Report On

The Role of a Teacher as a Facilitator: A Scenario in an English Medium School

By

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

- 1. The internship report submitted is my own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
- 2. The report does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
- 3. The report does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
- 4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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List of Acronyms

ELT English Language Teaching

CIE Cambridge International Examinations

CLT Communicative Language Teaching

GTM Grammar Translation Method

DM Direct Method

ALM Audiolingual Method

PBLT Project-Based Language Teaching

PBL Project-Based Learning

TBLT Task-Based Language Teaching

EFL English as a Foreign Language

IWB Interactive White Board

TTT Teacher Talk Time

STT Student Talk Time

Chapter 1

Introduction

From an early age, I saw my mother working as a teacher which had inspired me to do my major in Applied Linguistics and ELT and later my desire to become a teacher grew stronger as I got involved in teaching young learners. I have always seen people treating it as a noble profession and students considering their teachers as role models which had a great impact on my decision.

Luckily, I received the opportunity to work as a full-time intern teacher in Tiny Tots and Summerfield International School located at 6/4, Iqbal Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka. The school was founded in 1974 by Mrs Faizi Chowdhury and Ms Margot Enander, offering English medium education from pre-school to class XII. Currently, the junior section from pre-school to class IV is termed Tiny Tots and the middle and senior sections from class V to XII are termed Summerfield International School. At present, the school has four branches in Mohammadpur and two branches in Dhanmondi. It is registered with both Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) and Pearson Edexcel. Over the years, it has achieved great success through educating and nurturing students with love, care and patience.

My journey as an intern teacher began on 19th September 2022. It was a golden opportunity for me to engage myself in teaching young learners and be a part of such a renowned institution. Moreover, I was blessed to get Mrs. Shajeda Islam as my on-sight supervisor who guided me in every step to adjust and cope with the new environment. In addition, I came across some amazing colleagues who helped me to understand the school's rules, regulations and culture in a very short time.

I was appointed as an English Language teacher in grade five where there were 60 students in total. Within a few days, I realised that the school follows an Eclectic approach with a focus on

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Grammar Translation Method (GTM) mostly. As a language teacher, I was provided with a lot of instructions, teaching materials and lesson plans. The instructions included one important aspect that the teacher should never impose any answer on the students mostly in case of question answers. The students should always have a scope to state their opinions and the right to agree or disagree with logical arguments. It means, the teacher will act as a facilitator, offer support and guidance when needed and make all the students interact in the classroom communicatively but will never impose anything on them.

The school strongly believes that every student is capable and has something more or less to offer. Hence, it has introduced inclusive education and has a few special needs children who are always attended by the teachers with special care and love which has helped them a lot to develop themselves. Though they are in the same classroom as other students, these children are handled with more care and support and every teacher goes the extra mile to modify and prepare different materials, lesson plans and assessment methods which are more effective for them rather than just treating them as a part of the general classroom and forcing them to memorise the contents.

In the beginning, it seemed to be quite an easy task to be a facilitator but later on, I realised that it was a more difficult job. Being a facilitator, I needed to be more prepared than being the sole authority of the classroom because when the students were allowed to speak up, they started to amaze me with their knowledge and comprehension. Hence, I had to be well prepared before entering my classroom so that I was able to handle my students' responses and queries. Furthermore, after conducting each class, I had to update my lesson plan and materials according to the needs of the learners. Since every classroom is diverse, the needs of the students also varied and hence it was quite a challenging task as now I had to choose the teaching materials according to their age, capability and requirements.

This report is the outcome of my experience as an intern at Summerfield International School which I have completed to achieve my undergraduate degree in Applied Linguistics and ELT. As students of English and Humanities, at Brac University, we were given hands-on tasks for preparing ourselves to become future English teachers. Hence, I learned a lot of theories related to teaching which I could finally use in my classrooms. Though it was quite a challenging and adventurous journey, which I will discuss in further chapters, I undoubtedly enjoyed every bit and learned a lot from my students as well as my colleagues.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature relevant to the topic of this report which is the role of a teacher in an English classroom. From the review of the literature, it is found that in Bangladesh, one or two types of language teaching approaches are generally followed and teachers' role in students' language development is crucial, especially if learners are young. This chapter is divided into three parts as the following:

Part 1: Different Methods and Approaches of Teaching English discusses the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), The Direct Method (DM), The Audiolingual Method (ALM), the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Eclectic approach, Project-Based Language Teaching (PBLT) - their origin, features and influence in language teaching and learning.

Part 2: Role of Teachers in English Language Classrooms displays the impact of the teacher's role and student motivation along with the teacher's motivation in the case of language learning.

Part 3: Bangladesh Context discusses the existence of the four different types of curriculum and

their effect in the context of Bangladesh.

2.2 Part 1: Different Methods and Approaches of Teaching English

English is an international language which helps in various sectors such as education, economy, law court and many other areas. English Language proficiency is often understood to be part of the education that children receive in schools. It is because the English language is tied to knowledge, skills and related competencies that are required to effectively contribute to any social

activity. This is more suitable for them after they grow up. Over the past few centuries, different interventions in linguistics have influenced English language teaching to come to the stage it is at today.

In the twentieth century, language teaching and research increased as learning a foreign language, especially English, became popular. Several sociopolitical reasons for it are not relevant to the discussion of this chapter, except for two facts. One is that many parts of the world, including Bangladesh, were part of the British Empire during the Colonial period and that English emerged as a global lingua franca during the Cold War period and afterwards. Howatt and Widdowson (2004) explain the history of teaching English around the world. They mention that English language teaching in the Empire and Europe is the crucial stage that shaped the formal teaching of the language. Additionally, during the Cold War era, all domains of education and all professions considered English language proficiency to be crucial for a person to be considered educated and smart. Hence, the emergence of the varying purposes for learning English also influenced different methods and approaches to teaching English. Richards and Rogers (2014) note that the notion of a systematic set of teaching practices based on a particular language acquisition theory led to the emergence of various language learning theories. The essential methods and approaches that emerged are discussed in the following sections.

2.2.1 Grammar Translation Method and Its Influence in Teaching English

Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), derived from the Classical Method is the oldest and one of the most commonly used language teaching methods in ELT classrooms. The method began in Germany at the end of the eighteenth century (Howatt & Widdowson, 2004) and focused on teaching grammar in isolation, using translation exercises. Richards and Rogers (2014) note that, historically, Latin in the Middle Ages had galvanised the use and improvement of this method for

language teaching. However, the intention of its proponents was to develop a suitable method that could be used to teach school children (Howatt & Widdowson, 2004). The primary features of GTM include the use of the mother tongue in teaching the target language. Vocabulary is taught by using wordlists and as the mother tongue is used, the translation is there. Literary passages are read which contain comprehension questions and students are required to practice answering these questions. They are also required to translate the text to and from their L1 (Benati, 2018). The grammar rules are presented in an elaborated manner. Students are required to memorise these rules and the vocabulary of the target language. Typical exercises for learning vocabulary includes memorising synonyms and antonyms and definitions of the words (Brown & Lee, 2015). Additionally, it is highly teacher-centred. Even though this procedure was initially followed to learn Latin and translate texts into English during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the British used it during that time and later in all the places they ruled. This method, thus, was administered in all non-native contexts.

The use and practice of this method in non-native contexts is still prevalent today. Sultana (2018) asserts that GTM is an extremely helpful method in the context of Bangladesh. It is effective for learners with beginner proficiency levels. It is also effective for teachers because it does not require specialised teaching skills (Brown & Lee, 2015) and can be used by any teacher with different teaching abilities to teach in the classroom. Another crucial reason why GTM is a go-to method for language teaching in non-native contexts such as Bangladesh is that English language competency is associated with intellectual development (Richards & Rogers, 2014). Therefore, in the context of Bangladesh, English is taught as an academic subject (Sultana, 2018) in schools and this makes it a task among teachers to make sure they have learned the language properly.

Even though GTM is the oldest used language teaching method yet it has limitations that have been criticised by language teaching researchers. GTM provides students with a tedious experience where they have to memorise endless grammar rules and vocabulary. The focus is explicitly on writing and reading skills with little to no practice in speaking and listening. In other words, students' communicative competence is not focused properly by this method (Liu & Shi, 2007). Such limitations of GTM led to the discovery of new methods, backed by new interventions in language acquisition research.

2.2.2 The Direct Method

The origin of the Direct Method (DM) is also rooted in Germany and the teaching of German as a foreign language (Howatt & Widdowson, 2004). The basic premise of the idea behind DM was to find a method that followed the naturalistic principles of language learning. Sauver and others said that foreign language can be taught without the use of L1 if the meaning of the target language is directly conveyed to the learners through action (Richards & Rogers, 2014). It can thus be said that DM was found in response to GTM.

The features of DM are instruction is in the target language, class sizes are small, and only speaking and listening skills are taught. Modelling and practice are teaching methodologies. The vocabulary taught is everyday vocabulary. Unlike GTM, grammar is taught inductively (Brown & Lee, 2015). All teaching points were introduced in the DM class orally, and the use of demonstration, objects and pictures was crucial in teaching concrete vocabulary. Through all of these steps, correct pronunciation was sought as the idea was to teach the target language naturally just like children acquire their L1.

DM enjoyed popularity in the United States during the late 19th and early 20th century but it did not become popular in public education. The reasons were budget, as attractive activity using realia,

pictures and pantomime that encouraged students to learn the vocabulary directly (Djauhar, 2021) was not possible due to budget constraints, classroom size, time and teacher background as all of these were factors that could not be controlled in public classrooms. Hence, it paved the way for a newer ELT method to emerge later on.

2.2.3. The Audiolingual Method

The Audiolingual Method (ALM), also known as the Army method, borrowed tenets of DM to be formalised as a language teaching method. Similar to DM, it is rooted in the United States during the early quarter of the 20th century. It is noted that roots are based on theoretical assumptions of logical positivism and empiricism as both were dominant philosophies in psychology and education during that time (Shahheidari, 1997). Lado, Fries and others are credited as founders of ALM and they based this method under the influence of behavioural psychology, where Pavlov and Skinner's ideas of classical conditioning and operant conditioning were taken into account. The reason why ALM is also known as the Army method is because it started during World War II, to teach oral proficiency in other languages to the soldiers (Brown & Lee, 2015). The main features of ALM are, all language teaching materials were presented in the target language to the students, and new materials were spoken as dialogues in oral form. As it incorporated notions of behaviourism, imitation, memorisation and overlearning of language patterns were given emphasis (Rilling, 2018). Contrastive analysis was used to sequence and teach grammar, while it and vocabulary were taught inductively through contextualisation in dialogues. As the focus was on developing speaking and listening, great emphasis was put on pronunciation to be error-free (Brown & Lee, 2015).

ALM was a popular method in the West for a long period until the "Designer" methods era of the 1970s. The reason why ALM failed in the long-term was that students did not achieve long term

communicative proficiency and this paved way for the designer methods and ultimately, the CLT approach.

2.2.4 The Communicative Language Teaching Approach

Further innovations in foreign language teaching research in the late 20th century led to the founding of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. CLT is the approach to second language education where the emphasis is on developing students' communicative competence (Richards & Rogers, 2014). This phrase was introduced by the American linguist Dell Hymes in the late 1960s. He said that a person who has communicative competence can use language well as he or she knows either explicitly or implicitly, how to use it appropriately in any given context. Also, a person's ability to understand and speak the target language is not solely based on their knowledge of grammar (Hymes, 1962 as cited in Theresa, 2006), context is essential in determining what appropriate language is as it varies from one context to another. Finally, learning the appropriate language happens through the process of socialisation where a person learns to use language in and for real-life situations (Theresa, 2006). Taking these ideas of Dell Hymes, Canale and Swain (1980 as cited in Brown & Lee, 2015) further formalised the idea of communicative competence into four competencies, which are grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic and strategic competence. They argued that the CLT approach can help develop communicative competence in students and it is what is essential for L2 learners to become proficient in that language.

Hence, in CLT, systematic attention is paid to both structural and functional aspects of a language as teachers are advised to go beyond the rules of the target language to facilitate communicative ability among the students (Thamarana, 2015). CLT gives essential importance to the functional use of the second language (Richards & Rogers, 2014), both fluency and accuracy are focused on

(Brown & Lee, 2015), and teaching of the target language occurs in a pragmatic manner where learners are engaged to learn and use language for authentic and functional use (Thamarana, 2015). Grammar is taught less systematically (Savignon, 1991) with the focus being more on using the target language functionally. Finally, CLT focuses on developing all four language skills as communicative competence means being able to use a language for various purposes in real life (Thamarana, 2015).

The success of CLT in non-native contexts is debated for various reasons. For instance, in the context of Bangladesh, although CLT has been prescribed to be used in the curriculum (National Education Policy, 2010), its use for English language teaching in the country has been problematic (Rahman & Pandian, 2018) and the principal problems behind it is mainly related to lack of teachers' ability to teach effectively (Sultana & Nahar, 2008), a gap between policy and practice (Rahman et al., 2019) that needs to be bridged. Rahman et al. (2019) also note that Bangladeshi English language teachers are non-natives themselves and have limitations in their language proficiency levels, hence, their overall skills need to be developed if they are to teach students using CLT effectively.

2.2.5 The Eclectic Approach to Language Teaching

All language teaching methodologies and approaches have limitations which led to the founding of a new one. Similarly, CLT's limitations led researchers to find out more specific solutions for issues in second-language teaching contexts. For instance, the Situational Teaching Method focused on teaching the L2 based on the particular situation (Al-Khasawneh, 2022) but its criticism lies in the fact that it is not possible to predict language use as it occurs in novel situations (Mwanza, 2017). Therefore, researchers and practitioners came up with a new approach to teaching L2 which is known as the eclectic approach. The main characteristic of this approach is that it combines

various language teaching methods and approaches into one while taking into account the learning purpose as well as the learners' situation (Al-Khasawneh, 2022). In this regard, Gao (2011) thinks that the advantage of using this approach is that it allows teachers to take decisions based on the goal and situation of the classroom, the learners' needs and the materials available to the teacher to teach. The key features of eclecticism, thus, are teachers can select various types of teaching techniques in their classroom depending on the classroom learning objectives, they can resort to using any particular method or approach of teaching L2 that is relevant to their teaching contexts, and by doing so, they can overcome any difficult situation making learning enjoyable and innovative, enhancing student-teacher interaction, student-student interaction while paying attention to individual learner needs and giving them a sense of what the learning outcome is (Mwanza, 2017; Rao, 2018).

In non-native contexts such as Bangladesh, an eclectic approach (Summa, 2021), therefore, seems to be a more suitable L2 teaching approach. However, in a study conducted by Alam and Sultana (2020), it was found that there are some limitations to the approach. This includes a lack of trained teachers, limited facilities provided by the institution, unusual class size and lack of better-developed language teaching material. Even though an eclectic approach gives more freedom to the teacher, the teacher needs to have the ability to teach effectively.

2.2.6 Project-Based Language Teaching (PBLT)

Research into devising and finding the most suitable language teaching approach is still ongoing. It is common within the developments of language teaching practices and research over the years to adapt ideas from other related fields. In this context, Project-Based Learning (PBL), a student-centred model for teaching and learning focusing on real-life challenges where students can gather deeper knowledge and understanding of a subject matter and thus acquire multiple skills from their

experiences was adopted into language teaching. It is based on Dewey's (1959) problem-solving method of teaching where knowledge development occurs subjectively, through an interactive process between learners and their learning contexts (as cited in Grant, 2017).

Over the years, PBL became a model of teaching-learning used across different levels of education globally. The origins of PBL are in the progressive education movement that advocated student-centred and experiential approaches in primary, secondary, and higher secondary levels of education that supported deeper learning enamoured through active exploration of real-world problems and challenges (Condliffe et al., 2017). The advantage of PBL is that it improves the quality of learning-teaching while contributing to the cognitive development of a greater level that involves students to solve complicated problems with innovative solutions. It teaches students complex processes and procedures which involve planning and communication and it influences them to carry out authentic research, hence, promoting self-directed learning.

It also helps develop students' active listening, enhancing their preference for personal learning and making them able to define real problems and solve them accordingly (Newman, 2005, p. 13). The learning skills they develop through PBL are based on their experience and understanding of the theories and concepts they learned. Additionally, creativity, decision-making, stress management, time management, working collaboratively in groups, managing and adapting to changes, developing interpersonal skills, coping with conflict in a creative manner, reasoning critically and practising empathy are capabilities that are promoted through PBL.

In recent times, in English language learning classrooms PBL has been adopted, often called project work, project method, project approach, project-oriented approach or project-based instruction (Beckett, 2002). With similarities to Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Project-Based Language Teaching (PBLT) was first applied to English language learning more since the

1990s and it provided learners with chances to communicate and interact using the target language in an authentic context (Grant, 2017). Research has shown that English language teachers and students hold mixed feelings toward PBL because even if their language-related skills such as social and cognitive skills were developing but students had some dilemmas and frustration towards it (Beckett, 2002). However, its deep potential for the teaching and learning of the communicative aspect of the language has shown that it aids in language acquisition for young learners while increasing student autonomy for learning (Allen, 2004). Several studies (Hebbouch, 2018; Poonpon, 2017; Thuan, 2018) also found that PBLT is essential in boosting students' autonomous learning of the English language. They added that students find balance in their use of language skills through the projects that they do and this authentic integration enhances their cognitive development as well (Dornyei, 2005). Additionally, PBLT has become more popular for teaching young learners as it facilitates children's experiential reasoning and comprehension of relations (Habok, 2015).

For EFL contexts like Bangladesh, PBLT has the potential to be a useful language teaching approach as it can cognitively stimulate learners by exposing them to non-traditional forms of learning (Baidya, 2019). However, their previous lack of exposure to such type of learning needs to be taken into consideration by the instructor to successfully implement this in the classroom (Islam & Ahmed, 2018).

2.3 Part 2: Role of Teachers in English Language Classrooms

In L2 teaching such as English, the teacher's role has always been of central importance. The teacher's role has changed in each language teaching method and this also had a crucial impact on students' language learning and their motivation to learn. A teacher has many roles in the language classroom. They often have to be the controller because they take charge of the class and the

pedagogic activities for learning. These individuals view their role as a job to transmit knowledge to the students (Harmer,2001). Harmer (2001) further notes the other roles that teachers need to take in the language classroom. These are prompters, who help students by nudging them to complete an activity if students do not understand how to progress. The teacher as a participant is when teachers become participants themselves and take part in the various learning activities with the students in the classroom. The teacher as a resource is when students can turn to their teachers as the source of resource for any information related to the activity. In such cases, the teacher is not a prompter or a participant or a controller but a silent individual who is sharing information as per students' needs. The teacher as a tutor is when a teacher's role of being a prompter and resource is combined to help students, either individuals or small groups, by directing them towards the learning goal.

In traditional classrooms that followed the Classical Method or GTM, the classroom was teacher-centred (Liu & Shi, 2007). Scrivener (2005) describes this as a classroom where the focus is on the teacher and not on the learners. He further comments that in such classrooms, there is less student talk and more teacher talk. The outcome of such role of the language teacher can be debated to be both positive and negative. For instance, in a classroom where learners are young or where learners' proficiency level is low, a teacher-centred classroom with more teacher talk (Brown & Lee, 2015) will facilitate learning better compared to the same learners with a learner-centred classroom with less teacher talk.

Student motivation is a key factor in language learning (Kaboody, 2013). For foreign language teaching, it is understood that more motivated learners will learn faster and their proficiency will increase better. This has been highlighted in Brown and Lee (2015), along with Richards and Rogers (2014). Motivating learners may be a complex process but at the heart of the learning-

teaching situation, its importance cannot be ignored. It is because all teachers intend to educate students by helping them make their position better or in other words, making them better equipped with skills needed to succeed in life. SLA research has surmised several theories about motivation and the two key theories are extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation (Kaboody, 2013) is when social pressure or social rewards regulates students' language learning journey while intrinsic motivation (Brown & Lee, 2015) is when students are self-determined to learn the target language for their development. Research (Tanaka, 2005) notes that teachers are central to learner motivation in the SLA context. It is also reported that when teachers can motivate their learners, then the learners will learn the language better and faster (Kaboody, 2013).

In non-native contexts such as Bangladesh, it has been found that motivation has a serious impact on students. As mentioned earlier, the incentive to learn English in Bangladesh is tied to intellectual development as well as better opportunities in life. Hence, Hussan and Masum (2016) note that students in Bangladesh are mostly motivated extrinsically. It is because they believe they will get better opportunities in future. They also reported students' experiences that the teacher's role to motivate them helped them feel more confident and make their learning experience more enjoyable, leading to better outcomes in their examinations later on. As the CLT approach suggests, the role of the teacher is to be a facilitator and the language teacher needs to facilitate students' motivation too for them to achieve better in the language classroom.

2.4 Part 3: Bangladesh Context

In the context of Bangladesh, there exists mainly four types of curriculum recognised by the Ministry of Education (2010). They are the Bangla medium where the National Curriculum (2010) is followed and the explicit medium of instruction to teach all subjects is Bangla, the English

version where the same curriculum is followed but the medium of instruction is English and if English is not available then Bangla is to be used. The technical and vocational curriculum and the Madrasah curriculum follow the same as the Bangla medium curriculum. The only difference is in the English medium curriculum where most commonly the British curriculum is followed and the medium of instruction is always English with little or no Bangla use for learning and teaching. Rahman & Pandian (2018) recapitulate Hamid and Baldauf Jr.'s (2018)'s comment that there is no clear connection between policy and practice in the context of language education in Bangladesh. The above situation of the different curriculums shows that there is no uniform medium of instruction across the curriculum, hence, there are many problems that are present which is hampering learning. Additionally, teachers' limited capacity to teach and their own lower language proficiency levels (Sultana, 2008; Sultana & Nahar, 2018) further create problems in teaching English effectively. Bangladeshi learners are, thus, unable to attain a certain proficiency level even after twelve years of schooling and learning English as an academic subject (Ali & Walker, 2014). All of these point to the fact that in all institutions, the pressure on the teacher to improve students' language proficiency levels is immense. Additionally, primary, secondary and higher secondary education is seen as a gateway to doing well in life. Hence, Al Amin and Greenwood (2018) note that pressure to do well in public examinations also affects English language teaching greatly. As a teacher myself, I feel this pressure too and in my time as an intern teacher, all of these aspects did affect my teaching quality which I have shared in the next chapter of this report.

Chapter 3

Implementing Theories into Practice

3.1 My Experience as an Intern Teacher

I received the opportunity to teach English Language to grade five students while doing my internship at Summerfield International School. The school mainly follows Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach to teaching English to the learners. The age level of the students was between 11 to 13 years. Since most of them started their schooling either from Summerfield or belonged to English medium background, almost all of them understood basic English. Besides general students, the school had also a few special needs and indigenous children who were treated just like the other students in terms of behaviour but were given all the support as needed. It must be noted, however, the school is not an inclusive educational institution and I did not receive any formal guidelines regarding teaching such students.

The arrival and departure times of the teachers were 7:30 am and 2:30 pm respectively though the duration for students was 8:00 am to 12:50 pm. Right after entering the school, all the students of Grade Five were accompanied to their respective classrooms on the third floor by a teacher. The first task for the students was to write in their composition book. It was a regular activity of the students as most of them used to reach school by 7:45 am. Therefore, to utilise their time, the school had come up with the practice of making students write in a composition book where they had to write short stories, journals, and compositions on festivals, science fairs and so on. Afterwards, at 8:00 am sharp, they would go downstairs for their assembly where all the teachers accompanied them.

Though I was an intern teacher, I had to take three classes in the English Language every day since there were three sections in Grade Five. Moreover, the subject was divided into three parts: comprehension, grammar, and creative writing. There were two comprehension classes, one grammar class and two creative writing classes a week. Though, at first, taking fifteen classes a week and checking 60 copies every day through providing proper feedback was very challenging and tiring, however, with time I was able to cope with the situation.

On my first day, I was a little nervous as handling teenagers was not an easy job. However, to my astonishment, I was able to grab their attention and successfully conduct my classes. Within a very short time, I bonded well with my students as they started to shower their love on me. Their love and respect helped me a lot in refraining from my nervousness and anxiety. I soon understood how to grab their attention and make them complete their work within class time by showing a positive attitude and motivation.

3.2 Classroom Observation

While taking classes, I have realised that classroom management is the most important factor for effective language learning. It is because a teacher needs to create an atmosphere (Scrivener, 2011) where learning can take place properly. Grabbing the attention of young learners in addition to holding it till the last minute is a big challenge for all teachers. Teachers' use of their voices is important to manage the classroom properly. It is the most essential element of a teacher to grab the attention of his or her students (Gower et al., 1983 as cited in Derakhshan et al., 2016). By keeping this in mind, I tried to use my voice accordingly to gain and keep students' attention. For example, when the students were roaming around the class at the beginning of the lesson, I tried to make them sit in their seats and asked them to take out their books and copies to make them

understand that we will be starting our lesson. Additionally, this learning for myself as a novice teacher was helpful because it also helped me control the class and administer the group activities (Nunan, 2003). I would add that as the school follows the Eclectic approach mainly focusing on Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach to teaching its learners, it was really important to control the classroom in addition to engaging the students in activities.

3.3 Putting Theories into Practice

Different schools follow different teaching techniques or methods sometimes despite having the same syllabus and the same age level of learners. It was my first time working as a teacher in an English Medium School with such young learners. I was assigned to teach grade five students and was provided with a curriculum plan, lesson plans and materials which I had to strictly follow being a new teacher. Some of my observations were in the areas of seating arrangement, use of a whiteboard, elicitation, the interaction between teacher and students, skills taught in the classroom, vocabulary and grammar, group and pair work, extra-curricular activities, feedback, and correction, Parent-Teacher Meeting, Project Based Language Learning and special needs children. These aspects of my experience are discussed in the following sections:

3.3.1 Seating Arrangement

When I first entered the classroom, I saw a whiteboard, a pair of tables and chairs for the teacher, 22 single seats for students, a project paper display board, and a different board holding the colourful chart papers that included the students' birthdays, merit chart, class routine and list of groups. The classroom looked very colourful and attractive and all three sections were decorated in the same way. Even with all of this, the seating arrangement of the classroom was traditional (Scrivener, 2011). The problem with traditional seating arrangements is that it is not always

possible for the teacher to engage students in different types of learning activities. ELT research has stated that traditional seating arrangements are often unsuitable as they can affect students' motivation, in addition to lowering teachers' efficiency and ultimately student achievement. At the same time, it can lower teachers' efficiency (Hammang, 2012). Therefore, it is suggested that some variation in the seating arrangement in the language classroom can lead to better attention, interest and engagement from the students (Norazman et al., 2019). I also agree with this and think that it would have been better if it was the horseshoe arrangement since every student would have been able to make eye contact with each other and listen to each other. Moreover, it would have been easier for me and other teachers to reach every student and give them the same attention. Due to the traditional seating arrangement, I had to walk all around the classroom to ensure that everyone was doing their work instead of sitting or gossiping. Although this arrangement helped during group work as it was convenient to make circles with single chairs and would consume less time, I as the teacher had to be careful all the time.

3.3.2 Use of White Board

Every classroom had a large-sized traditional whiteboard which is an essential resource for a teacher. Using the board is helpful for a language teacher because it helps the teacher keep essential everyday information related to classroom practices organised (Scrivener, 2011). The whiteboard used in the classroom was mainly divided into three parts: the left part was for the class activities, the middle part for the content and the extreme right side consisted of date, day, total students, present, absent, and the class routine. Such ways of dividing a board to organise information are helpful to teach different contents in the classroom (Scrivener, 2011). I would again divide the left part into two parts: on the extreme left, I used to write the class activity and in the middle of the board, the chapter or unit number and name below it. The board would look like this:

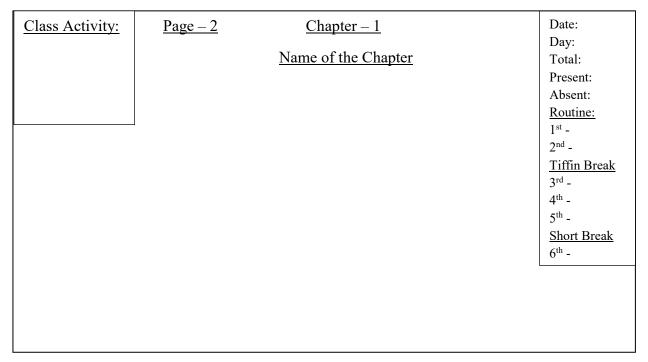


Figure 3.1: Use of the Whiteboard

Usually, I used to avoid writing much on the board as students get a chance to gossip if the teacher is always busy writing. Additionally, I would not spend too much time writing on the board to avoid wasting time (Scrivener, 2011). I would mostly write the main ideas on the board and guide the students further with oral instructions. Moreover, I would go to every student and roam around the classroom to monitor them to ensure whether they were following my instructions accurately or not. I believe that if there was the option to use an Interactive White Board (IWB), then it would have been more engaging for the students. For instance, a study conducted on Turkish students, it was found that IWBs had a positive effect on students, especially in terms of engaging them in learning (Mathews-Aydinli & Elaziz, 2010).

3.3.3 Elicitation

While teaching, first and foremost I tried to gauge the existing knowledge of the students by asking them questions. This process is known as elicitation where ideas and information are drawn out from students' minds (Scrivener, 2011). During the grammar class, for instance, I asked students

a few basic questions such as, "What do you understand by nouns? Give some examples. How many types of nouns are there?" and more. Some students were able to answer the questions whereas many of them failed to. This technique of elicitation shows that some students' knowledge may be more than what the teacher can deliver and others may not. It is also a productive way to start a lesson (Husna & Amri, 2018). Hence, taking their responses into account, I started to explain the first chapter, "Nouns". It is also stated that such action taken by the teacher in the class allows both the students and the teacher towards new findings which is often more effective than just giving lectures. Additionally, through elicitation, I also followed Krashen's input hypothesis (1982) in which he referred to this level of input as (i+1) where "i" is the existing language of the learner and "+1" is the added information given to him or her beyond the existing knowledge. This elicitation process would have been much easier if there were projectors in the classrooms since images and videos could have been shown to the students for effective elicitation. However, the school does not have such a facility which I think is a barrier to effective teaching and learning.

3.3.4 Interaction between Teacher and Students

Teacher Talking Time (TTT) and Student Talking Time (STT) are important factors in second language acquisition. Harmer (2015) states that language teachers should be aware of whether they are talking excessively as it may not be too advantageous for the students. TTT should contain comprehensible input mostly. Hence, in my classes, I used to talk less and would ask questions to the students to involve them in the learning and maximise student talk time (Scrivener, 2005). In addition, before starting the lesson, I would ask them to recap what they learned in the last class and after ending the lesson, I would ask them to summarise that day's lesson. Every time they were asked questions, they responded quite well. The students did make errors in the beginning but I would always correct and explain those to them with a positive attitude.

3.3.5 Skills Taught in the Classroom

In my observation, the students were mainly exposed to productive and receptive skills. As the lesson plans involved reading texts, the learners would read from their books one by one and others would listen to the reader. Thus, they were exposed to listening to peers and the teacher only since the school did not have any technological facility through which the listening skills of the students could have been ensured in a better way. In addition, the students engaged in conversation with their peers, and teachers and would give oral presentations which enhanced their speaking skills. Moreover, they had to write narrative, descriptive, and argumentative essays, stories, reports and so on which assisted them in improving their writing skills. As a result, the speaking and writing skills of the learners contributed to developing their productive skills.

As a language teacher, I worked as a facilitator (Harmer, 2015) in the classroom. As discussed in the previous chapter, as a facilitator, I tried to be an enabler who did not centre the classroom lecture around himself or herself. The fact of the matter is that I tried to use the CLT approach to teach the students and this approach also sees the role of the teacher as a facilitator (Brown & Lee, 2015). Hence, I provided students with the opportunity to speak, put their opinions forward and ask me questions if they had any. This was a more difficult job for me as now I had to be well-prepared to answer their questions and clear the confusion. Here came a massive challenge as when students were allowed to ask questions, there were times when they used to ask irrelevant, personal questions and sometimes even something I was not aware of. However, despite all the challenges, I handled the situations and responded to them positively rather than scolding and avoiding their queries. For instance, if I did not know any answer, I simply said sorry and replied that I would gather the required information and let them know the next day.

3.3.6 Vocabulary and Grammar

The students I taught during my internship lagged in vocabulary and grammar since they spent two years doing online classes because of COVID-19. Thus, it was a big challenge to work on their grammatical knowledge and vocabulary. I started providing them with synonyms and antonyms from the texts that were taught in their books. Later on, I realised that they were not actually learning them and hence I started taking oral quizzes on synonyms and antonyms. This technique of assessing them alternatively as well as eliciting has been discussed too in the previous chapter. Moreover, students were asked to maintain a separate vocabulary copy where they would write the meaning of five unknown words from the dictionary every day and make sentences with them so that at the end of the week, they could at least learn 35 new words every week to enrich their vocabulary. The parents were given the responsibility to ensure that their child was doing it since I could not do it alone.

In the case of grammar, I had to start from the very basic such as nouns since they were still struggling with basics. In every grammar class, I used to recap nouns, pronouns, and verbs and further moved on to the main topic. For example, before teaching adverbs, I had to revise nouns, verbs, and adjectives and then started with adverbs. However, the students would still mix up pronouns with proper nouns and adjectives with adverbs. Therefore, for weak students, extra grammar classes were arranged once a week which was mandatory for them to attend. I had to prepare worksheets for extra grammar classes which would include changing adjectives into

adverbs and making sentences with those adverbs and changing passages from present to past tense.

The worksheet is attached below:

3 rd Quarter Grammar Practice Worksheet I						
Name			Roll	Class V	Date	
Subject – Engl	ish Grammar	Section		_ Topic: A	Adverbs and Te	nse
1. Change	the following	adjectives into	adverbs by	adding suffix	xes and make se	ntences
with th	e adverbs					
a) slov	<i>I</i> —					
b) terri	ble –					
c) gent	ile –					
d) trag	ic –					
e) ang	ry –					
2. Rewrite	e the following	passage in the	e past tense			
We are making	pictures out of	leaves and tw	igs, which pu	pils are bring	ing in from hom	e. Peter
is cutting out p	ictures of wood	land animals f	rom the old 1	magazines tha	it parents donate	. Emma
uses crepe pape	er to form a bar	k-like appearai	nce on an old	cardboard tu	be – it <u>looks</u> like	an oak
tree. Mrs Thom	son <u>praises</u> the	ir efforts and g	ives them bo	th a sticker.		

Figure 3.2: Grammar Worksheet

3.3.7 Group and Pair Work

Group and pair work is crucial for efficient language teaching and learning. It enables students to engage in joint activities, while making the learning environment more relaxing (Alfares, 2017). Although group activities take up a lion's share of time in many lessons and hence cannot be applied very frequently, I tried to implement them in my classes, especially during creative writing

class. For instance, in a story writing class, students were divided into four groups each consisting of five members. Each group had to write ten words in total and each member had to contribute two words and after they were done with writing ten words, they had to write a story using those ten words as well as draw a picture that reflected their story. One of the groups wrote a story regarding a black cat that took revenge on its owner as it was killed by him though it was unintentional. The following image reflects their short story:

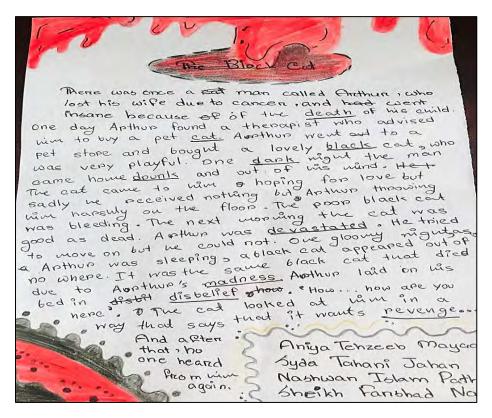


Figure 3.3: A Group Work on Story Writing

The learners enjoyed this group activity a lot and while they were carrying out their tasks, I actively monitored their work and activities. Each group had a leader who was responsible to ensure that all the members were contributing and that the work was completed within class time. Afterwards, when all the groups from all sections submitted their work, the best story from each section was hung on their "Project Work" board which helped to create a healthy competition among the

students. Therefore, through group and pair work, the learners were able to share their ideas with their peers, learn to respect each other's opinions and take decisions and were exposed to better language learning. This practice of my classroom is reflective of PBLT which has been discussed in the previous chapter. The project work allowed students to interact meaningfully in a particular context, for a particular purpose. It also stimulated their cognitive development (Condiffe et al., 2017; Allen, 2014).

3.3.8 Extra-Curricular Activities

The school introduced several extra-curricular activities to help the students boost their passion and hidden talents. As a part of co-curricular activities, there is a debate club, illustration club, chess club, gardening club, book fair, drama class, annual show, annual sports, field trip, *Pitha Utshob*, art camp and many more. The clubs and the drama classes were conducted every week and the other activities took place annually. Students were taken to Bangabandhu Military Museum for their field trip where they gathered vast knowledge regarding the history of our country and enjoyed it to their hearts' content. In addition, the annual sports took place in the Government College of Physical Education where the children had an amazing day with their friends, family and teachers. Moreover, the school had arranged the Pitha Utshob festival where the students gave stalls and sold pithas to their peers and teachers. It was a very new experience for them since it was their first time celebrating the festival after COVID-19. Besides academics, students loved to participate in these co-curricular activities which not only freshened their minds but also helped them bring out their latent talents.

3.3.9 Feedback during Oral and Written Work

During grammar classes, the students were initially making a lot of grammatical errors and I corrected those by repeating the sentences right after a student completed his speech. For instance,

when I asked the question, "What does a nurse do?" A student replied, "A nurse take care of the sick people." Immediately I repeated the sentence and told, "A nurse takes care of the sick people." Moreover, I added that in the case of a third person, we add "s/es" with the verb. Thus, the student was able to understand his mistake and the rest were aware of the grammatical rule and none made the same kind of error during the rest of the class. This method of repetition is known as echoing. According to Harmer (2015), "echoing is a precise way of pin-pointing an error" (p.144). On the other hand, while doing the exercises, whenever each exercise was discussed, I continuously roamed around the classroom and took a look at the students' copies and instantly pointed out their spelling errors and the students made the corrections. This made students more aware and alert of their errors and they instantly learned from their mistakes. My attempt to provide them with corrective feedback is reflective of the behaviourist paradigm of language acquisition as corrective feedback induces positive reinforcement (Richards & Rogers, 2014).

3.3.10 Copy Checking and Written Feedback

Since I had three classes every day, I used to check a minimum of 50 copies each day. In my opinion, checking copies is the most hectic part of a teacher's job. However, when I used to complete checking each set, I would feel immense pleasure. While checking copies, I had to give written feedback to the students and all corrections were done using a red-inked pen. For spelling errors, I would underline the word, write "sp." below it and do the correction above the word. For grammatical errors, the word would be underlined, "gr." would be written below the word and similarly, correction would be done above the word. In case of incomprehensible handwriting, I provided feedback such as, "Please improve your handwriting." This did not affect the students rather later on I realised that they tried to work on their handwriting. The correction instructions are given below:

Correction Type	Symbol
Grammatical Error	gr.
Spelling Error	sp.
Small Spelling	sm.sp.
Capital Spelling	cap.sp
No link between sentences	run on
Two separate words	←→
Incomprehensible	Please improve your
handwriting	handwriting.

Table 3.1: Written Feedback

3.3.11 Correction Work

Error correction is a type of feedback for language learners (Amara, 2015). All language teachers use error correction to correct any form of language errors their students may have. Young learners such as this particular learner group usually had intralingual interference and simplification errors (Amara, 2015). As their teacher, I instructed them to do their correction work regularly. It is noted that feedback and correction work usually help learners retain it in the long run (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010). Therefore, whenever a student made any mistake and I expected him or her to do a correction, I had to write "C" where the written work ended. Later on, the students used to do their correction work. For each spelling error, the students were instructed to write the word three times and for each grammatical mistake, they had to rewrite the whole sentence once. The students were also awarded stars if they did their correction work properly and timely. These stars were counted at the end of the session and students were rewarded with a "Highest Star Winner" certificate.

3.3.12 Parent-Teacher Meeting

The Parent-Teacher Meeting session was arranged every quarter to discuss the academic development and behaviour of every child with his or her parents. The role of parents in educating students is essential and this often has a cultural significance. In language teaching, it is said that the successful involvement of parents has many advantages and can help the teacher teach the students better (Pena, 2000). At the school, the Parent-Teacher meeting was organised during weekends so that working parents did not have any issues attending it. All the teachers had to be present and we used to seat in one column facing the door and would place cards on our tables writing our identities such as name, class, and subjects we took. Moreover, the class teachers used to have a paper where the names of the students were written and the parents would have to sign and give feedback for the school's service. In this way, the meeting was monitored and after the Parent-Teacher Meeting, our section-in-charge would call a meeting with the teachers to discuss the overall feedback and concern of the parents.

Along with the verbal discussion, every teacher had to write all the details every parent had talked about and mail it to the head. Therefore, based on the feedback and concern, the school would take steps to solve the issues. For instance, one parent showed concern about his daughter that she was very slow in everything and hesitated to talk to anyone loudly. Her voice was very soft and she was a shy and introverted one. Later on, we, the teachers were instructed to engage her more in all activities such as asking oral questions, asking her to read texts during the class, assigning her to distribute copies, changing her seating partner, pushing her to write swiftly and so on. After one and a half months, we noticed a few positive changes in her behaviour; now she could make friends easily, engage in conversations willingly, voluntarily ask and answer questions and many more.

3.3.13 Project-Based Language Teaching (PBLT)

The students were assigned various projects in different subjects such as Science, History, Bangla and French. They had to complete the projects according to the provided instructions of the teachers; sometimes individually and sometimes in groups. Thus, through these projects, the learners would express their thoughts, creativity and learning. Even though I did not receive any formal training or directive from the school to implement PBL but the outcome of it is reflective of the findings of studies regarding PBL as presented in the previous chapter (Poonpon, 2017; Hebbouch, 2018; Thuan, 2018). The school had organised a Science Festival where the interested students participated and presented their projects in front of audiences and the best three were given awards whereas each student who participated received certificates. Some of the students' science projects are given below:



Figure 3.4: The Working Model of a Water Dispenser

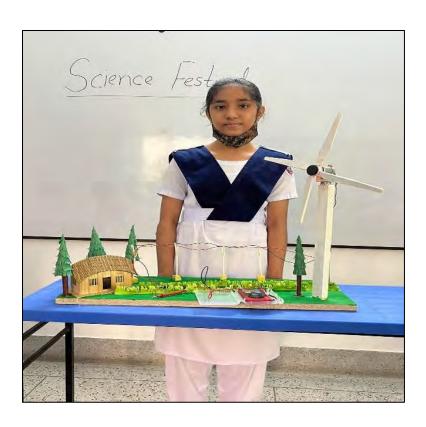


Figure 3.5: Windmill Energy

3.3.14 Special Needs Children

There were five special needs children who could not produce creative writing as they were unable to write complete sentences through organising ideas. Thus, the school introduced a separate creative writing book published by Singapore Asian Publications Pte Ltd. for those learners where the content was very basic. Incorporating such practices to teach special needs children along with other students is part of inclusive education. Although the institution that I worked at did not explicitly advertise or mention that they provide inclusive education facilities, however, they did have the initiative for it in place. There is a greater agenda attached to this practice at the school I worked at. Firstly, Bangladesh is doing its best to achieve the SDGs put forth by UNDP by 2030 and one of the goals is to ensure and promote inclusive education across all institutions. I believe that taking this initiative to teach these five children will help them in the long run by allowing them to grow dynamically (Fedulova et al., 2019) in similar capacities to their classmates. Hence,

these five children were given their books only during the creative writing classes and once they were done, I would take back the books and keep them with me. The books were always kept in the school so that they did not forget to bring the books and also to monitor their performance more closely. In that book, students were asked to rearrange words to make meaningful sentences, identify pictures and fill in the blanks with clues given in the box, rearrange sentences to make a paragraph, write sentences with given words and so on. The students also got chances to colour the pictures in their books which they enjoyed. After two months, those five children were observed to perform excellently due to this effort. In addition, their parents also provided positive feedback that they had observed changes in their children. Two sample exercises from their creative writing book are shown below:

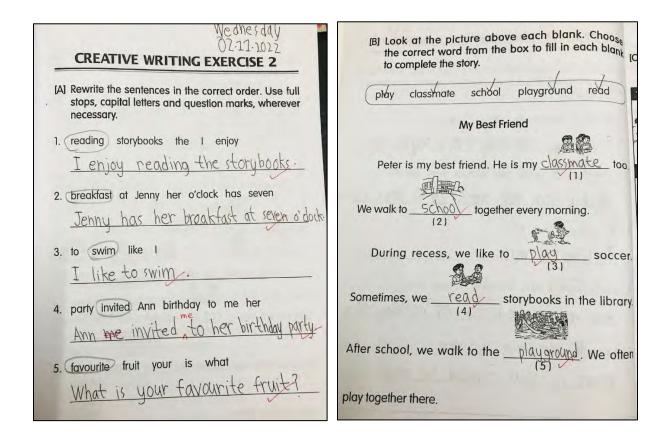


Figure 3.6: Creative Writing Book Exercises

3.3.15 Some Other Responsibilities

Along with all the duties of an intern teacher, I was assigned with few extra duties during various festivals and occasions at the school. For instance, during the Book Fair, I had to lead my students to the book stalls and look after them. Moreover, during Field Trip, I was assigned twenty students who were with me the whole day. I had to take care of each of them and was responsible for anything concerning them. In addition, during Parent-Teacher Meeting, a class teacher was absent and, on her behalf, I had to conduct the meeting and carry out all the responsibilities assigned to the post. Furthermore, after school, I had dismissal duty thrice a week where I had to hand over the children to their guardians by seeing their cards. Apart from these duties, I had to do morning duty once a week where I had to be present early in the morning and welcome the students and teachers. In fact, during tiffin and a short break, the students had to be monitored to avoid any kind of unwanted behaviour and activities. These extra duties apart from the regular responsibilities of a teacher helped me to build my leadership skills and brush up my communication skills to a great extent.

3.4 Challenges Faced during the Internship

There were a few challenges that I had to face during my internship period. For the first two weeks, I struggled in keeping the young learners' attention throughout the whole class time. However, when I was able to build a good bonding with my students and received suggestions and help from my colleagues, I was finally able to handle the students and keep their attention almost till the last minute. Rewarding them with stars for the accomplishment of any work helped a lot in this case.

Secondly, since there were five special needs children who had different creative writing books, it was quite difficult to manage both categories of students at the same time. On one hand, I had to explain the regular lesson to the general students and on the other hand, I had to give attention to

each of the special needs children individually since five of them had different levels of understanding. Thus, in the beginning, it was very challenging to balance both lessons together within the class time but after a few classes, I figured out strategies and could manage and balance it in a better way as now I knew my learners.

Thirdly, another challenge I often faced was the lack of interest of the students in doing creative writing. They would complain that they do not want to write lengthy essays and mostly did not know what to write. Hence, I started to discuss the essay topics before they would start writing and the students would share their ideas among themselves and then produce their writing. I would also provide some words according to the topic so that they could use those words which helped as a guideline for them these strategies helped me to overcome this challenge.

Fourthly, as an ELT major, I learned a lot of teaching techniques and methods which I wanted to execute in my classes. However, I was not allowed to do so since I was an intern. I was provided with a curriculum plan, lesson plans and materials prepared by the previous teachers which I had to follow. Later on, while taking classes, I observed many mistakes in the lesson plans and materials and informed my section-in-charge and course coordinator. Finally, I was permitted to do the corrections and incorporate my answers but with the course coordinator's approval every time.

Finally, copy and script checking was one of the challenges that I had to face which turned into a very frustrating experience for me within a very short time. Since I was taking English Language which had three parts, comprehension, grammar and creative writing, I had a minimum of three classes every day. Therefore, I had to check at least 50 to 55 copies each day. Though checking comprehension and grammar copies was easy, I struggled a lot with creative writing copies. I had

to invest at least 15 minutes in checking each creative writing copy. Hence, I was not able to complete checking within school time and would bring the copies home. This caused me a lot of stress and frustration for a certain period. However, with the motivation of my section-in-charge, I gradually found a way to complete my checking within school time.

Chapter 4

Recommendations

During my internship, I figured out some ideas which can help the teachers to improve the teaching and learning experience:

Firstly, the seating arrangement should be changed from traditional to horseshoe because that would allow the teachers to focus on each student individually and observe their work more efficiently. Moreover, students will also be working faster rather than gossiping with their friends sitting at the back. In addition, a horseshoe seating arrangement would also allow all the students to feel prioritised and each of them can share their views and opinions while others can hear and learn from their peers.

Secondly, there should be a projector in every classroom. I believe it would work magically to teach young learners as they tend to forget what they only hear. If there is a projector, the teacher can show them various images and short videos related to the content which would make the classes more interesting and help to keep their attention till the last moment.

Finally, teachers should be given chances to incorporate materials that they deem necessary for their learners. Every classroom is diverse since every student is different. There are various types of learners and hence teachers need to come up with different strategies to include the needs of all the students. A teacher should be provided with the flexibility to carry out different roles as a facilitator, prompter, participant, resource, tutor and controller as per the needs of the students and the classrooms. S/he should not be adhering to any specific method or role. Thus, the teachers should be given a little scope to decide what is more useful for the learners that they are teaching.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to state that I had an amazing experience during the three months of my internship at Tiny Tots and Summerfield International School. I received the opportunity to brush up on my experience as a teacher alongside gaining love and respect from my students and colleagues. Though I did face a few challenges while working there, I was able to cope with them which I have shared in the previous chapters. The main purpose of my internship was to investigate the role of a teacher in teaching the English Language to young learners in an English Medium school setting. Thus in the process of gathering the experience, I have identified that the role of a teacher as a facilitator works best and the teachers need to use the eclectic approach, that is, blending a few methods and approaches for effective language teaching and learning. I have discussed these aspects in this report by evaluating them with relevant theories. In addition, I have suggested some recommendations which I believe will benefit the young learners.

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