpose. In the section 16.3, we have learnt on the various purposes of constructive feedback. The only thing that needs to be added to this is stating what is going to be talked about and why it is important.

**b. Describe what you have observed**

The second step of constructive feedback is describing the observation. It is based on observation and the reactions of the observer on the observation. The best feedback is tied to goals and ensures that actions can be taken. Give the feedback from a personal perspective, starting with 'I'. Constructive feedback is about focusing on what we see and hear. It is not about making assumptions and inferences.

**c. Offer specific suggestions**

The third step of constructive feedback is offering specific suggestions or solutions. We all respond better when we receive specific feedback. Specific suggestions can come when the feedback is immediate, while all the details are fresh in the observer's mind. While trying to offer specific suggestions one must avoid the words like 'never', 'all', 'always'. Then the observed individual may get offensive. It is better to discuss the direct impact of the behaviour and avoid a personal blame. Focusing on the action and not on the individual is a feature of constructive feedback.

**d. Summarize the discussion**

The fourth and final step is summarizing everything that was said in the discussion. This requires using the right language for the type of feedback so that the observed individual do not miss anything. The observed individual should have an opportunity to respond to the discussion. The individual needs to be listened to and get him/her into offering solutions for the problem. This can be in form a better performance at

the next session or positive behaviour in a different context. This will ensure the actions and will end the discussion on a positive note.

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## 16.6 Constructive Feedback and Destructive feedback

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The whole idea of constructive feedback is to enhance personal and professional growth. It can enhance individual's morale, and lead to positive impact on individual's behaviour. The individual receiving constructive feedback reduces confusion on expectations and builds new perspectives on current performance. At this point, we can learn to distinguish between constructive feedback and destructive feedback.

Destructive feedback is a direct attack on the individual highlighting the faults. Destructive feedback does not provide supportive statements or practical advice. Examples of destructive feedback are: 'You are wrong', 'you have no idea of what you are doing', 'that is not how things are done' etc.

Constructive feedback is about corrections and improvement. The feedback is on the things that the individual can change, and not on the things that are out of his/her control.

### **Activity 4**

Read the following feedback 4 from a parent to a class teacher and change it into constructive feedback. You may point out specific solutions to the problem.

*"We have noticed that what is being taught in the classroom appears to not age appropriate. We're not happy with our child being exposed to content such as inappropriate books / images before we as the parents feel our child is ready. We would like to respectfully request that this content be removed from the classroom."*

**Your answer:**

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## 16.7 Examples of Constructive Feedback

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It is not necessary to talk about the advantages of constructive feedback. Here are a few examples for you to go through and infer for yourself.

- a. That was a good class. But your plan was a little ambitious; you could learn to adjust your time.

- b. I liked the way you introduced the words to the class. Did you check the spellings for all the words you taught before the class? This is an important aspect of good teaching.
- c. You were asking questions loudly, but when some students did not understand, you just repeated the questions. Though this is helpful, it is better to rephrase the question. Will you try doing it?
- d. Teaching poetry is quite difficult, but you did it very well. When you read a poem, you need not stop at the end of each line; you should care for the punctuations. This will make the meaning clear. You may remember this next time you teach a poem.

### **Activity 5**

Read the paragraphs 5 below and discuss the effects of feedback.

Some managers only focus on the positive and choose to gloss over the negative, hoping that showering their employees with endless praise will magically inspire them to overcome their shortcomings. Others only focus on the negative and never acknowledge when their employees do a great job.

Both of these approaches are misleading to your staff. Employees who receive the first type of feedback never get to know how they can improve and thus can't achieve their full potential while those in the second group feel overlooked and discriminated against from the lack of recognition.

Constructive feedback is a healthy blend of praise for achievement and suggestions for improvement. In order to give constructive feedback managers have to master the art of having difficult conversations with their employees and offering them meaningful praise in the right measure.

**Your answer:**

### **Activity 6**

Mention the reason of constructive feedback from the following excerpt 6.

*"I have been getting positive reviews regarding your work not only from your team leader but fellow team members as well. However, there is one area which might be stopping you from achieving your fullest potential as the top contributor, which is your lack of communication. We would love to hear your ideas and thoughts regarding different agendas that are discussed during team meetings. Please be assured that we all work as a team, and*

*therefore hearing out every team member is our priority and part of the team culture that we want to build.*

*Feel free to reach out to me in case you are facing any sort of hiccups and I would be happy to help you. Do not hesitate to voice your opinions as everyone is entitled to their own and even if there occurs a mistake, your team will be there to help you in every way possible."*

**Your answer:**

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## 16.8 Summary

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The unit is designed to introduce the fundamental concepts of constructive feedback. We as language teachers need constructive feedback as a factor in professional development. It is necessary to learn to take and as well as to give constructive feedback for the benefit of the teaching-learning process. The following are the review questions to check your comprehension of the unit.

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## 16.9 Review Questions

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1. What is constructive feedback?
2. Why do teachers need constructive feedback? Give at least five reasons.
3. What are the purposes for constructive feedback?
4. What are the different types of constructive feedback?
5. Which types of constructive feedback do you think is necessary for your students? Give some examples of constructive feedback.
6. What is destructive feedback?
7. What are the differences between constructive feedback and destructive feedbacks?
8. Do you have any experience of constructive and destructive feedback?—Discuss.
9. What are the procedures for implementing constructive feedback?
10. Write the procedure for giving negative feed-forward.

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## 16.10 References

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Richards, Jack C. and Thomas S.C. Farrell (2005). *Professional Development for Language Teachers*. Strategies for Teacher Learning. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

### Notes

- 1 Professional Development for Language Teachers. Page 162.
- 2 Giving Feedback Boosting Your People's Confidence and Ability  
[https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM\\_98.htm](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM_98.htm)
- 3 Professional Development for Language Teachers. Page 148.
- 4 <https://helpfulprofessor.com/feedback-from-parents/>
- 5 How to Give Constructive Feedback  
<https://inside.6q.io/how-to-give-constructive-feedback/>
- 6 Sharing Constructive feedback with your employees  
<https://allthingstalent.org/2020/07/08/constructive-feedback-examples-employees>

### Notes

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