

An Analysis of Teachers' Role: A Case Study



Department of English and Humanities (ENH)

BRAC University

Submitted by: Ummay Sabi Tultul

ID: 07203008

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An Internship Report Submitted Fulfillment of the Requirements for
Degree of Bachelor of Arts in English

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In The Name of Allah
The Most Compassionate
The most Merciful

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Chapter 1

Introduction:

The name of the institution where I did my internship is Abdul Hashem Khan UCEP School. UCEP (Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs) is a well known NGO in Bangladesh. Though it is a NGO but it works for the underprivileged children to give them education. They have several branches all over Dhaka and I was appointed as a teacher at Rayer Bazar section. It was a Bengali medium school but I taught them English. The methods the school followed were mainly GTM (Grammar Translation Method) and Audio Lingual Method. As the students were used to those methods so it was to a certain extent difficult for me to use CLT (Communicative Learning teaching) method. However I managed to use CLT method in the classroom and I tried to complete implementation and fulfill the roles of a teacher. The students getting education here are mostly working children so; they come here at their free time. Though the administration or the school follows the syllabus of Bangladesh education board but they teach the students in a concise way as their one session contains six months. So, the syllabus is concise. They have three different shifts in a day and I am appointed for the first shift which starts at 8.10am and ends at 11.10. They are taught English I paper only so the book used is "English for Today". Although they follow this book but they skip some of the sections of exercise.

A teacher is the core of a classroom and better education or learning takes place if a teacher is well trained and fulfill his/her role. Teaching means to teach something or provide knowledge over something. Different dictionaries have different meanings of teaching and vary from person to person. As it means teaching or training someone so the

teacher's role is very important for the learners to learn and for the learning in a classroom.

Chapter 2

Literature Review:

According to Jim Scrivener in the book called "*Learning Teaching*", there are several ways of teaching but when we think of a teacher the basic characteristics that come to our mind is that a teacher uses maximum time of a class to explain something using the blackboard and standing in the front. Scrivener also said that, there are three kinds of teacher such as the explainer, the involver and the enabler.

There are some teachers who know their subject matters very well and these kind of teachers believe in explaining or lecturing as a medium of conveying the knowledge.

The **involver** teacher "[...is able to use appropriate teaching and organizational procedures and techniques to help the students learn about the subject matter]"

(Scrivener, 25).

The third kind of teachers is confident and enable to control over the class. They handle the class entirely. Decisions and organizations are made by themselves.

Traditionally these pictures come if we think of a teacher. Question answer session is also common in a learning situation.

However within a classroom a teacher has variety of activities or roles to play. And the potential roles of a teacher are given below:

1. As a Controller
2. As an Organizer
3. As an Assessor
4. As a Prompter
5. As a Participant
6. As a Resource person
7. As a Tutor
8. As an Observer
9. As a Performer

2.1 As a Controller:

“The teacher as a controller of everything that goes on in the classroom”, opined by J. Harmer in the book called “*The Practice of English Language Teaching*”. Acting as a controller the teacher controls the whole class and all the activities that take place in the classroom. S/he is the centre of all the power. Teacher controlled activities or classroom situation is different from the situation of group activities. As a controller the teacher takes the lead of all activities like giving instruction, reading aloud and all the things that a teacher does. The teachers who believe in transferring information or knowledge becomes the medium to students mostly feel comfortable by being a controller. These teachers feel at ease participating in the image of a controller as the controller also means the source of knowledge. In a teacher controlled classroom the teacher gives the

announcements, instructions, explanation asked or required by the course, controls the students and monitors them. These are the common role that is seen in situation when the teacher is in control. On the other hand, it has some negative effects. Most importantly, most of the teachers do not go beyond these activities rather they continue with them which make students feel suffocated in the monotonous classroom. Students get less talk time and hardly can speak or ask questions. However, to improve this situation a teacher can create an atmosphere where the students can feel working as a whole group.

2.2 As an Organizer:

Being an organizer is considered as an important role of a teacher. An organizer means managing a classroom with a variety of activities. A teacher as an organizer plays some duties such as giving proper instructions, information, making proper seating arrangements, creating group activities and sum up the class lecture. So as an organizer s/he has to organize all the activities and things from the beginning till the end of a class. Firstly, students should be given “[...supplemental instruction in order to be successful.]” according to Barbara J. Guzzetti in the book called “*Literacy in America: An Encyclopedia of History, Theory and Practice*”. They should be provided with proper instructions so that they can do the task with an ease. The instructions should be as simple as possible and also demonstrate about the tasks. Proper instruction is an important part of organizing a lecture because if the students are not given proper and right instructions then they will face problems and will not understand the task they are required for.

Secondly, a teacher should be aware of students' participation and activities. S/he should make sure that students are ready for the task. When they are ready the teacher should give the needed instructions what they have to do at the beginning and the rest of it.

Students may be divided into groups, in pair or individual activities. However, the teacher should organize the tasks in a way so that students feel something new will happen and they get benefit from it.

Finally, students should finish their task in the allotted time and if they do not the teacher will let them know that it is time to stop. After that the teacher will give feedback and sum up the lecture or class. Thus, a teacher plays his/her role as an organizer.

2.3 As an Assessor:

The role as an assessor means assessing the students' level of learning, giving feedback and grading them. Most teachers are seen as assessors in the classroom. Teachers offer the help if students do not understand something, they give feedback over their activities and also grades them in different ways. As an assessor the teacher checks the students' exam or test papers and corrects the mistakes. A teacher should always be fair in assessing students' grades and "[... must always be sensitive to the students' possible reactions]" (Harmer, 60). They might feel neglected or feel like a bad student. But it is a disadvantage that some teachers cannot be fair. Sometimes they give good grades to those students whom they like. So, while assessing a teacher should be fair. Teachers should check the scripts anonymously, should give equal marks in the same quality of writing or answers. It is a conventional role of a teacher.

2.4 As a Prompter:

Jo McDonough and Christopher Shaw said, "The teacher as prompter, encourages students by 'nudging' them forwards" in the book called "*Materials and Method in ELT*." Motivation is important for both teachers and students. Without motivation, effective teaching or effective learning cannot take place. A motivated teacher can teach better and motivate the learners as well. Sometimes students lose their motivation or they do not have any interest for the lesson so the teacher encourages them as a prompter. A teacher encourages the students by pushing them ahead. The teacher does not help the students fully but partially such as offering words, helping in role play; giving some suggestions etc. A teacher should prompt the students positively and encourage them.

2.5 As a Participant:

Usually teachers are not seen as participants. Mostly, they monitor the activities or offer help to provide information. Hardly teachers participate in any tasks. Students always do group work, pair work, role play etc. but teachers do not participate rather stay as a prompter, organizer or monitor the class.

A teacher can be a participant in the activities. S/he can join in group or make a pair. And when a teacher plays role as participant students feel comfortable as they can share their knowledge too. When a teacher is a participant s/he can know the inside things as being in a group rather staying outside as a monitor and also "[... a teacher as participant is to get pupils to talk and listen to each other, rather than directing all their talk through the teacher]", according to Robert Fisher in the book called "*Teaching Children to Learn*." Most importantly, students enjoy it very much and feel happy.

On the other hand, sometimes students feel shy as they think they might be wrong. Also sometimes teacher cannot cope with the students and dominate them. Students become nervous and conscious.

2.6 As a Resource person:

Sometimes students want to do their work, assignments or task by their own. Here in this kind of situation teacher's interpretation is disregarded. They want to be independent but still they need some help or suggestions from the teacher. For example: a student is writing a paragraph and he can have teacher's help to set it in the right order. The students might need a teacher in the middle of a task.

As a resource the teacher should always be ready to help but s/he should not interfere rather the students should ask for him/her. Through this process students will become independent and increase their capability. So, playing role as a resource is similar to be a consultant or adviser.

2.7 As a Tutor:

"When students are working on longer projects, such as pieces of writing or preparations for a talk or a debate, we can act as a tutor, working with individuals or small groups, pointing them in directions they have not yet thought of taking" (Harmer,62). So, a tutor is a combination of a prompter and resource. Here a teacher works with small groups and individuals in larger groups. When students work in small it is easy for a tutor to go around and give attention to each members of the group. A tutor can stand in that group;

attention on every member of large group. Thus a tutor should help them individually so that every student gets the teacher's help or advice.

However, a tutor should help or guide his/her students but s/he should not break in the task too much or too little.

2.8 As an Observer:

A teacher is an observer. S/he observes the students individually to assess them. The students are observed to give feedback and grades. Students should be observed individually and attentively. They should be observed by their every activity. Teacher can note while observing their performances so that it helps him/her to assess them in future. Although the students are observed they should not be distracted. Teacher should observe them in a way so that they do not distract from their work.

2.9 As a Performer:

Different teachers have different patterns of behavior. So, they also perform differently. A teacher has to do some activities in the classroom and in the book called "*Acting lessons for teachers: using performance skill in the classroom*" Robert T. Tauber and Cathy Sargent Mester said, "[...and playing a role, with the goal of convincing...]" the students. The performance varies from teacher to teacher. The teacher as a performer is the mixture of all the roles discussed above. If a teacher performs badly it affects the learning process. So, it is very important for teacher to be a good performer in the classroom.

Chapter 3

Implementation:

3.1 Experiences as an Intern:

I was appointed as an intern teacher in UCEP (Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs) and taught the language classes of 1st, 4th, 7th and 8th grades. The learners were both primary and secondary level students and the number of students in each class was 30 to 32. As an intern teacher I got the chance of teaching and as my focus was in teachers' role, it was challenging for me. Classroom management techniques are important and a basic requirement to teach language in a class and to create an active and effective teaching I used these regularly in the class.

3.1. i The Obstacles:

There were some obstacles which I faced at the very beginning of my teaching. Firstly, the teaching method that used by the regular teacher was GT method (Grammar Translation) and the teacher used to teach them in their first language which is Bangla and the students were used to it. If I told the students to speak in English they became demotivated and there were hardly any students who volunteered. So, it was difficult for me to apply CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) and teach them in English. I had to speak in both English and Bangla and the time was also limited. As a result it was hard for me to complete each required tasks in the classroom.

Secondly, as an organizer I could not make proper use of seating arrangements because the seats were fixed and heavy to move. Three students sit together in each bench so it was difficult for me to create pair work and to control them.

Most importantly, I had to monitor the learners always and I could not apply the vanish mode in the classroom. The students had natures of cheating and side talking while doing the tasks. So I had to monitor them all the time. However, I tried to overcome the obstacles through creating interest in the tasks.

3.1. ii Implementation of Techniques:

It is important to increase the learners' proficiency level in a language class. To increase learners' proficiency level; an effective class is very important. I integrated classroom management techniques to provide the learners effective teaching or learning. In order to achieve the better proficiency level of the students I incorporated pair work and group work. As they were used to with GT method they feel interest and active in these tasks. It also created opportunities for the weak students to participate in any task. In this process as a monitor or an observer I could observe the performances of each students as well as their progress.

There were three rows so sometimes I divided into three groups. One row was a single group and I made their competitor the other groups. And the winner group will have rewards. So the students were curious and liked this game. I applied this technique as well.

Elicitation creates interests among the students. It also makes them attentive in the classroom. I always started any topic with an elicitation. I asked the students about the topic if they know anything or they want to share their experience with the class. Students were very active and felt interesting. They also wanted to participate.

Giving the instruction is an important element in an effective teaching. Proper instruction will guide the students to finish any task as it should be. I gave the proper instructions as a controller of the class. The regular teacher of the learners used to instruct them in their L1. As a result it was hard for the learners to understand the instructions in English. So, I gave instructions in English using simple words and sentences first then I repeat it in their L1 so that they understand the instruction properly. I also explained the tasks and how to do them.

A teacher should use gestures. I used gestures wherever it was applicable. I used to make eye contact and pointing by fingers with the students. Some students might not like calling them through eye contact thus I also used to call by their names.

Monitoring the classroom is a key feature of a teacher. I monitored each and every classroom. When the students were involved in their work I monitored them. If it was an individual work I had to monitor them strictly so that they cannot cheat.

With the aim of effective class I used blackboard and board drawing. I used the blackboard if I had anything to write down. I also took their lessons in the board to check their progress, spelling and to know whether they were doing it by themselves. The students showed a lot of interest in this activity. The advantage of this activity was I could call the weak and introvert students who were not used to participate and to come at the front.

Teacher action zone is an important part of teaching. Some teachers are used to keep their eyes in particular students. But I did not have any particular zone rather I kept my eyes on everyone thus I also could contact with introvert students.

I used CLT method for my teaching. And students liked this technique a lot because the activities and works were new to them.

As an assessor I assessed the students with their work and progress. I offered help if they do not understand anything or they need my help. I also checked their scripts and tried to be fair while checking them. It is important to be fair in assessing their scripts because they might react negatively so I kept that always in my mind.

As a prompter I tried to motivate the students to speak in English and the students were very interested. They wanted to talk in English and they tried. I also prompted them in other activities.

Giving feedback is necessary. I gave feedback to them after their tasks. I gave my comments in the scripts in details so that they understand their mistakes and errors. If the students were not able to understand then I asked to talk to me after the class and I asked them about their problems. After any task or activity I asked them about the task whether they liked it or not. If they did not like it then I also asked them about it.

The interaction between students and teacher was better as well as students among themselves. As an ELT (English Language Teaching) learner I know that teacher talk time should be 30% and students talk time should be 70%, I tried to maintain that and create such opportunities for the students to interact more.

I ended up all the classes by revising and summarizing the lectures and tried to give them home works.

Examples:

1st Grade: Use of “And” (suggested topic)

First I elicited the topic and I asked them to tell me some sentences using and. Some students volunteered and gave some sentences and I wrote them on the blackboard. Then I elaborated and described the use of and. First I described it in English and then translated it into their L1. After that I gave some examples and to clarify their understanding I asked them several times about it. Then I wrote some sentences with blanks for class work. It was a pair work because the topic was new to them and I thought by interaction they will learn better. I monitored them while they were doing their tasks. After finishing their task I checked their copies and gave feedbacks. It was an effective pair work and as a teacher I fulfilled the roles of a teacher.

4th Grade: Punctuation (suggested topic)

At the beginning of the class I wrote some sentences using comma (,) and full stop (.). Then I asked them about these. Some students answered and some were confused. After that I started my teaching. I explained the use of comma and full stop. I asked them if they had any problem understanding it and then I repeat it again. Then I gave them proper instruction to do the class work. I clarified the instruction so that they did not face any problem. It was an individual work and I monitored the whole class. I offered my help if needed. After finishing their work I checked their copies and gave feedback. At the end I ended the class by summarizing the lessons.

7th Grade: The diary of Anne Frank (suggested topic)

First of all, I asked the students who wrote diary and maximum students raised their hands. I asked some what are the things they used to write. Then told them the topic and as it was a reading material I called two students to come in front and read the dialogues. After their reading I described the matter. Then I divided them into groups of three members and asked them to find out the unknown words and underline them. After that they should come up with the meanings of the words from the given context and write down a dialogue between three friends in any topic as they wish. I participated with one group as a member and did the task. After that when everyone was finished I shared all the dialogues with the class and gave them the feedbacks. Few were able to found out the meanings from the context and maximum students could not. So I made them understand the meaning from the context and the guessed. It was a successful class.

8th Grade: Knowledge Part: 3 (suggested topic)

I started the class by asking them to describe the given picture in the book in English so that their speaking skill developed. Few students volunteered. Then I asked the introvert and weak students to read so that they participate. After that I summarized the topic and asked them to underline the unknown words and guess the meaning. I asked the students and they answered. Then I wrote the meanings on the board. After that I told them to answer the question given in the text by using it. It was an individual work. I checked their copies and gave feedbacks. I gave them some true/false as homework and ended the class by summarizing the lectures.

Chapter 4

Recommendation:

GT method was used by the teachers in the language class. The learners were habituated with this method and they were more comfortable with their L1. To increase their proficiency level they should be introduced and taught by CLT method.

The students were taught only language or English 1st paper. They did not know anything about grammar. As a result it became difficult for me to make them understand about grammar. And as a consequence they were weak in writing skill. So they should be taught grammar as well because it is also necessary.

As their syllabus was prearranged and so there was no scope to setting up various kinds of activities. Although they follow the given book but they skip some sections of exercise. They should not omit them rather practice those exercise. As the students in the school are working children so they are given old and used books. So if they were given any home work or take home lesson they just copy it from the book because it was done by previous students. Therefore they must be given new books to motivate the students to learn by themselves and not to cheat.

Most of the students had the habit of memorization rather understanding any topic. For example: if I wrote or told them any sentence using a word they used to memorize it. And as a result if I asked them to write or tell another sentence using that word they were not able to do that. So, they should be taught any topic deductively so that they understand about the topic rather memorize it.

There were mixed proficiency level students in every class and they were not at same ages. The age of the students was also not equal. Sometimes it varies too far. As a result

some students needed more time think and finish the tasks and some were faster. Those who were faster always tried to participating and leading the class. On the other hand, the weak students hardly volunteered. To overcome these problems I applied pair work and group work so that every one could participate and interact with each other. And thus it was easy for me to find out the proficiency level of the students.

Another consequence of GT method was the students did not feel comfortable to interact with the teachers. They felt ashamed to ask the teacher for clarification if they did not understand anything. They felt uncomfortable to talk to the teachers about their problems. So, I tried to create the friendly atmosphere and always assured them that if needed I was always there to provide help.

The students were not familiar with elicitation, prediction etc. and when I applied these they were very interested and tried to participate in the tasks or discussions. So, students should be introduced by these classroom management techniques. And thus they will not feel boring and monotonous class.

Most importantly, teachers should provide feedback and assess the students fairly. They should be given feedback so that they can find out and understand their problems as well as should be asked about their comments on the tasks. Students' script should be assessing fairly.

Chapter 5

Conclusion:

Teachers' role enhances a better and effective learning and teaching as it involves proper guidance to the learners. It not only assures the guidance but also fulfill the requirements of classroom managements which are the basic requirements of a class.

As a controller teacher leads all the activities thus a class goes within planning. The organization of the teacher makes it more appropriate. As the teacher monitors and assesses the students it helps them to do better in future. As a prompter s/he helps them in learning and motivates them. And thus the students become self dependent.

In brief it can be said that, implementation of these characteristics of a teacher provides better learning opportunities.

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