Assiut University
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TEFL/TESOL Methodology 2

Advanced Language Teaching/Learning Strategies

By

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TEFL/TESOL Methodology 2: Advanced Language Teaching/Learning Strategies (2nd Edition)

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Acknowledgement

As I mentioned in the 1st edition, I feel so grateful to 4th-year EFL student teachers at Assiut University Faculty of Education during the 1st semester of the academic year 2014/2015. I wholeheartedly thank them for their creative ideas and active participation while studying the TESOL/TEFL Methodology 2 course, which inspired and helped me while writing this book. I consider them my co-authors, as I employed here much of the summaries, oral discussions and written reports they enthusiastically made during the lectures, workshops and online! Also, I'd like to thank all those active MA and PhD researchers who willingly contributed to the book with some excerpts of the theoretical background sections in their theses. Finally, I'd like to thank my colleague, Dr Rehab A. Elsayed, lecturer of Curriculum & TESOL at Faculty of Education, Assiut University, for her insightful input on Virtual Language Learning (VLL) in Chapter Seven.

Preface

TEFL/TESOL Methodology 2: Advanced Language Teaching/Learning Strategies (2nd Edition) is a language methodology course with a modern touch. In other words, it is a combination of the most commonly used language teaching approaches, strategies and/or techniques in modern schools nowadays. In particular, it is intended to be used both as (1) an EFL teaching guide that complements (and builds on) the previous *TEFL/TESOL Methodology 1 course*, and (2) an Advanced Language Teaching/Learning Strategies post-graduate course for TESOL/TEFL specialists (some parts and chapters were written for this specific audience). Thus, it aims at acquainting senior (4th-year) EFL student teachers and post-graduate students (majoring in Curriculum & TESOL/TEFL) with the knowledge and skills required for teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) at Egyptian schools, with specific reference to secondary schools.

Moreover, the course explores some important language learning issues and teaching/learning strategies, techniques and scenarios, which have emerged to reinforce students' language learning, and address many language-learning problems and/or difficulties. Thus, the main topics include: (1) introducing some problematic educational (language learning) terms (i.e. epistemology, approach, methodology, method, procedure, technique and strategy) (Chapter One), and other commonly used language learning terms (Chapter Eleven); This includes guiding senior EFL student teachers into how to deal with secondary-stage students, and help them to learn the English language effectively, and how to employ EFL teacher observation checklist/sheet prepared by the author during their practicum (Chapter One); (2) how to employ effective and successful classroom management inside the classroom (Chapter Two); (3) how to use and employ many modern language learning/teaching strategies, such as: situated language learning scenarios/tasks (Chapter Three); Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) including online (Web-based) learning strategies, Web-Mediated Language Learning or WMLL (Chapter Nine), and Virtual Language Learning or VLL (Chapter Seven, prepared by my colleague, Dr Rehab A. Elsayed); Multiple Intelligences-Based Language Learning Strategies (Chapter Ten); (4) how to employ Facebook (and other social networks) for a variety of language learning/teaching purposes (Chapter Five); (5) using assessment and English language testing, including alternative assessment strategies and/or techniques (Chapter Four); (6) how to develop students' advanced writing skills, especially while using computers and IT (Chapter Eight); and (7) how to use fun and humour in formal English language teaching/learning settings (Chapter Six).

Along with the basic knowledge that senior EFL student teachers need to gain and the teaching skills they need to develop, the book also conveys my understanding of how TESOL/TEFL should be tackled within the Egyptian context in the light of the new technologies, and their subsequent literacy challenges imposed by the 21st century, and the new literacy and language theories that have been recently influencing language teaching and learning. Therefore, in addition to its primary goal of developing and advancing EFL students teachers' knowledge and understanding of language learning in today's world, the course is also intended to be used by them as a *guide* that should help with choosing the appropriate language learning strategies, approaches and/or techniques based on the specific requirements of their teaching/learning situations.

Mahmoud Abdallah

Assiut, Egypt (June 2019)

Course Specifications

English Language Teaching Methods (2) or "TEFL/TESOL Methodology 2"

1- Course Details:		
Code: CURR411	**Course Title:** English Language Teaching Methods (2)	**Level:** 4th year (1st semester)
Major: Bachelor of Arts & Education (English Section)	**No. of Units:** Lecture (2 hours) Practical Sessions/Workshops (1 hour)	
Aims:	Student teachers are expected to analyze the major theories and principles behind the methods, techniques, and strategies that would help them to teach language skills.	

Teaching and Learning Methods	Lecturing Discussion Micro-teaching and practical workshops Online learning
Teaching and Learning Methods for Low & Gifted Learners	Giving them special exercises and written assignment Discussing their mistakes privately after class Online learning (for gifted learners) Reflective learning (for gifted learners)
Evaluation:	
a) Tools	Mid-term written test Final- term written test Oral presentations Online reports
b) Time Schedule	-A lecture every week, with each chapter/topic being covered either in one lecture or in two successive lectures depending on the length of each chapter

	-The last 2 weeks are allocated for revision - Mid-term exam week 7 -Final exam week 16
c) Grading System	Semester work=25 Oral=25 Written exam=**75** ***Total=125***
List of References:	
a- Course Notes	Notes in Methods of TEFL/TESOL: Abdallah, M. M. S. (2019). *TEFL/TESOL Methodology 2: Advanced Language Teaching/Learning Strategies (2nd ed)*. Faculty of Education, Assiut University, Egypt.
b- Required Books (Text Books)	- Abdallah, M. M. S. (2011). *Teaching English as a Foreign Language from a New Literacy Perspective: A Guide for Egyptian EFL Student Teachers*. VDM Verlag Dr. Müller, Saarbrücken, Germany. - Abdallah, M. M. S. (2016). *TEFL/TESOL Methodology Two: A Guide for Egyptian Senior EFL Student Teachers*. Assiut University College of Education, Egypt. -Shawer, S. (2007). *The Complete Step by Step Guide to Test Design, Administration Scoring, Analysis, and Interpretation*. Cairo: Dar El-Fekr El-Araby.
c- Reference Books	Spotlight on Primary English Education Resources (SPEER) A Resource Text for Egyptian Primary English Educators, Supervisors and Teachers. Academy for Educational Development. 2002 Arab Republic of Egypt. Ministry of Education
d- Periodicals	English Teaching Forum; Arab World English Journal (AWEJ); TESOL Quarterly

Contents

CHAPTER ONE

Teaching English at the Secondary School

1.1 Introduction

Generally, teaching at the secondary stage might be somehow **challenging** in Egypt. Novice teachers meet new types of students with different **orientations, attitudes and abilities**. Besides, the courses taught there look **more advanced** and complicated compared with those taught at the preparatory stage. Further, secondary-school students start to think seriously about their future tertiary education which is sharply determined by the total scores they get in the 2nd and 3rd years. In other words, in this **exam-oriented system**, students' results are becoming decisive for each student's future career opportunities. Therefore, teachers should take these conditions into consideration while dealing with those learners.

General Secondary Education refers to that type of secondary education, as an educational stage which precedes tertiary (higher) education. This type of secondary education extends over three years, of which the first serves as a preparatory year for the other two. In this first year the student studies both humanistic and scientific subjects. At the end of the year, and on the basis of his or her grades, the student enters one of ***three streams*** in which s/he will study for the next two years: humanistic, scientific, or mathematical, each with its specific curricular focus, although some subjects, such as Arabic and religious education, are taught in all streams (available at: http://www.impact-se.org/docs/reports/Egypt/EgyptMarch2004_ch1.pdf).

As far as English language learning (ELL) at the secondary stage is concerned, there are many ***challenges*** that novice teachers face, which can be summarised in the following points:

- The **exam-oriented nature** that highly controls (and influences) the process of handling the English language courses at this stage;
- The **traditional methods** preferred and used by **senior teachers** of English (old generation) who neither follow the stipulated teacher's guide adequately nor conduct the learning activities in the required communicative/interactive fashion, ;
- The ***private lessons/tutorials*** provided by English teachers outside schools in return for big sums of money, which make regular attendance of English classes at school a very peripheral or minor practice;
- The ***cultural and growth problems*** that make some students inactive and reluctant to participate during the English class;
- The growing number of students' ***populations*** in classrooms which make them unsuitable places for proper language learning and practice (the ideal language class should include no more than 25 students);
- Some students' **negative attitudes** towards the English language itself, and their focus on **a set of linguistic and knowledge aspects** that always appear in the final exam, at the expense of those human and **communicative aspects** that should enable them to use the target language properly and effectively.

For more information on the Hello! Course at the secondary stage, please Google it or open this link to access Teacher's Guide:

http://elearning1.moe.gov.eg/sec/semester1/Grade1/pdf/Engish_1sec_t1_TG.pdf

1.2 Nature of English Courses at the Secondary Stage

In general, the main **aim** of teaching English as a foreign language at the four mainstream educational stages (i.e. pre-school, primary, preparatory and secondary stages) in Egypt is to enable learners to **communicate** in English. However, this main aim is translated into some **specific minor aims** within each stage. For example, the main aim of teaching English at the preparatory stage is to enable learners to communicate in English and use the target language to accomplish some realistic goals while integrating the main four language skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing).

Subsequently, the aim of teaching English to secondary-school students (especially in the first year) is to equip students of secondary school age with the necessary **language, thinking and study skills** to ***communicate*** effectively and to understand spoken and written English competently. It aims to give students the necessary **experience** and **confidence** to apply these skills both inside and outside the classroom and beyond school in their current and future lives. **New** language, skills and topics are introduced **gradually** and practiced thoroughly, so that students have the chance to learn and use the language before they move on. **Critical thinking** skills and awareness of strategies to improve language and learning skills support the learning of language and contribute to the **development** of a more **autonomous** learner.

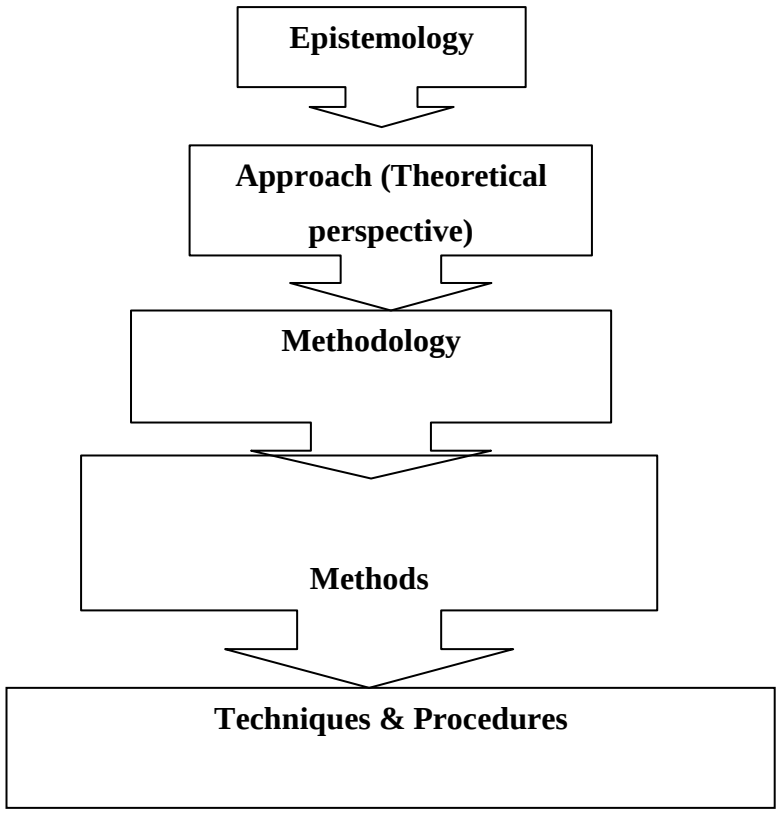
Thus, in addition to presenting new topics and developing more advanced language and thinking skills, the English courses at the secondary stage also ***build upon*** the knowledge, skills and ***linguistic-communicative competences*** developed by students in the preparatory stage. Language is a **connected whole** that is hard to segmented or split. Therefore, it sounds a good idea if secondary-school English teachers spend some time to **revise** the preparatory English courses, especially in terms of goals/aims, objectives, scope and sequence, vocabulary, grammar and language functions.

Thus, the **current** secondary-one course (***Hello! English for Secondary Schools: Year One***) develops and extends the **language and skills** which students acquired through *Hello! English for Preparatory Schools*. Previous structures, lexis and functions are built on and enriched. For example, in the first units, students are helped to make the **transition** from the preparatory to the secondary stage by **recycling** previously studied language and structures in a new context with more mature content.

Moreover, some literary components (i.e. literature) are integrated to enable students to get familiarised with the literature of the target language (English). Those components, along with the various language activities that target developing the main language skills, are necessary for acquainting students with advanced language competencies.

1.3 Knowledge Acquisition & Language Learning Methodology

It sounds appropriate here to explain the problematic concepts that EFL (student) teachers might struggle with. These concepts are: epistemology, approach, methodology, method, and technique. Crotty (2003) provides a comprehensive theoretical argument in this respect (see Figure 1 below). These concepts are: epistemology, approach, methodology, method, and technique. Crotty (2003) provides a comprehensive theoretical argument in this respect (see Figure 1 below): ***Figure 1: Crotty's Diagram (adapted)***



Although Crotty targeted the social research process from this argument, I think that the argument is still useful and significant for English language teaching methodology as well. Hence, I will try here to adjust this argument to our field.

1.3.1 Epistemology: How one gets knowledge

Generally, '**epistemology**' refers to the theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspective and thereby in the methodology. It is a very general term that relates to the broad question of how one gets knowledge in this world. Therefore, epistemology is related more to the human knowledge in general, than to language learning in particular. In other words, it tries to specify the way through which one acquires the knowledge existing out there. Hence, it explores the nature of knowledge itself, and whether it is obtained objectively or subjectively in this world. In other words, it poses questions such as: is knowledge obtained through direct, concrete interaction with the physical world in a unified fashion, and consequently becomes an ***objective***, standardised reality equally available to all the people around? Or is it ***subjectively*** formed throughout our interactions with others, and hence our personal interpretations and judgements become significant in this knowledge formation process? Or is it neither purely objective nor purely subjective, but takes a ***critical*** or pragmatic stance instead?

Thus, **epistemology** deals with 'the nature of knowledge, its possibility, scope and general basis' (Hamlyn, 1995: p242). In this regard, two roughly defined clusters of standpoints can be distinguished: ***absolutist*** (also termed: realistic &

objective) and ***fallibilist*** (also termed: subjectivist, interpretativist, relativist) perspectives. The difference between these standpoints is profound. An *absolutist* epistemology views 'truth' as something that can be attained. Thus, things exist independently of any mind. In other words, ***Objectivist*** epistemology, for example, holds that meaning, and therefore, meaningful reality, exists apart from the operation of any consciousness. Thus, a tree in the forest is *a tree,* regardless of whether anyone is aware of its existence or not. In other words, when human beings recognise it as a tree, they are simply discovering a meaning that has been lying there in wait for them all along (Crotty, 2003: p8). On the other hand, a ***fallibilist*** (***constructionism*** or ***subjective***) epistemology rejects this objective view of human knowledge contending that there is no objective truth waiting for us to discover; instead, truth, or meaning, comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world. Thus, meaning is NOT discovered, but ***constructed***, and hence, different people might construct meaning in different ways, even when the same phenomenon is in question (Crotty, 2003: p9). *Fallibilism* is a sceptical position, in that it believes that no knowledge is eternal, absolute, superhuman, and above error and change. Similarly, *relativism* is the view that knowledge is dependent on the knower and his/her context. Or, as *constructivism* suggests, knowledge is not passively received, but actively built up by the cognizing subject. Moreover, the function of cognition is adaptive and serves the organisation of the experiential world, not the discovery of ontological reality. Accordingly, learners construct their own understanding, which is not received directly from outside (e.g. from the teacher). Thus, learners (and we) do not discover a real objective world, but *construct* a personal model of the world

from which we can never escape. As a result, no certain knowledge of the world is ever possible.

Further, ***pragmatism*** as a third epistemology is a pluralistic real-world, practice-oriented, and problem-centred position that does not see the world as an absolute unity. Some epistemologies prioritise the mind over matter (i.e. the physical world), while others focus mainly on the physical world as an objective reality that has nothing to do with our thinking minds, and hence a ***duality*** was established among thinkers and philosophers. As an alternative to the mind-matter dualism, the ***pragmatic*** approach to education, which dates back to Dewey (1929), posits a ***transactional realism***, one in which reality only reveals itself as a result of the activities of the organism, and thus the focus should be on the "interactions between the living human organism and its environment" (Biesta & Burbules, 2003: p10).

Instead of separating mind from matter (real world), ***Dewey's*** pragmatism incorporates both of them into one entity conceptualising nature itself as "a moving whole of interacting parts" (Dewey, 1929: p232). Dewey did not want to identify his pragmatism with any of the two extremes (i.e. idealism vs. realism). Instead, he wanted his philosophy to stand between objectivism and subjectivism, and between idealism and realism, highlighting the importance of real interaction with (and experience of) the lived world, and thus, favouring an ***experiential/experimental*** learning theory (Biesta & Burbules, 2003). Thus, Dewey views knowledge as a construction, not of the human mind, but that is located in the organism-transaction itself (Biesta & Burbules, 2003: p11).

1.3.2 Approach (Theoretical Perspective)

Approach (theoretical perspective) is a way of looking at the world and making sense of it. It might draw on a certain epistemology (i.e. a theory of knowledge), but its main function is to ***guide*** and underlie specific ***methodologies***. In other words, it is the ***philosophical stance*** that lies behind our chosen methodology. Thus, in a language learning context, an approach is a ***set of beliefs*** or ***assumptions*** about language and how it is taught and learned. These beliefs or assumptions provide the logic and criteria needed for the methodology we will use. In this context, Harmer (2001: p78) contends that an approach 'describes how people acquire their knowledge about the language and make statements about the conditions which will promote successful language learning'. Thus, *behaviourism* and *naturalism* can be two distinctive approaches to language learning.

An approach can be interpreted and applied in a variety of different ways in the classroom. Thus, if we approach English language learning/teaching from a ***behaviouristic*** perspective that highlights the stimulus-response or input-output system in language learning, then all our teaching/learning activities will be centred on the ***observable behaviour*** of learners as a main indication of their learning. On the other hand, if we hold a ***communicative*** approach according to which 'language is for communication' or 'language should be taught communicatively so that learning becomes effective and meaningful', then our ***methodology*** should be a communicative one that applies the assumptions or beliefs constituting the communicative approach we are adopting.

Similarly, one might hold a ***socio-cultural approach*** to language learning according to which language learning becomes a ***social process*** in the first place rather than a purely individual and cognitive one (Wertsch, 1991). This process is ***mediated*** by cultural tools, both physical and mental, that will gradually become integrated into the learner's mind. In this case, the methodology s/he will use should focus on socio-cultural learning activities/techniques such as: cooperative/collaborative language learning, peer teaching, group discussions, Web-mediated learning, and reciprocal teaching (see also Cumming-Potvin et al, 2003).

In the same vein, if one holds a ***constructivist*** approach to language learning that stresses students' pre-existing knowledge, beliefs, and experiences (see, for example, Hu, 2005), then the chosen methodology will focus on ***learner-centred***, ***enquiry-based***, and ***reflective*** activities (Mintrop, 2001) in which case the students' previous knowledge is activated and built upon. In other words, the learners' ***voices*** will be heard more in the classroom in the light of this constructivist pedagogy.

1.3.3 Methodology

According to Crotty (2003: p7), from a social research perspective, a **methodology** provides the rationale for the choice of certain methods to accomplish the overall goal. A **methodology**, as I understand it, describes a strategy or an organised ***plan of action*** to ***carry out*** the abstract philosophy entailed in an approach. Thus, a methodology should be compatible with the

main approach and go in line with its main premises and/or assumptions. In other words, it translates the abstract approach into ***feasible***, meaningful practices and procedures that can be carried out inside the classroom. This way, a methodology functions as a ***means*** that links theory to practice in English language teaching/learning.

At a lower level, **methods** describe the various ways of carrying out a certain methodology. According to Harmer (2001: p78), a **method** is 'the ***practical*** realisation of an approach'. For Richards and Rodgers (2001), a method refers to a specific ***instructional design*** based on particular theories of language and language learning. Thus, in each method, the following aspects are clearly specified: (1) the linguistic content and the sequencing of the syllabus; (2) roles of both the teacher and learners; (3) the classroom techniques to be followed; and (4) assessment/evaluation procedures and/or techniques (see also Barnard, 2004). There are many language teaching methods in literature such as: The Grammar-Translation Method, the Audio-Lingual Method, the Direct Method, and the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Method.

However, there is a recent argument that should be considered in this regard which implies that the best method is that there should be no specific method. In this regard, Brown (2002) argues that in this ***post-method*** era, ***there is no 'one-size-fits-all' method*** that will suit every individual learner and teacher. There are many personal factors (e.g., individual differences, motivations, and personal preferences) that inevitably interfere with the teaching-learning process. None of the adopted methods has yet proven to be, as I can phrase it, the ***'panacea'*** for all

the language learning illnesses and problems. Consequently, teachers have to be ***eclectic*** or ***selective*** by developing a ***fitness-for-purpose*** attitude according to which the goals/objectives at hand should guide how they teach, not the other way around.

Realistically speaking, each method has its own advantages and disadvantages; up till now, no method has been empirically proven the best for all language educators to blindly adopt without discussion. For example, the current great enthusiasm to (and wide adoption of) the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method in Egypt can be attributed to the failure of the previously adopted method (i.e. the Grammar-Translation Method) to meet the national language learning goals. It failed to develop a language learner who can communicate properly in English. This does not mean that the CLT will stay forever, especially in this ICT-dominated age that has been changing the nature of language and how it should be taught (see Chapter 1).

1.3.4 Procedures & Techniques

Procedures refer to the ***direct steps*** that teachers should follow inside the classroom to accomplish the stated objectives based on the adopted method. In language learning terms, a **procedure** concerns the techniques and practices employed in the classroom as consequences of a particular approach or design (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). In other words, it refers to the detailed, organised, and ***concrete means*** that teachers can easily state in advance in their teaching

notes. This way, they are more relevant to the teaching/learning practices at the classroom level.

A teacher by himself/herself might not be able to translate the teaching method and/or approach s/he is adopting into detailed, meaningful steps that help with accomplishing the objectives of the lesson. For this reason, a teacher's guide provides the detailed procedures that the teacher should follow for each lesson. However, these stipulated procedures are not intended to be final or closed in the narrow sense; rather, they should be flexible enough to be adapted, and also be open to discussion and amendments/revisions to be made on them if/when necessary. Sometimes a teacher is obliged (owing to time constraints or whatever) to skip, modify, and/or merge together some procedures. This is natural in teaching/learning in general as a human activity that can never be fully controlled in the same way laboratory experiments are controlled. However still, the followed procedures should conform to the main language learning/teaching approach and methods employed.

Techniques, on the other hand, are used to realise a certain objective by ***carrying out*** a specific ***activity*** in a certain way; or by ***doing*** something ***directly*** during learning in a way that sounds appropriate and relevant. Examples of techniques include: individual work, pair work, and group work (which are commonly referred to as ***organisational*** techniques). They also include the ***options*** available for teachers to do the same thing. For example, there is a wide range of available techniques that s/he can use to present new vocabulary and grammar/structure (e.g., dramatisation, definition, Arabic translation, miming, using pictures/drawings, using real situations, and using gestures). Similarly,

there are many techniques that a teacher can use for ***drilling*** and ***practice***, such as asking students to: re-arrange sentences, match words with pictures, substitute words with certain ones given, fill in the missing parts, re-write a paragraph, and find the odd-one-out item/word. These are common practices that English language teachers always do in the classroom, even without realising that they are called 'techniques'.

The **current approach** employed in Egyptian secondary schools nowadays is based the standards-based curricular reform; it is called, '***Standard-based communicative language teaching***'. It is '***standard-based'*** because it aims to fulfil the **standards** set out in the Ministry of Education Standards Document. According to this approach/methodology, students are presented with **interesting topics** and **meaningful** situations right from the start of their secondary-level education. They use and **integrate** the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in **meaningful contexts** and undertake realistic language tasks which they would potentially undertake in future academic, professional or vocational situations. To do this effectively, student-to-student interaction in class is necessary. Please see this link for more details: http://elearning1.moe.gov.eg/sec/semester1/Grade1/pdf/Engish_1sec_t1_TG.pdf

Generally, the language teaching-learning approaches and methodologies at the secondary stage should focus on the **whole development** of the learner, and develop the **language and cognitive skills** creatively. In particular, they should be translated into some **interactive activities and tasks** that should help

learners with developing advanced language knowledge, skills and competencies. Thus, those approaches/methodologies should:

1. address the ***main language skills*** (i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing) interactively;
2. employ ***communicative*** and ***cooperative*** language learning strategies/techniques;
3. employ ***self-study*** and ***reflective*** learning (e.g. writing personal journals and posting on blogs);
4. creates a ***community-based*** learning environment;
5. employ ***different techniques*** of student-student and teacher-students ***interaction*** (e.g. individual work, pair work and group work);
6. employ ***new technologies*** (e.g. academic websites and social networking websites) and different teaching-learning aids for realistic language learning purposes;
7. allow for more ***extensive reading*** to be done by students (especially at home) and more ***extra-curricula*** activities; and
8. allow for both cooperative learning and independent study.

1.4 Language Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies are defined by Cohen (1998) as ‘‘the conscious thoughts and behaviours used by learners with the explicit goal of improving their knowledge of a target language” (p. 68). Such strategies are usually contrasted with *communication strategies*, which are, unlike learning strategies, concerned with the production of L2 output, not its acquisition and

internalization. Language learning strategies are also contrasted with learning styles due to their problem-oriented nature: Strategies are used when a learner is faced with a specific learning difficulty, and his/her strategic approach may change in accordance with the nature of the learning problem faced. Styles, on the other hand, are relatively fixed and do not change dramatically from one learning task to the next (Brown, 1994).

There are now different classification systems available for language learning strategies. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) divide learning strategies into three groups of *metacognitive*, *cognitive*, and *social/affective*. ***Metacognitive learning strategies*** are ''higher order executive skills that may entail planning for, monitoring, or evaluating the success of a learning activity" (p. 44), while ***cognitive learning strategies*** ''operate directly on incoming information, manipulating it in ways to enhance learning" (ibid.). ***Social/affective strategies*** are concerned with the control of affect and interaction with the others. In another classification, Oxford (1990) makes a distinction between two broad classes of language learning strategies: Direct and indirect. *Direct language learning strategies* deal with ''language itself in a variety of specific tasks and situations" (p. 14) while indirect learning strategies are for ''the general management of learning" (p. 15). Direct language learning strategies include memory strategies (for storing and retrieving new information), cognitive strategies (for comprehending and producing language), and compensation strategies (for overcoming gaps in the learner's L2 knowledge). In the indirect category, Oxford refers to metacognitive learning strategies (dealing with the

management and coordination of the learning process), affective strategies (concerned with the emotional regulation of second language learning), and social strategies (related to learning through interaction with others) (Akbari & Hosseini, 2008).

1.4.1 Metacognitive language learning strategies

According to some previous studies (e.g. Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002; Rossiter, 2003; Thompson, 2012), language teachers have an important role while using metacognitive learning strategies that can be represented in (Salman, 2018):

- recognising task requirements;
- giving explicit instructions;
- cueing students to analyse tasks;
- selecting and implementing strategies (i.e. planning skills and deciding upon how completion will be judged); and
- monitoring and adjusting performance (i.e. assigning some time during a lesson to stop and monitor how the task is going).

Mokhtari and Reichard (2002) argue that thinking is a skill that can be learned, practiced, developed and improved, suggesting four ways that a teacher can use to promote metacognitive awareness:

- Telling students about metacognition and promoting the processes in his/her own work;
- teaching students about the types of strategies they can use to study and learn;

- helping students to learn how to regulate their thinking as they work on a task; and
- demonstrating that metacognition is valued in the classroom.

Metacognition combines various thinking and reflective processes, which can be divided into five primary components: (1) preparing and planning for learning; (2) selecting and using learning strategies; (3) monitoring strategy use; (4) orchestrating various strategies; and (5) evaluating strategy use and learning. Teachers should model strategies for learners to follow in all five areas (Anderson, 1999).

Metacognition enables students to be more active in their language learning; and therefore, they must know how they learn and be aware of the steps that are followed and the means that are used to acquire knowledge, solve problems, and perform tasks (Schunk & Pintrich, 2002; Paul et al., 2009; Oxford, 2011).

According to the LD Online Glossary (2014), metacognition is the process of thinking about thinking. For example, good writers use metacognition before writing when they clarify their purpose. In other words, metacognition is the understanding and awareness of one's own mental or cognitive processes. Here are some examples and illustrations of metacognition:

1- A student learns about which things that would help him or her to remember facts, names, and events.
2- A student learns about which strategies are the most effective for solving problems.

3- A student learns about his or her own learning style.

For Morin (2014), metacognition involves thinking and reflecting before, during, and after a learning task. It starts when students think about the strategies they will use to perform a task, and happens when they choose the most effective strategies and decide for themselves whether the outcome of these strategies meets the standards. The time taken to teach a variety of strategies is very important because students must choose strategies for each task they perform. Owen (2002) identifies many ways and steps that teachers can use to implement metacognitive strategies within language teaching/ learning settings. These include:

1- Choosing an appropriate metacognitive strategy for the creative writing skills.
2- Describing and modelling the strategy at least three times.
3- Checking students' understanding to ensure their comprehension of both the strategy and how it can be used.
4- Providing ample opportunities for students to practice using the suggested strategy.
5- Providing a timely corrective feedback and a model use of strategy as expected.
6- Providing students with strategy cue sheets as they begin to use the strategy independently.
7- Reinforcing students for using the strategy appropriately.

It seems that the metacognitive strategies that allow students to plan, control, and evaluate their learning have the most central role to play; hence, the ability to choose and evaluate one's strategies is of central importance (Graham, 1997). Rather than focusing students' attention solely on learning the language, second/ foreign language teachers can help students to learn to think about what happens during the language learning process, which will lead them to develop stronger learning skills. Metacognition is most closely associated with a teacher's instructional and metacognitive practices which- if done effectively- can lead to student self- regulation and learning control.

According to the inclusive schools network (2014), the purpose of teaching metacognitive strategies is to provide students with explicit teacher instruction for a specific metacognitive learning strategy. Teachers who use metacognitive strategies can positively impact students who have learning disabilities by helping them to develop an appropriate plan for learning information, which can be memorized. As students become aware of how they learn, they will use these processes to efficiently acquire new information, and consequently, become more independent thinkers.

Many metacognitive strategies are appropriate to use in the language classroom; these include: (1) Thinking a loud;(2) organizational tools; and (3) explicit teacher modelling.

In the same context, Lerner (2006) mentions some basic metacognitive aids such as:

1. Connecting new information to existing knowledge.
2. Selecting thinking strategies deliberately.
3. Planning, monitoring, and evaluating thinking processes.

Pohlman (2011) proposes some strategies to be employed for developing metacognition, which include:

1. Sharing and modelling self-monitoring processes.
2. Explaining and providing particular strategies that may be helpful.
3. Clarifying and modelling when particular strategies are appropriate.
4. Indicating why particular strategies are helpful and useful.

Although there are many metacognitive strategies, our focus will be on only three of them: (1) brainstorming; (2) self-planning and self-regulation; and (3) cooperative learning.

Brainstorming is an excellent way of creating many new ideas; it helps students to break out their thinking patterns into new ways of looking at things (Mudassir, 2014). Also, it is a process that one goes through in an effort to generate creative ideas and solve certain problems. It can be applied to a variety of activities including creative writing. It is - as Printer (2000) states - an effective way to think of new ideas individually or within a group.

Brainstorming is an excellent way of creating many new ideas; it helps students to break out of their thinking patterns into new ways of looking at things (Mudassir, 2014).

The following are some steps of brainstorming strategy in a group:

1- Allot 20 to 30 minutes for the session.
2- Record all ideas, so that everyone can see them; then retrieve them at a later date.
3- Encourage all ideas, and you may offer a sticker to the person with the most innovative ideas or creative suggestions.
4- Do not accept judgmental expressions that classify the ideas into good, bad, or funny.
5- Use others' comments to think of new ideas.
6- Keep discussions of the recorded ideas to a minimum during brainstorming.

After the session, take a break, and then come back for a more critical evaluation of the ideas. During the analytical phase, make sure that comments are constructive; otherwise, students might avoid speaking up at the next brainstorming session.

The steps of brainstorming strategy done by oneself (alone) as stated by Mudassir (2014) are:

1- Draw or doodle while you are thinking

2- Ask questions
3- Write something
4- Take a walk with a little notepad and pen
5- Work a crossword puzzle or a word search
6- Do something with the intention of figuring out what you want to focus on
7- Look around and write down the interesting things you see, hear, touch, feel, smell, or taste.

Self-planning (self-regulation) learning strategy refers to learning that is guided by metacognition (thinking about one's thinking), strategic action (planning, monitoring, and evaluating personal progress against a standard), and motivation to learn. Self regulation describes a process of taking control of (and evaluating) one's own learning and behaviour (Burman & Shanker, 2015).

Self-planning and self-regulation learning strategy is a process in which students regulate their own knowledge while performing a certain task. Strategically, it helps students to resolve any difficulties that might hinder their engagement with the written text, and hence improve active processing of learning.

Self regulated learning emphasizes autonomy and control by the individual who monitors, directs, and regulates actions towards the goals of information acquisition, expanding expertise, and self improvement (Paris & Paris, 2001).

It generally helps students understand more of what they write; also, it might prompt them to consider background knowledge before writing, and thus prompt

their self-monitoring of understanding, while practicing creative writing. Therefore, teachers need to consider the type of text that students will write while teaching them how to self regulate their learning.

Another benefit is that when students are encouraged to self-plan and self-regulate their knowledge during creative writing, their ability to generate appropriate written texts will be enhanced.

Self-regulated learners develop a deep understanding of subject matter as they control their learning environment. They also develop self assessment, foster planning, and assess which skills are needed (Laskey & Hetzel, 2010).

Therefore, in order to train students in using self-planning and self-regulation strategy, teachers should:

- explicitly state the importance of strategy use and use clear learning objectives;
- follow a specific teaching sequence that includes explicit modelling of the strategy;
- think aloud during instruction; and
- monitor students' progress and provide explicit corrective feedback to students (e.g. encouraging appropriate contributions).

Self-regulation is desirable because of the effects that it has on educational outcomes. The use of self- regulation techniques might make students more

active in their formal learning. Students need to view language learning as an activity that they do for themselves in a an innovative manner, while taking a more active role in learning: i.e. students are placed in the driver's seat to be in charge (Zimmerman, 2001).

In addition to being a metacognitive learning strategy, **cooperative learning** is an educational approach which aims to organise classroom activities based on academic and social learning experiences. Students must work in groups to complete tasks collectively toward achieving specific academic goals. It has been described as structuring positive independence.

While learning cooperatively, students can capitalize on each other's resources and skills (e.g. asking one another for information, evaluating, each other's ideas, monitoring one another's work, etc.). Furthermore, the teacher's role changes from giving information to facilitating student's learning, as every student must have a role here; and teachers assign and indicate those roles according to the task at hand (Chiu, 2008).

According to Johnson (2009), five elements are identified for the successful incorporation of cooperative learning in the classroom:

- Positive interdependence;
- individual and group accountability;
- active (face-to-face) interactions;
- fostering and promoting the required interpersonal and small group skills; and

- group processing.

The essence of a group is the interdependence among members that results in a group being a dynamic whole so that a change in the state of any member or subgroup changes the state of any other member or subgroup. Group members are made interdependent through common goals. As they perceive their common goals, a state of tension arises that motivates movement toward the accomplishment of these goals (Brown & Ciuffetelli, 2009).

Cooperative learning strategy is effective for all ability levels; it helps students to demonstrate academic achievement; it increases self- esteem and self- concept; also, it increases generations of new ideas and solutions.

Recent research has focused on scaffolding and metacognition awareness or strategy use among learners. These studies (e.g. Kolic&Bajsanski, 2006; Shan et al, 2010; Channa & Yossiri, 2012) revealed that successful learners perceive the use of appropriate strategies that can enhance creative writing in English.

Kolic and Bajsanski (2006) examined the use of metacognition strategies based on comprehension monitoring. The results indicated comprehension monitoring as the most important predictor of reading comprehension of the learners. Shan et al (2010) investigated the use of strategies through survey by comparing strategies in Malaysia. The results of the study indicated differences among learners

and good learners preferred using strategies with touch of scaffolding and metacognition.

For example, Channa and Yossiri (2012) investigated the students' attitudes towards activities used in classroom and found learners' perceptions and satisfactions on their teachers using class activities that include teaching strategies, class activities; these strategies helped learners to change their negative attitudes towards teacher use of activities.

In the last decades, a great number of curriculum specialists and theorists have shed light on the term *metacognition* and the positive effect on language learning process. The term metacognition is new but the concept is not, since the 1970s, many theoretical discussions and much experimentation have shown metacognition to be a popular theme in reading and writing research (e.g. Baker & Cerro, 2000; Everson & Tobias, 2001; Rasekh & Ranjbary, 2003).

The study conducted by Baker and Cerro (2000) showed a strong correlation between metacognition and degree completion. Research has shown that students who are high achievers in academic learning domains such as reading, writing, Math and science also exhibit higher levels of metacognitive knowledge about that domain, and have developed greater abilities in self regulation. Metacognitive strategies are designed to monitor cognitive progress; it is used to control one's own cognitive activities, and to ensure that a cognitive goal (e.g. writing a story) has been met.

Various studies have examined the influence of metacognitive strategies on adult performance. For example, Everson and Tobias (2001) report that research shows a difference in the metacognition of effective learners and ineffective learners. The effective use of metacognition has been shown to predict learning performance. Students with higher metacognitive strategies outperformed those with lower metacognitive strategies in problem solving tasks.

In this regard, Rasekh and Ranjbary (2003) investigated the effect of metacognitive strategy training through the use of explicit strategy instruction on the development of lexical knowledge of EFL students. The result of the study showed that explicit metacognitive strategy training had a significant positive effect on vocabulary learning of EFL students.

Metacognition is a crucial part of language learning. There are different types of metacognition and its different strategies. So, the responsibility of teachers is to adapt and help students to use them. Teachers can promote students' development and control learning by teaching them how to reflect on their understanding, learn and do the academic activities at live stages. Teachers should enhance metacognition through actions and encourage their students to be responsible for and control their own learning in their education. Planning for creative writing involves the metacognitive strategies of identifying a purpose for writing, activating prior knowledge and organizing ideas (Salman, 2018).

1.4.2 Socio-cultural Language Learning Strategies

The socio-cultural learning theory (socio-culturalism) was originally developed by Vygotsky (1978). From a socio-cultural standpoint, human learning is defined as a dynamic social activity that is situated in physical and social contexts, and distributed across persons, tools, and activities (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991). The core of the theory is that the ***external social processes***, rather than the internal cognitive ones, ***mediate*** and shape human learning. In other words, according to Vygotsky (1978), any psychological function appears on two planes: first on the ***social plane*** (i.e. during social interaction), and then on the ***psychological plane*** of the individual. Thus, learning starts in a social context as a social event which the individual ***appropriates*** through ***cultural tools*** into his/her psychological structure, not the other way around (Abdallah, 2011a).

Highlighting the social, collaborative nature of learning, the theory posits that the individual is ***inseparable*** from his/her social context, and consequently, cognitive development is viewed as a socio-cultural activity where cognition is seen as a social product achieved through ***interaction***. Thus, the individual constructivist development of the learner is still in focus, but such development would not be possible without the social interactions promoting learning in a meaningful context. This ***socio-cultural*** focus recognises the importance of learning as a ***social experience***, even when the individual learner is physically alone on his/her computer chatting with others online. Thus, the social processes are vital for learning to occur.

In language learning terms, these social processes facilitate the production of discourses, artefacts, and resources useful in language learning (Singh &

Richards, 2006). The concept of ***Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)***, or, in instructional terms, ***scaffolding*** as a prominent practice in language teaching (Erben et al, 2009), is a key concept here. Vygotsky (1978: p86) defines ZPD as "the distance between the ***actual*** developmental level as determined by individual problem solving and the level of ***potential*** development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers". In educational terms, ZPD is the ***interactional space*** within which a learner is enabled to perform a task beyond his/her current level of competence through assisted performance or scaffolding, and hence the internalisation of the social interactive processes happens (Ohta, 2000; Wertsch, 1991).

Unfortunately, the cognitive/psycholinguistic perspectives dominating language learning and reading/writing instruction disregarded the socio-cultural and contextual factors that influence language learning and literacy practices. In particular, the ***autonomous model*** of literacy suggests that literacy is a set of unified, universal, neutral, and value-free skills and cognitive practices the acquisition of which is virtually devoid of any contextual features or social connections (Au, 2006: p38; Knobel, 1999; Street, 1995). This has restricted language educators' views on the language learning process driving them to assume that any language can be taught anywhere in the same way under any circumstances. As a reaction, sociological approaches to language and literacy were developed by New Literacy Studies (NLS). NLS starts out from what people do in their lives to understand and examine their social practices through the

study of particular events (Barton, 2009). This represents a new tradition in considering the nature of literacy perceiving it as a social practice (Street, 2009)

1.5 Caring for Individual Learners

All courses delivered in the secondary stage should take care of learners as individuals. Learners here are teenagers who are going through a very critical stage of growth and development. In particular, those learners have many types of personal needs (e.g. emotional, intellectual, social and cognitive) that should be addressed by any course. In this regard, the English course shows (throughout its new content and materials) some consideration and concern for those learners. In particular, topics in this course should be chosen to appeal to learners'

- developing physical and emotional identity
- developing awareness of the self as an individual
- interest and engagement in the world beyond the home and classroom
- positive desire to make the world a better place
- transition to greater maturity
- increasing intellectual and emotional independence
- need for positive models of behaviour and achievement (Salman, 2018).

1.6 EFL Teacher Evaluation/Observation Checklist

Here's an observation checklist that I've included as part of the TESOL/TEFL Methodology (2) for some reasons:

1. It will be particularly useful in helping you in 'teaching practice' at schools while you're observing other colleagues teaching in the classroom. In the light of the identified criteria/standards in the checklist, you can easily assess a

teacher's performance (i.e. to what extent has his/her teaching been successful? For example: Has s/he done a successful classroom management?).

2. It will be useful while studying this section on 'Classroom Management' in Chapter One. You'll be acquainted with practical aspects/components of classroom management.
3. You will need it in the future for self-assessment (and reflective) purposes; from time to time, you'll need to evaluated your teaching and improve it in the best possible way.

EFL Teacher Evaluation/Observation Checklist

Prepared by Dr Mahmoud M. S. Abdallah

Main Teaching Aspects	Specific Teaching Aspects/Skills	Rating Scale					Comments
		Very Poor	*Poor*	*Fair*	*Good*	*Very Good*	
Personal Traits and Manners	Teacher's voice (i.e. clear, loud enough, varied, suitable, and convincing).						
	Teacher's adequate appearance (i.e. good and respectable clothes, cleanliness, tidiness, being smart, etc.).						
	Using body language and facial expressions appropriately and effectively						
	Caring for learners and being friendly/sociable demonstrating a reasonable level of concern for others.						
	Providing constructive and appropriate feedback to learners.						
	Employing good eye-contact with learners as well as adequate observation strategies/techniques (e.g., scanning class and observing entire class).						
	Effective movement inside the						

Main Teaching Aspects	Specific Teaching Aspects/Skills	Rating Scale					Comments
		Very Poor	*Poor*	*Fair*	*Good*	*Very Good*	
	classroom (e.g., going around to check whether students are doing the task properly and if any assistance is needed).						
	Being encouraging and supportive to learners demonstrating good rapport.						
	Being a good listener by listening carefully and patiently to learners and respecting their opinions.						
Classroom Management	Teacher's giving of instructions (e.g., giving clear instructions before going through an activity; making sure that all learners understand exactly what they are required to do).						
	Teacher's use of both verbal and nonverbal communication appropriately.						
	Teacher's transition from one stage of the lesson to another.						
	Teacher's management of group and pair work.						

Main Teaching Aspects	Specific Teaching Aspects/Skills	Rating Scale					Comments
		Very Poor	*Poor*	*Fair*	*Good*	*Very Good*	
	Teacher's handling of teaching/learning aids and employing them efficiently.						
	Budgeting and managing time						
	Dealing with learners' misbehaviour/misconduct.						
	Handling difficulties and emerging circumstances inside the classroom wisely and flexibly.						
Teaching Methods & Techniques	Using appropriate warm-up techniques/activities that stimulate and engage learners at the beginning of the lesson.						
	Using appropriate teaching methods and techniques to accomplish the objectives of the lesson.						
	Using various questioning and answering techniques.						
	Using various teaching strategies appropriate to learners' level.						
	Following a logical sequence throughout the whole lesson and organising the activities						

Main Teaching Aspects	Specific Teaching Aspects/Skills	Rating Scale					Comments
		Very Poor	*Poor*	*Fair*	*Good*	*Very Good*	
	accordingly.						
	Drawing links between old material and new material.						
	Employing new technologies and AV aids for effective teaching, especially during the presentation stage.						
	Presenting new language items (i.e. vocabulary and grammar) effectively and properly.						
	Dealing with the various types of language-learning activities/tasks within the lesson (e.g., grammatical exercises, language practice, speaking activities, listening activities, reading activities, and communicative activities) efficiently and properly.						

1.7 Summary & Main Highlights

- Teaching English at the Egyptian secondary schools might be a ***challenging*** process;
- Courses are more ***advanced and complicated*** compared with those taught at the preparatory stage;
- Secondary education tends to be ***an exam-oriented system*** since students' final scores do really matter;
- There are many challenges that novice teachers face, such as: (1) the exam-oriented nature of the English courses; (2) traditional methods of language instruction; (3) private lessons/tutorials; (4) growth problems; (5) big numbers of Ss in classrooms; and (6) negative attitudes towards the English language.
- The main aim of TEFL in Egypt (mainstream education) is to enable learners to communicate in English; this is translated into some specific minor aims within each stage.
- There are differences between the words/terms: 1. **GOALS** (very broad); 2. **AIMS** (medium); and 3. **OBJECTIVES** (more specific); so, please do a further reading in this regard.
- The aim of TEFL at the secondary stage is to equip students with the necessary language, ***thinking and study skills*** to communicate effectively and to understand spoken and written English competently...Remember: LANGUAGE + THINKING + STUDY skills.

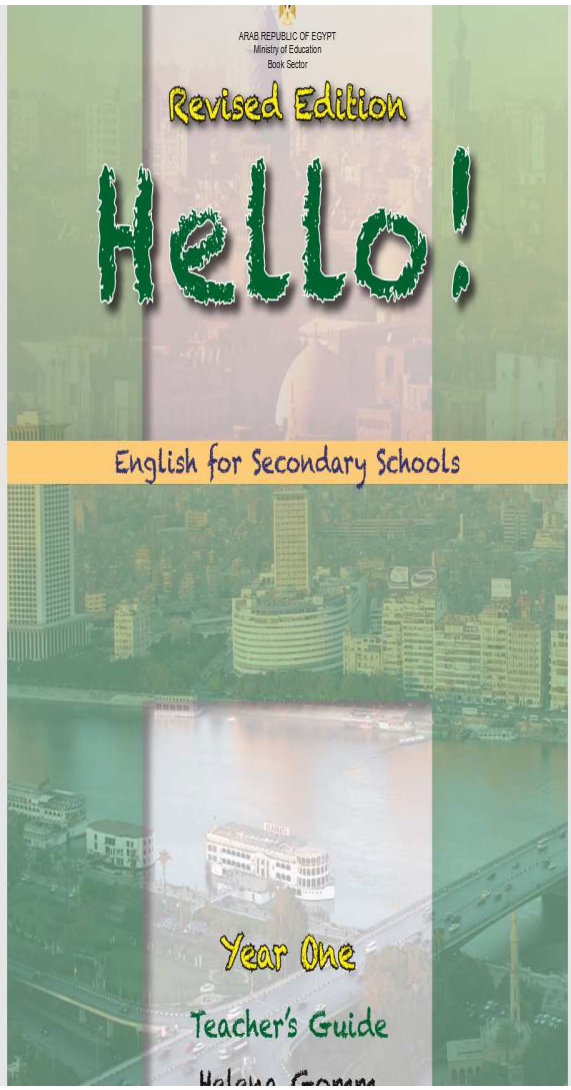
- CRITICAL THINKING skills (What are they? Try to be aware of examples, and awareness of strategies to improve language and learning skills support the learning of language and contribute to the development of a more autonomous learner.
- Secondary-one English courses build upon the KNOWLEDGE + SKILLS and LINGUISTIC-COMMUNICATIVE competences (e.g. GRAMMATICAL competence, PRAGMATIC competence, STRATEGIC competence, etc.) developed by students at the preparatory stage.
- Novice English teachers at the secondary stage need to spend some time to revise the preparatory English courses, especially in terms of: goals/aims, objectives, scope and sequence, vocabulary, grammar and language functions (Usually these points are illustrated in tables in the Teacher's Guide Introduction for each year).

1.8 For Workshops

With the help of the teaching assistant, please review the introduction of the teacher's guide of ***'Hello for Secondary Schools: Year One'*** and then discuss together some issues such as: the teaching approach/methodology used in the course; course organisation; different types of learning activities and how they are organised and delivered; classroom management; caring for individual learners and autonomous learning; teaching/learning language skills; and learning aids.

Also, please review with the teaching assistant the ***EFL Teacher Observation Checklist*** above to come out with some ideas on how you can effectively employ it in your teaching practice to assess other teachers'/colleagues' performance.

1.9 Appendix: Teacher's Guide-Introduction



The main aim of *Hello! English for Secondary Schools, Year One* is to equip students of secondary school age with the necessary language, thinking and study skills to communicate effectively and to understand spoken and written English competently. It aims to give students the necessary experience and confidence to apply these skills both inside and outside the classroom and beyond school in their current and future lives. New language, skills and topics are introduced gradually and practised thoroughly, so that students have the chance to learn and use the language before they move on. Critical thinking skills and awareness of strategies to improve language and learning skills support the learning of the language and contribute to the development of a more autonomous learner.

The approach

The course uses a standards-based communicative approach and methodology for the teaching and learning of English. Students are presented with interesting topics and meaningful situations from the start of their secondary-level education. They use and integrate the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in meaningful contexts and undertake realistic language tasks which they would potentially undertake in future academic, professional or vocational situations. To do this effectively, student-to-student interaction in class is necessary. Students need to speak and work together cooperatively when asked, they need to help each other when directed, and they need to develop a sense of independence and responsibility for their own learning. Therefore, they will need to be able to work together in pairs, as well as in groups, and to work on their own or as a whole class. The course is standards-based and aims to fulfil the standards set out in the Ministry of Education Standards Document. It aims to assist students in the process of reaching certain proficiency, behavioural and civic goals, not only in the English language, but in the day-to-day interactions which they encounter throughout their lives.

Because students are expected to acquire tools and not simply ingest rules, standards are valuable and effective supports for good learning. This is because they express clear expectations for what all students should know and be able to do. Teachers become aware that language is a means by which students achieve wider goals, and is not an end in itself.

In this context, rote learning as a framework for linguistic progress becomes ineffective because it is insufficient to help students to achieve those wider educational standards. When teachers apply standards-based curricula, language learning is more purposeful and practical than in most other forms of curricula.

"Standards communicate shared expectations for learning and provide a common language for talking about the process of learning and teaching. As a result, community leaders and business people become more effective partners in, and monitors of, young people's education." [El-Naggar, et al. (2003), p. 144]

Extending learners' linguistic knowledge

The course develops and extends the language and skills which students acquired through *Hello! English for Preparatory Schools*. Previous structures, lexis and functions are built on and enriched. In the first units of the new materials, students are helped to make the transition from the preparatory to the secondary stage by recycling previously studied language and structures in a new context with more mature content. This approach is continued and intensified through succeeding units, and more new language, skills, structures, functions, tasks and activities are brought in to add to and deepen learners' linguistic knowledge and skills.

The role of the teacher

In the communicative classroom, a teacher has many roles. Below are ten roles a teacher may perform each time he or she teaches using a communicative approach.

***Planner*:** The teacher decides on the aims and anticipated outcomes of each lesson in order to decide what is taught, how it is taught, and what equipment and materials will be needed in the lesson.

***Instructor*:** The teacher introduces the language to be learned, gives instructions to students, and decides what language and activities need to be practised.

***Language model*:** The teacher provides a model of spoken and written English for students, especially when new language is presented and practised.

***Manager*:** The teacher organises the class in order to fulfil the different activity requirements. Sometimes this may mean putting learners into pairs or groups.

***Controller*:** The teacher controls the pace and content of a lesson, and the behaviour and discipline of the students.

***Decision maker*:** The teacher decides what activities students will engage in, which students to ask questions to, and how long each activity should last.

***Advisor*:** The teacher monitors the progress of the class, deciding how learners are performing and what extra input should be given, such as further clarification of the task or extra examples of language items.

***Monitor*:** When the students are working individually or in pairs or groups, the teacher moves from one student or group to another, helping students or correcting mistakes.

***Personal tutor*:** The teacher identifies individual students' areas of difficulty and finds ways of helping them.
***Assessor*:** At different points in a class the teacher may observe the performance and progress of particular students with a view to awarding ongoing assessment marks or marks for participation.

Teaching a communicative course
As previously noted, a communicative course imposes a number of different roles on how you teach, depending on what you are teaching and at which stage you are in a lesson. The next part discusses some recurring themes which emerge while teaching a communicative course.

Preparation, planning and monitoring
As a teacher, you can make teaching and learning as effective and enjoyable as possible at the beginning of the year by

- getting to know the course materials very well by reading them through in advance
- planning the academic year
- getting to know individual students' names
- making sure you have any important information about students.

As the academic year progresses, regular time and effort will be needed to

- prepare individual lessons
- learn new teaching methods, techniques and activities
- reflect on successes and constraints in the classroom
- discuss teaching with colleagues
- mark students' written work
- monitor individual students and assess their progress.

Classroom language: mother tongue or English?
This is a widely debated topic, and teachers choose to take different approaches about when to use the mother tongue. For example, in which language should you

- give instructions
- advise students
- praise them
- explain grammar
- monitor understanding?

It is an area of foreign language teaching that has to be considered, and judgements have to be made by individual teachers. They sometimes face a dilemma. Teachers wish to maximise opportunities for students to hear and use English. At the same time, they also deal with different levels of ability and wish to ensure that as many students as possible participate in a lesson. It is also generally agreed that the classroom situation provides the natural context for the meaningful and repeated use of language, and the opportunity to use English for these should not be missed. Also, as the classroom provides many students with their only exposure to English, it should be used as much as possible, except where learning will be impeded by its use. Do make sure that learners understand the rubrics in their books, and make use of this language when giving instructions for an activity. When setting up pair work and group work, use the same instructions each lesson so that students become familiar with them.

Language accuracy or language fluency?

When teaching a communicative course, you have to decide whether to focus on language accuracy or language fluency. When learning and practising to speak English, we want students to speak accurately and correctly, but we also want them to speak naturally and at a reasonable speed. These two things can contradict each other. If a student is trying to structure a sentence correctly, trying to remember vocabulary and trying to pronounce words carefully, he or she might hesitate and speak slowly to give lots of thinking time.

Conversely, if a student is interested in what he or she is saying and speaking quickly, then the number of language errors will probably increase. Generally, try to balance accuracy and fluency. When practising and presenting new language, it is perhaps more important to stress accuracy. During oral activities when students are making use of language in a more life-like activity, you should stress fluency more and be prepared to tolerate errors more (and intervene in the lesson less!). In this way, you encourage students to be more responsible for their own learning.

Correcting mistakes

It is important to vary how and when you correct according to the kind of activity and the stage of the lesson. The important thing is to maintain students' enthusiasm to speak while at the same time helping them to improve. One consideration is to vary how you correct mistakes. Do not always be the source of corrections yourself. Highlight errors sometimes and give students or their peers the opportunity to correct

their own work. Another approach might be to note consistent mistakes and correct them the next time you review the language, for example.

The Student's Book

The Student's Book of the *Hello! English for Secondary Schools, Year One* course is the principal means of presenting, contextualising, practising and extending the language, topics and skills introduced at this stage.

The general aims of the Student's Book are to:

- contextualise, present and practise target language
- consolidate and extend students' knowledge of English structures, functions and lexis
- extend students' strategies to cope with language skills and language learning
- develop students' sense of independence, autonomy and responsibility for their own language learning
- develop students' critical thinking skills and their ability to evaluate, form opinions about and comment on a range of subjects
- give opportunities to review recent language
- expose students to a range of interesting and educationally valuable topics.

Format and content

- The Student's Book consists of 18 main units based on a structural and communicative syllabus covering a range of topics intended to motivate and interest students.
- The 18 main units are arranged into groups of three units; at the end of each group of three units, there is a Revision Unit. This makes a total of 24 units, 12 of which are to be covered in the first term and 12 in the second term.
- New language is introduced in the context of a series of subjects and themes which engage the attention of the learners and which are a worthwhile and lasting contribution to learners' broader intellectual and moral education.
- Materials feature Egyptian and international personalities who students can identify with and be inspired by.
- Photographs, graphics and life-like illustrations are used to contribute to an attractive and colourful design which will appeal to the maturity of students of this age.
- The first page of each main unit starts with a box which summarises the objectives of the unit for the students and gives teachers an opportunity to outline the structures, functions and lexical content contained in the unit. The

objectives box gives students a useful checklist against which to monitor their progress at the end of a unit and to help them as they come to revise for their end-of-term examinations.

- All units cover the four language skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing – and practise many key sub-skills such as reading for the main ideas of a text, listening to identify the purpose of an oral text, and note taking.
- All units contain tasks which, by their variety, take into account different learning styles and which encourage students to develop independent learning strategies and habits and critical thinking skills.
- There is also a supplementary Grammar Review at the end of the book. This highlights key structures introduced in the book and acts as an aid to revision. The individual sections of the Grammar Review are highlighted in the unit colours to show the correlation between the unit being studied and the relevant section of grammar.

Unit format and content

- Each main unit contains five pages, each of which fulfils a different function.
- Each five-page main unit in the Student's Book is complemented by a four-page unit in the Workbook. The first, second, third and fifth Student's Book pages are always accompanied by a corresponding page in the Workbook.
- With its unit objectives box, mentioned above, the first page of a main unit sets the scene for the whole unit and presents a listening activity. It also contains discussion or pair work activities to start students thinking about the unit topic.
- The second page, the Focus on Grammar, concentrates on the structural content of the unit and contains activities to present and practise target language.
- The third page concentrates on Reading. It develops both the content of the unit and students' reading skills.
- The fourth page develops Critical Thinking skills. It is designed to encourage students to think for themselves. It contains activities that develop reading comprehension and encourage students to think about the topic and practise language which will help them to express their ideas.

CHAPTER TWO

Classroom Management

2.1 Meaning and Rationale

Classroom management is incredibly important for language classes to go as planned. The good EFL teacher is one who can achieve a reasonable level of proper classroom management so that teaching and learning can go smoothly and effectively.

As an educational term, 'classroom management' is a term which is used by teachers to describe the process of ensuring that classroom lessons **run smoothly** despite disruptive behaviour by students. The term also implies the prevention of disruptive behaviour. Classroom management has become an irritating problem that consumes much of teachers' energy and efforts. The problem has recently become more complicated as a result of the changing social values in society and the new revolutionary culture going on in Egypt following the revolution, especially among young men and teenagers.

Thus, **classroom management** is an extremely important component of the process of teaching English to secondary-school students. It is the means through which instructional **goals** and learning objectives are successfully **achieved** by sustaining an optimum language learning environment. Classroom management is closely linked to issues of ***motivation, discipline and respect***. According to Moskowitz & Hayman (1976), once a teacher loses control of their classroom, it becomes increasingly more difficult for them to regain that control.

2.2 Classroom Management and Teacher's Roles

There are many **roles** that a teacher is supposed to take inside the classroom: ***facilitator, manager/organiser, monitor, counsellor, advisor, and evaluator***. Classroom management involves this specific role of a 'manager' or 'organiser' of teaching/learning activities and events. Also, this specific role involves how to deal with students' misbehaviour in order to sustain a supportive and encouraging learning environment.

Poor classroom management might ***indicate poor teaching***. In this regard, research shows that the time a teacher has to take to correct misbehaviour caused by poor classroom management skills results in a lower rate of academic engagement in the classroom. From the student's perspective, effective classroom management involves ***clear communication*** of behavioural and academic expectations as well as a ***cooperative*** learning environment.

Further, in a ***language class***, a teacher is responsible to ensure that **classroom interactions** are leading to successful and effective language learning. In this regard, language teachers should:

- Establish and sustain rapport (good and friendly relationships with learners).
- Creating a positive language learning environment (e.g. adding humour and fun, and making learners feel at ease).
- Allowing for adequate physical movement during the lesson that would serve teaching and learning.

- Displaying aims and purposes of the lesson to students to make them feel more confident, and thus will share with the teacher responsibility of reaching and accomplishing the desired goals.
- Listening to learners with all attention and care, using appropriate eye contact with them.
- Varying voice tone and teaching style to reach more learners.
- Using different techniques for questioning students (e.g. asking relevant questions; using both individual questioning and group questioning; re-phrasing or re-stating questions; allowing students sufficient time to think about answers; and appointing students to answer questions using many ways).

2.3 Classroom Management in the Language Class

In the language class, there are many classroom management issues that an English teacher needs to consider, which can be summarised in the following points:

1. How the teacher can ***handle*** students' ***misbehaviour*** and the best techniques to use for ***punishing*** some students;
2. The ways the teacher uses to ***provide instructions*** (which need to be clear and understandable);
3. The teacher's ***organisation and management*** of individual work, pair work, and group work;
4. The teacher's ***talk*** inside the classroom and how it can be employed efficiently, and when and how to allow a sufficient time for learners to talk in English and practice it orally;

5. How the teacher can create a **balanced atmosphere** of students' **participation** inside the classroom, without being trapped into getting certain students to dominate all the discussions;
6. How the teacher can provide **feedback** to students and correct their errors/mistakes.

2.4 Effective Classroom Management

Classroom management is not just about handling students' misbehaviour/misconduct and punishing them; it can also involve: (1) providing clear instructions; (2) organisation of individual work, pair work and group work; (3) balancing 'talk' inside the classroom; and (4) providing any necessary feedback properly.

Effective classroom management would guarantee effective teaching and learning. Classroom management involves many important aspects/elements that need to be handled properly. These include: (1) Appropriate physical environment; (2) seating arrangement (e.g. frontal teaching vs. horseshoe seating); (3) voice and body language (e.g. voice should be audible/varied and handwriting needs to be visible enough); (4) achieving discipline and minimizing misbehaviour/misconduct as much as possible; (5) Establishing RAPPORT (i.e. good and affectionate relationship with students by, for example, calling them out by names); (6) planning for the unexpected (e.g. being flexible enough to accept other unplanned scenarios and deal with emergent situations which are NOT originally in the teaching plan).

Cheating acts as a common classroom management problem within the Egyptian context, which imposes challenges on the teaching/learning process; it's mainly there because of our exam-oriented educational system!

It sounds a good practice when a teacher devises (and agrees on with his/her learners) some RULES right from the start; this - in the long run - will lead to a more effective classroom management.

There are many classroom management problems for which you need to think of workable solutions (e.g. how to punish misbehaving students; how to deal with unexpected classroom events; how to budget your time properly; how to deal with talkative -and also mute - learners; how to reach most students and establish rapport with them).

2.5 Summary & Main Highlights

- Classroom management is a term used by teachers to describe the process of ensuring that classroom lessons run smoothly despite disruptive behaviour by students.
- It is the means through which instructional goals and learning objectives are successfully achieved by sustaining an optimum language learning environment.
- Classroom management is necessary for effective teaching to take place; poor classroom management might indicate poor teaching
- It is an irritating problem that consumes much of the teacher's time and energy.

- It is closely linked to issues of: (1) motivation, (2) discipline and (3) respect.
- It involves this specific role of a 'manager' or 'organiser' of teaching/learning activities and events.
- From the student's perspective, effective classroom management involves clear communication of behavioural and academic expectations as well as a cooperative learning environment.

2.6 For Workshops

- Discuss with each other the different classroom management problems that you have noticed during teaching practice.
- Work in groups to suggest solutions to some of the most common classroom management problems/issues.
- Discuss some of the classroom management issues which are closely related to English language learning.

CHAPTER THREE

Situated Language Learning

3.1 Language and Participation

Many educators and researchers in language learning (e.g. Warschauer, et al., 2000; Shih and Yang, 2008; Yang, 2011) strongly believe that successful learning is anchored in collaboration, cognitive apprenticeship, and situated cognition. It is assumed that situated, contextualised practice always leads to deep understanding and meaningful learning (Abdallah, 2011b).

According to Sfard (1998), there is a shift of learning from an *acquisition* metaphor that involves students in cognitive activities mainly to facilitate the acquisition of some imposed symbolic mental representations, towards a *participation* metaphor in which knowledge is considered fundamentally situated in practice (see also Barab & Duffy, 2000).

Thus, the most effective way to learn a language is to *participate* in a community in which the target language is used to communicate in a real context. In such an environment, the language learners are left with no place to hide. They are forced and encouraged to think, speak, and write in the target language. In other words, they become immersed in an input-rich, natural, and meaningful context in which the target language can be acquired spontaneously (Shih & Yang, 2008).

3.2 Meaning of Situated Language Learning

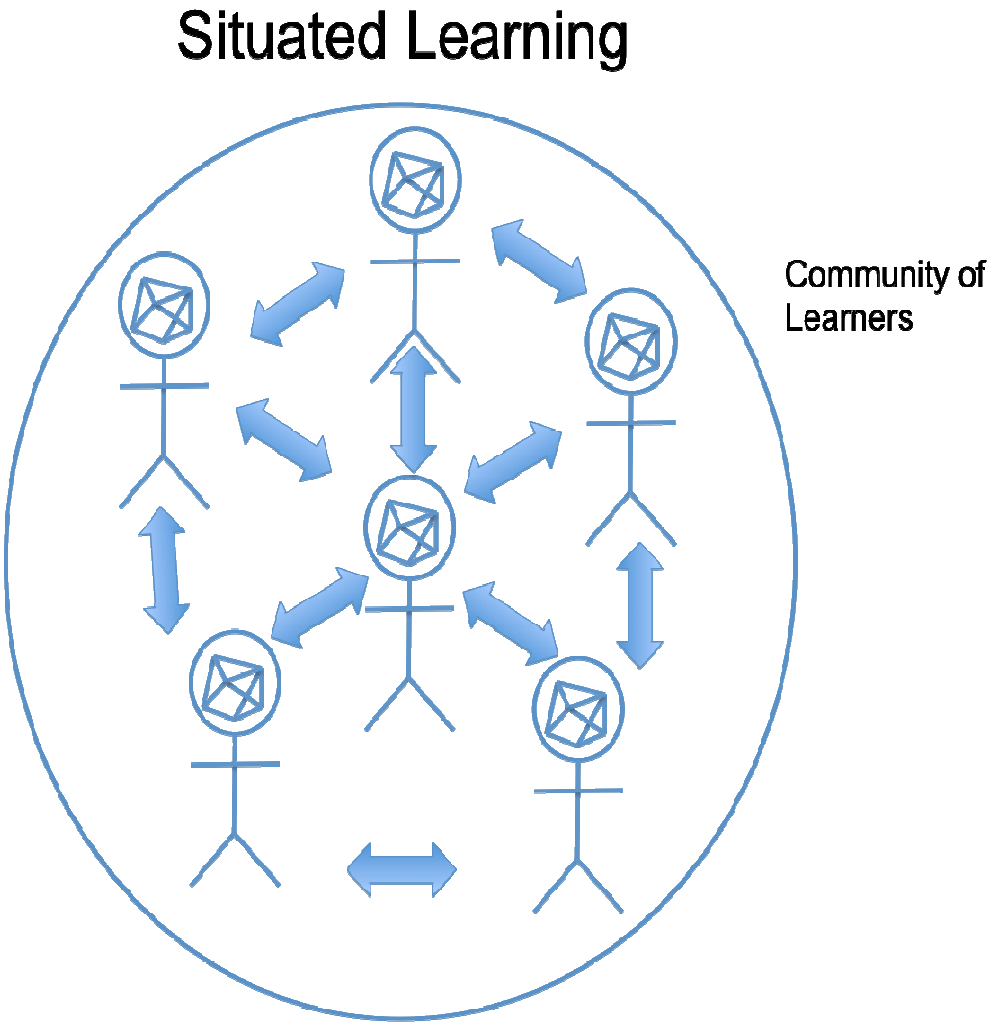
Situated learning in general refers to that type of learning which takes place in the same context in which it is applied. It employs the social aspect of human nature to help learners feel relaxed and at ease while learning. Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that learning should not be viewed as simply the transmission of abstract and decontextualised knowledge from one individual to another, but a social process whereby knowledge is co-constructed; they suggest that such learning is situated in a specific context and embedded within a particular social and physical environment.

Through situated learning students will be able to learn the skills and also be able to accurately use the skills they have learned. Situated learning allows students to gain experience through doing in some way; and from this experience they are able to be productive in their lives after they have graduated.

Situated language learning in particular approaches language learners as 'active constructors of knowledge who bring their own needs, strategies and styles to

learning, and skills and knowledge are best acquired within realistic contexts and authentic settings, where students are engaged in experiential language learning tasks' (Felix, 2002: p3). Thus, it focuses on the role of the *context* and *situation* in language learning and knowledge construction.

It is a well-known fact that 'language is practice'. *Practice* here is a fundamental process in which learning occurs through *immersion* in purposive and practical activities. Brown et al. (1989) and Barab and Duffy (2000) propose that learning is always situated and progressively developed through activity, and hence, it is only through use that concepts are fully understood. Knowledge itself differs in nature, taking a *situated stance* which Barab and Duffy (2000) describe as neither 'objectively defined' nor 'subjectively created', but rather 'reciprocally constructed' within the individual-environment interaction. Such arguments lead to the conclusion that situated, contextualised practice always leads to deep understanding and meaningful learning.



3.3 Importance and Significance

Based on review of some literature in the area (e.g. Barab & Duffy, 2000; Brown et al., 1989; Shih & Yang, 2008; Lave & Wenger, 1991), I can confidently argue that situated language learning is important and significant in many ways:

- It attracts learners' attention and increase their language learning motivation;
- It draws on social capacities of learners which are useful in language learning;
- It helps with developing and improving communicative and pragmatic competencies in language;
- It creates a meaningful language learning environment;
- It indulges the creative side into the traditional language learning process;
- It reinforces a positive and interactive language learning atmosphere;
- It bridges the gap between language learning theories and actual practices (i.e. linking theory to practice);
- It reinforces a contextualised acquisition of new language items (e.g. vocabulary and structure);
- It connects linguistic forms and structures with real-life uses;
- It helps students feel relaxed and at ease while learning;
- It widens and expands learners' horizons;
- It adds fun and joy to language learning;
- It turns the language learning process into a contextualized process;
- It helps learners realize learning goals and objectives;
- It helps with resisting boredom and tolerating time;
- It helps learners with sharing and employing their linguistic input;
- It helps with exploiting digital tools and social media in meaningful language practices;
- It reinforces reflection on one's own learning;
- It attracts learners' attention.

3.4 Forms of Situated Language Learning

Situated language Learning can take many forms in teaching-learning situations, such as:

1-**Communities of Practice (CoP)**: A community of practice for language learning purposes refers to a group of learners who share common goals, interests, orientations, and needs. Learners communicate interactively as a social community to achieve some language learning goals and purposes (Barab & Duffy, 2000).

2-Online Language Learning Communities: Those communities are mediated by the Internet or the Web to overcome physical boundaries. They exchange language learning ideas, materials, experiences and facilities online.

3-Authentic Language Learning: Nunan (1999) defines authentic materials as spoken or written language data that has been produced in the course of genuine communication, and not specifically written for purposes of language teaching. Similarly, Rogers and Medley (1988: p468) define authentic materials as 'samples that reflect a naturalness of form and an appropriateness of cultural

and situational context that would be found in the language as used by native speakers'. Therefore, authentic language learning can be viewed as an approach in which realistic language learning is targeted through genuine authentic materials used in the classroom.

4-Task-Based Language Learning: Under the umbrella of 'Situated Language Learning', Task-based learning is viewed as an approach to language learning according to which the tasks done by students become central to the learning process. It requires the teacher to organise classroom activities around those practical tasks that language users will engage in when they are 'out there' in the real world (Oura, 2001). Situated learning is consistent with this task-based learning approach when tasks are authentic, interactive, situated, and goal oriented.

5-Virtual Language Learning (VLL): It refers to employing 3D Virtual Environments or MUVEs as tools of foreign language instruction that promote collaboration and social presence in a lifelike 3-D environment (Cooke-Plagwitz, 2008). In virtual worlds, such as Second Life, language learners can communicate with anyone with no boundaries. Individuals are represented by avatars that can freely move, walk, fly, and socialize on their behalf. This allows for mimicking real-life situations in this virtual environment. Besides, it enables simulation (and acting out) of some situations that would develop functional and pragmatic **use of the target language.**

6-Cognitive Apprenticeship Model: It is a situated constructivist learning model in which the teacher is approached as a master of a skill who teaches this skill to an apprentice (a student). It is employed to capture the implicit processes involved in carrying out complex skills while teaching novice learners (Collins, et al. 1987).

7-Dramatisation: Using drama in language classrooms is a favourable activity if more active and realistic language learning is the target. Dramatisation helps language teachers to transform the artificial world of the classroom into quasi-real language learning situations (Boudreault, 2010). Role-playing itself turns passive language learners into active participants. The improvisation aspect of drama gives students opportunities for developing their communicative skills in authentic and dynamic situations. Thus, learners would contextualise language and make it come to life by adding the dimensions of vividness and fun into it.

3.5 Summary & Main Highlights

- Currently, there is a shift in language learning from the 'acquisition' metaphor to the 'participation' metaphor.
- This involves viewing learners as active constructors of knowledge who can collaborate together to create meaningful language learning situations and contextualised practices.
- Thus, this chapter aimed at exploring the concept of 'Situated Language Learning' by shedding some light on its significance and importance for

many language learning purposes, and also the forms that it might take represented in the approaches and learning scenarios which are consistent with situated language learning as an umbrella term.

- These forms include: Community-Based Language Learning (e.g. Community Of Practice and Online Language Learning Communities); Authentic Language Learning Pedagogy; Task-Based Language Learning; Virtual Language Learning (VLL); and Cognitive Apprenticeship Models.

3.6 For Workshops

- Discuss with your instructor the meaning of ***situated language learning*** and how it can be implemented in reality.
- Work in groups to come out with ideas on how to employ ***some situated learning forms or scenarios*** in the English class (e.g. Task-Based Language Learning, Community of Practice, Authentic Language Learning and Community-Based Language Learning).

3.7 Further Reading

Gee, J. P. (2015). A Situated Approach to Language Teaching. *Retrieved from jamespaulgee. com.*

A Situated Approach to Language Teaching

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Regents' Professor
Arizona State University

The Vexed Nature of Language Learning and Teaching

Language learning is a vexed topic. There really is no unitary phenomenon covered by the term "language learning". Learning a first native language as a monolingual is not the same as learning two or more native languages (Grosjean 1984, 2010). Learning to deal with a great many languages around you (as in parts of Africa) is not the same as learning to deal with one or two (Finnegan 1988). People learn "foreign" languages in many different ways for many different purposes. Learning a language in a classroom is different than learning one in situ. Learning a vernacular variety of a language is not the same as learning a specialized register like the language of physics (Gee 2004).

It is not surprising that learning language is not a single phenomenon, since language itself is not (Chomsky 1986). The word "language" does not name anything very coherent from a theoretical point of view. German and Dutch are called different languages largely for political reasons and state boundaries. They could just as well be seen as dialects of the same language. At the same time, there are some dialects of German that are mutually uninterpretable yet they are said to be the same language. Furthermore, any one language, like English or Russian, is composed of many different dialects and registers such as the language of physics or the language of Yu-GiOh (Gee 2004). Every speaker of a "language" fails to know many—actually most—dialects and registers.

And, then, too, written language is not the same as oral language and the two are not learned in the same way (Gee 2015; Pinker 1994). Oral language has accompanied humans from at or near 3 their evolutionary origins. Written language has not and is relatively new on the scene. Yet we call both of them "language".

Talking about language teaching rather than language learning simplifies matters only if we take teaching just to mean formal classrooms. But the role of adult guidance in all sorts of language learning is important well beyond classrooms. Adults are the ones

who usually meld language acquisition with primary socialization and enculturation. Extended talk with adults is also crucial for the latter acquisition of some registers like school-based forms of literacy and academic language (Gee 2004, 2015). Adults serve as cultural brokers in many settings where people acquire languages initially as "outsiders". Even classroom teachers can play many more roles than the role of instructor.

Indeed, the role of instruction (only one form or act of teaching) is vexed in the case of language teaching and learning. Instruction in grammar and or via speaking drills treats a language as if it were "content" like the information in a history or chemistry textbook. While there are, indeed, people who know French only as written content to place into cloze tests in school, languages are not content but rather technologies for communicating and doing.

Real teaching—not just of language—involves several different acts. Informing ("saying") is only one such act. Demonstrating or modelling, assessing and giving feedback, helping learners manage their attention (for example, to avoid cognitive overload), and designing well-mentored and helpfully constrained learning experiences in the world and in social interactions with others are others such acts (Hattie & Yates 2013). Humans primarily learn from experience, but 4 unguided, unconstrained, and un-mentored experience can be overwhelming to beginners. That is why we have teachers, adults, and culture.

While there is a well-known empirical literature on learning, there is also a not very-well-known, but fairly robust, empirical literature on what constitutes good teaching (Hattie 2009). Since this literature has played such a small role in the training of teachers, it is not known to what extent it applies to language learning when languages are not treated as content, but as sets of tools for saying, being, and doing in meaningful ways. All this means that, after decades of work, it is not clear—at least to me—that we have anything like a coherent theory of the complex domains of language learning and language teaching. It is perhaps the case that—like other areas of science (e.g., psychology)—we have been misled by taking the everyday meanings of words (in this case, words like "learning", "development", "acquisition", "teaching", and "language") too seriously as good guides for how to categorize the data and phenomena with which we are faced.

All this means that, after decades of work, it is not clear—at least to me—that we have anything like a coherent theory of the complex domains of language learning and language teaching. It is perhaps the case that—like other areas of science (e.g.,

psychology)—we have been misled by taking the everyday meanings of words (in this case, words like “learning”, “development”, “acquisition”, “teaching”, and “language”) too seriously as good guides for how to categorize the data and phenomena with which we are faced.

It is clear that language involves structure (grammar), function (meaning and action), and culture. In this respect, language is just like the human body. The body has a morphology or structural design in terms of organic parts and connections among them. Its organs and systems also have functions that are related to these organs and systems in complex ways. Finally, the human body exists in culture and in environments utterly shaped by culture. At the same time, cultures have been shaped by the nature of the human body itself.

We can clearly—in the case of language or the body—study structure, function, and being-in-culture separately. But we have to study their connections and integration as well because they are integrated both in activities in the world and in growth and development (acquisition, learning). Furthermore, both for language and the body, structure, function, and culture take on different meanings and significance as an overall integrated system that they do when studied in isolation.

Going further, the connections between language and body are, in fact, much deeper than both being structure-function-culture systems. Language is “encoded” in the brain, a part of our bodies. Language is spoken and written by the body usually for and with other bodies. Chomsky, for instance, treats language as an “organ” of the brain (Chomsky 1986). And, finally, the basic semantics of all human languages is closely tied to how the human mind and body orient to space and time (Lakoff & Johnson 1980). We keep things “in mind”, we can “lose” a thought, “fall” in love, “come back” to our senses, “grasp” an argument, and be “filled” with courage, or “move on” in life. These connections are well studied in work on the localist (or locative) hypothesis and in cognitive linguistics (Ungerer & Schmid 1996).

Situated (Embodied) Meaning

Having acknowledged that everything here is so complex, I certainly cannot speak to most of these issues I have just raised. Furthermore, my designated task is to say something creative about creative language teaching (where teaching might mean different things). To make matters simple for myself and for my readers, I will discuss but one phenomenon, namely what I will call “situated meaning” (it has also been

called “embodied meaning”) and its implications for teaching in settings like schools, colleges, and centers (Gee 2004, 2014).

People learning language in some fashion (there are many ways, remember) can know what a word (or phrase or structure) means in many different ways. Thus, consider an utterance like “The coffee spilled, go stack it again”. If you do not know that this means coffee cans or packages, then you cannot give the word “coffee” what I will call a situated meaning (properly contextualized meaning; for lovers of jargon, an “utterance token meaning”).

If all you know is “coffee” names a drink or some verbal definition of “coffee” (e.g., “a drink made from the roasted and ground beanlike seeds of a tropical shrub, served hot or iced) then what you have what I will call a “basic or verbal meaning” for the word (an utterance type meaning). All you can really do is assign the word “coffee” some limited image or definition, not a full range of nuanced meanings fit for different contexts, let alone new meanings for new contexts.

By the way if you think coffee is grown on a tree and not a shrub, you can still be a good meaning situator, though be a fact shy at a cocktail party. The issue of situated meaning and situating meaning (an activity) is not too serious for a word like “coffee”, but it gets more serious for words like “democracy”, “game”, “love”, or “work” (e.g., “Relationships shouldn’t be work”, “Work gives meaning to life”, etc.). If you cannot situate meaning for such terms and many more like them then you are not really able to participate in culture and social interactions in a very wide way. In any case, I am here interested only in the issue of situated meaning in language learning and teaching.

One reason I am interested in situated meaning is that this phenomena is crucial for people— native speakers or non-native ones—trying to learn specialist registers and participate in specific functions or occupations. So a graduate student who says “God wants you to be my PhD advisor because I need help and it is your job to help me” (as was said to me in perfect English by a foreign graduate student who had lost her advisor) has situated meaning in the wrong way for me as a faculty member in a secular public university in the United States. I heard her (rightly or wrongly) as telling me that that she knew better than me what my job was, that being needy is good grounds for accepting an advanced PhD advisee, and that I am going to disappoint someone’s god if I do not accept her.

Notice that the problem of situating meaning here might actually be mine—perhaps she meant this very differently—but, alas, in this situation, a student is supposed to

consider how the faculty member is likely to situate what he or she says in the contexts of secular and (yes) hierarchical graduate institutions. The meek may inherit the Earth, but they get eaten by institutions if their language usage does not show due reflection on the nature of power and the social geography of society and its institutions.

I want to note again that this issue is as germane to a non-native speaker as a native one. Even a native speaker without a family background in "higher education" could have made this same "mistake". So situating meaning is a topic for both second language learning and register learning. Furthermore, since all academic content learning involves learning a new register, all academic learning is a form of language learning and we, thus, add a great many language teachers (perhaps kicking and screaming) to our roles. For example, if you do not know that "work" means something different in physics than it does in the vernacular or that "heat" and "temperature" mean something different in chemistry than they do in the vernacular you are on the way to failing your science course.

Mind, Experience, and Language

Before we get to my possibly creative idea about creative language teaching, we need to say something about the human mind and its relationship to language and the world (Gee 2004, 2015). We once thought the human mind worked pretty much like a digital computer. Digital computers are good at calculating, abstracting, and processing information by rules. They are really "syntactical" devices that process symbols and assign them rather general meanings. Recent research has shown that human minds do not, in fact, work like digital computers— indeed, that's why we have digital computers. Digital computers are good at keeping your bank checkbook correct, humans minds are not. Humans are good at recognizing faces, digital computers are not.

This recent research argues that our minds are filled with records of the experiences we have had in life. When we have an experience we store it in our minds (human memory of experience is nearly endless). This mental storage works best and most deeply for experiences in which we have had a goal for an action about whose outcome we really care. Goals, action, and emotional investment are important for well-organized memories that are well integrated with the rest of our knowledge.

We do not store experience in an unedited form. We pay attention to the aspects of our experiences in certain ways. We pay more attention to some elements of an experience than we do to others. We then store the experience in our minds in an edited fashion with certain elements foregrounded and others backgrounded.

Experiences for humans need not just come from the "real world". We treat what we have heard from others, seen in movies, and read in books as vicarious experiences. Indeed, humans often respond to media emotionally as if it were "real" (for example, we cry in movies) and they sometimes have a hard time remembering what was "real" and what was not.

We humans use past experiences not so much as a memory bank to get nostalgic about the past, but as materials to help us think about what we are going to do in the future and plan it before we do it. That is why human memory is not all that factually accurate. It matters more, from an evolutionary point of view, that a memory prepares us for successful action and survival in the future than that it is a faithful reflection of the past.

That the human mind is built by associations, networks, and connections from personal experience raises a deep problem. Since humans can have very different experiences in the world and, thus, very different minds, how do they ever learn to communicate and collaborate across such differences? The answer is social groups and cultures. Social groups and cultures—via mentoring and teaching—ensure that newcomers get many of the same experiences and edit them in similar fashion so that their minds fit with the minds of more advanced members and each other. For example, birders take out new birders and see to it that they end up in the right habitats and pay attention to the right things so they can share minds and practices with other birders. In this sense, the mind is social. Except for social isolates, the mind is shaped by experiences that have been in turn shaped by teaching in a broad sense.

There is also a problem with language and it is a classic chicken and egg question. Language gets situated meaning from contexts (that is, from the elements in our past experiences relevant to what we say or hear). Experience (in the world and in the mind) gives meaning to language. We can even use past experience creatively to situate new meanings for words, for example, for "coffee" in an utterance like "Big Coffee is as bad as Big Oil". But, at the same time, languages (and registers and other symbols systems like geometry or algebra) categorize, cut up, and regiment experience in certain ways (Vygotsky 1987). Different languages, registers, and symbol systems

help us to put a “grid” on our physical and social worlds so we can see them as organized into certain sorts of elements and combinations of elements.

So which comes first, language making experience comprehensible and meaningful in certain ways or experience giving language situated meanings that make it comprehensible and meaningful in certain ways? It is interesting that learning in schools tends to start with language (talk and texts) and only then move on to experience. Informal learning out of school often moves in the opposite direction starting with experience and then moving to language (talk and texts).

In fact, most learners cannot learn deeply without starting with experience so that they have some fodder with which to give useful meanings to language in use. In school, some children have gotten lots of experiences at home to bring to the academic language they face, while others have not and these others fare less well.

It is core to good teaching (here is the bare beginnings of my putatively creative idea about creative language teaching) that experience (situated meanings) and language (as system) bootstrap each other for learners. For beginners, they must alternate move by move in a dance. This is certainly true of first language learning (where performance comes before competence). In such learning, “teachers” (parents, mentors, adults, and more advanced peers) use language “just in time” and “on demand” (Gee 2003). “Just in time” means giving a short piece of language right when it can be applied to experience and married to it to demonstrate situated meaning. “On demand” means longer stretches of talk, symbols, and texts when learners are ready for them, prepared for them, need them, and know that and why they need them. This is, of course, after extended experiences have prepared the ground and created some useful ways of situating meanings.

There is a “funny” opening to one version of the video game America’s Army (a multiplayer game used for training and, in a public version, for entertainment). You as player start by hearing a flip-chart lecture that later when you are in the field you cannot remember or apply. The lecture’s words are about a world of images, actions, dialogue, and experience that you have not yet experienced. The words have no situated meanings, only basic or verbal ones. This beginning is meant to parody school-based learning because the Army believes in situated learning (including using video games for experiences where no one can actually get hurt). At an education conference once someone asked a Colonel why the Army taught the way it did, using

games and simulations. The Colonel said "Because we often get the kids you failed. If we teach them the way you did, this time they die. You educators should be ashamed that the Army was the one to start this". Amen.

Social Languages and Discourses

Languages at the size of "English" or "Russian" are composed of a myriad of what I will call "social languages" (Gee 2014). Social languages (some of which might be called dialects, registers, varieties, styles, or by other names) are styles of using words, grammar, and discourse to enact a socially significant identity. This identity might be connected to a place, an ethnicity, an occupation, or a shared interest. Social languages are distinctive ways with words that betoken a "location" in social space. Social languages include the various different ways with words in mathematics, science, gaming, carpentry, business, law, street gangs, gardening, cooking, birding, theology, and a great many more activities.

When someone wants to enact a socially significant identity they have to get their style of language "right" (recognizable). They have to "talk the talk". But that is not enough. They always have to "walk the walk". They have to act, interact, and dress "right". They have to value, think, and believe the "right" things (or seem as if they do). They have to use various sorts of objects, tools, and technologies in the "right" way. And they have to do all this at the "right" times and places. They have to be, say, and do the "right" things so that they can get recognized as having the "right" socially-significant identity at a given time and place (that is, the identity recognized by a social or cultural group who created and sustains that identity).

I use the term "Discourse" with a capital "D" (Gee 2014, 2015) for any combination of ways of "talking the talk" (ways with the words = a social language) and "walking the walk" (ways with thinking, doing, and things). I use the term "Discourse" because such identities as "Fundamentalist Christian" and "Evolutionary Biologist" or "L.A. cop" and "L.A. Street Gang Member" talk and interact ("discourse") through history with each other via the transitory human minds and bodies that instantiate them for a time and are ultimately replaced by others.

Being able to enact and recognize identities within Discourses (= "talking the talk" + "walking the walk") is deeply consequential in society. The graduate student I mentioned above—the one who had lost her PhD advisor—needed to get recognized as an advanced graduate student in an American university and she needed to know what to expect from someone being (at a time and place) an American university

research professor. Failing this she was in endanger of being thrown out of graduate school because she had no advisor and losing her student visa. It matters. And it is clearly not just a matter of getting your grammar right. The student needed to say, be, and do in the "right" ways.

So here I am concerned only with language teaching that focuses on social languages and Discourses. This means helping learners to be able to use language in combination with ways of acting, interacting, valuing, and using objects, tools, and technologies so as to "pull off" consequential identities, whether this identity is being an "informal person" in a certain part of the United States, an advanced student of biology in an American University, or a fellow Yu-GiOh fan. Teaching people just to be able to "speak English" does not let them actually enact and recognize identities so they can navigate society, institutions, and sociocultural spaces in that language.

Principles of Situated Language Teaching or Discourse Teaching

- Teach the game (activities, practices, problems, challenges) the language is about. Relate words to experiences of play/work/problem solving.
- Offer learners well-mentored, well-modelled extended samples of talk and text in the relevant social language so that they can learn the language that regiments their experience and defines is ontology. But do this after and side by side with experience that builds up situated meanings and creates preparation for future learning.
- Offer multiple ways to learn and multiple tools and platforms of learning. Encourage learners to try several ways to learn and to try new ways. Encourage them to switch ways if one way is not working. But do not encourage learners to pass up challenges or not to persist past failure.
- Use multiple forms of media and multiple forms of social interactions to exemplify how to "talk the talk" and "walk the walk" and how to reflect on and think about these things during and after practice.
- Offer constrained, well-mentored, well-designed experiences of individual and collaborative problem solving but with help for learners to know what to pay attention to in the experience and how to do so. Give learners help with managing their attentional economies and lower cognitive load for beginners.
- Lower the cost of failure. Encourage learners to explore and try things.
- Don't divorce language from action and experience. Use language (and information) either "just in time" when it can be applied and reflected on in

application or “on demand” when learners want, need, as ask for larger blocks of language. Use such “on demand” language (see point 2 above) to get learners to engage in articulation, meta-level thinking, and discussion about theories and strategies.

- Making learning highly interactive where each learner gets to make, design, lead and follow, teach and learn, discuss and argue, and gain a shared passion for what they are doing in a community of practice, activity system, or affinity space (choose your favorite term).
- Do not measure learning by time, but by different trajectories to mastery. Be sure there are multiple models of mastery along the way and that they are discussed so learners can begin to share paradigms of excellence.
- Assess on multiple variables across time in relation to multiple paths or trajectories different people can take to mastery. Offer operational feedback. Remember that growth is often U-shaped. Learners initially get better, then they get worse (as they are cognitively reorganizing their knowledge), and then get better again at a higher level. Watch out for downgrading people at the bottom of the U. Failure there is an indication of real learning.
- Thinking of teaching as designing and resourcing a learning system with moving parts.

CHAPTER FOUR

Assessment and English Language Testing

4.1 Introduction

There are many reasons for testing students in the English language; these include (see also Harmer, 2001; 2010):

1. Putting students at the appropriate level by finding out what they know and what they do not (i.e. **placement** test);
2. Identifying how students are getting on with the lessons, and to what extent they have assimilated previously-learned language content (i.e. **progress** test);
3. Seeing how well students have learned everything in a certain class/course (i.e. **achievement** tests), and this is the most common type of tests. It tests all four skills plus knowledge of grammar and vocab.;
4. Identifying the general language proficiency level that a learner has reached at any one time (i.e. **proficiency** tests). These are used by employers and universities as reliable measures of students' (applicants') language abilities.
5. Monitoring learners' progress and following-up with their learning.
6. Discovering learning difficulties and language learning needs.
7. Choosing competent language learners to perform specific tasks.
8. Measuring language skills, knowledge and competencies.

Tests are sometimes used, NOT only as 'one-off' events as in the above examples, but also for CONTINOUS ASSESSMENT purposes; in this case, a student's progress is measured as IT IS HAPPENING though the whole learning period, not just at the end (e.g. language portfolio and continuous recording).

4.2 Good Tests

Good tests should be:

1. **Valid** (i.e. designed to do the job they are supposed to do, or measure the specific aspects/components they are to measure);
2. **Reliable** (i.e. give the same or similar results if marked by many scorers or if administered on different occasions). A test should be designed to minimize the ***effect of individual marking styles***;
3. **Clean**, as much as possible, from the WASHBACK effect (i.e. teaching for the test). The **washback** (or back-wash) effect has a negative effect on teaching if the test fails to mirror our teaching; we may be tempted to make our teaching fit the test, rather than the other way round;
4. **Consistent** with the activities used in the classroom;
5. **Motivating** and **encouraging**; never design a FAILING test (i.e. don't make items too difficult for students to answer), and, on the other hand, never write very easy tests that only address low-achievers, for example.

4.3 Tests Types and Categories

Contrary to INDIRECT test items, DIRECT test items require students to use the language; students are asked to DO something (i.e. a **task**) instead of just demonstrating knowledge about language.

In READING, for example, students might be asked to put a set of pictures in order instead of choosing the right word, for example.

In LISTENING, we can test their global understanding of the text, or ask them to fill out a summary form or write their personal reflections.

In WRITING, instead of just put missing words in a sentence, we might ask them to write a LEAFLET or brochure based on information supplied in an accompanying text.

In SPEAKING, we might involve students in oral interviews or free discussions or ask them to DRAMATIZE (e.g. role-play) certain situations.

Direct tests might involve items that look like the kind of tasks that students have been practicing in their lessons. Direct test items are MORE DIFFICULT to mark than indirect ones. Markers tend to be very SUBJECTIVE while scoring a piece of writing, for example (Harmer, 2010).

INDIRECT or **OBJCTIVE** items of a language test are commonly used to measure knowledge and understanding of different language aspects (e.g. vocabulary and grammar). These items usually include:

- True-Or-False Items
- Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQ)

- Completion Items
- Matching Items
- Re-arrangement Items
- Word-Recognition Items
- Transformation Items
- Punctuation Items

Table: Advantages and Disadvantages of Commonly Used Types of Achievement Test Items

Type of Item	Advantages	Disadvantages
True-False	Many items can be administered in a relatively short time. Moderately easy to write; easily scored.	Limited primarily to testing knowledge of information. Easy to guess correctly on many items, even if material has not been mastered.
Multiple-Choice	Can be used to assess broad range of content in a brief period. Skillfully written items can measure higher order cognitive skills. Can be scored quickly.	Difficult and time consuming to write good items. Possible to assess higher order cognitive skills, but most items assess only knowledge. Some correct answers can be guesses.
Matching	Items can be written quickly. A broad range of content can be assessed. Scoring can be done efficiently.	Higher order cognitive skills are difficult to assess.

Short Answer or Completion	Many can be administered in a brief amount of time. Relatively efficient to score. Moderately easy to write.	Difficult to identify defensible criteria for correct answers. Limited to questions that can be answered or completed in very few words.
Essay	Can be used to measure higher order cognitive skills. Relatively easy to write questions. Difficult for respondent to get correct answer by guessing.	Time consuming to administer and score. Difficult to identify reliable criteria for scoring. Only a limited range of content can be sampled during any one testing period.

(CRLT, 2014, Available from: http://www.crlt.umich.edu/P8_0)

4.4 Resolving Bias & Subjectivity

Unlike **objective questions** (e.g. MCQ, matching, true-or-false?, etc.) that can be easily scored by examiners, **essay** questions are more difficult to score. The main problem of such type lies in 'subjectivity'. **Subjectivity** is represented in giving an overall score based on our GUT-INSTINCT reaction (i.e. what we generally feel about the text). To counter the danger of MARKER SUBJECTIVITY, there are **TWO** ways:

1. Involving other people (e.g. two or three markers/raters) in the process, and then taking the mean score;
2. Using MARKING SCALES or CRITERIA for a range of different items. This way, we might diminish the overall impressionistic marking process.

To make marking scales MORE OBJECTIVE, we can write careful **DESCRIPTIONS** of what the different scores for each category represent.

Table: Sample Marking Scale or Criteria

Score	*Poor (1)*	*Fair (2)*	*Good (3)*	*V.Good (4)*	*Excellent (5)*
Accuracy					
Relevance					
Organisation					
Fluency					
Clarity					

4.5 Test Design

Designing tests depends on some factors, such as:

(1) Type and purpose of the test;

(2) List of items to be tested;

(3) Frequency of occurrence of certain language items; and

(4) Language content and skills needed to develop.

An important tip: As a teacher you can make use of any course books or test generators while designing/writing a test, but you MUST take care of the issue of weight: weighting the marks to reflect the importance of a particular element, item or section.

Further, language teachers should consider some important points while designing language tests:

- Spend some time in choosing your items and questions types; draft your preliminary ideas, and then edit your initial draft until a satisfactory test has been written. This also involves preparing a specification grid.
- Avoid – as much as possible – vague, tricky and highly challenging questions.
- State test items/questions as much clearly as possible; arrange them in a coherent and logical sequence.
- Review the textbook content outline (e.g. for all studied units and lessons) to decide upon the areas and/or aspects that your test should cover.
- Keep the time duration always into consideration; allocate maximum time for each section, and try your best to allow sufficient time for your students to think about answers.
- Read model tests and questions (especially those that the MOE has formally suggested) for guidance.
- Consider students' varying achievement levels and different learning styles while designing the test.
- Consult senior and expert language teachers at your school, and try to edit – when necessary - your test based on their feedback and suggested amendments.
- Ensure that no section or question in the test gives clues or keys that examinees might use for answering another question.

- Prepare your test in more than one or two sessions; then, take a break (perhaps for a few days), and re-read your test to reflect more on it before administering it to students.
- Provide clear and simply stated instructions so that students would not need any guidance or interference by the teacher during the test time.
- Prepare marking schemes and model answers.
- Make use of students' ideas and suggested questions.

4.6 Alternative Assessment in TEFL

Sometimes **formal** testing strategies/techniques are not sufficient to capture the whole image. Therefore, English language teachers might need to use ***alternative*** ways, methods, strategies and/or techniques to assess/evaluate learners more fairly and properly and – above all – more realistically!

In general, alternative assessment refers to any goal-oriented form/technique that can be used while teaching during the English class that should **involve** learners in real performance (e.g. hands-on activities, oral production, dramatisation, physical movement, etc.)

Thus, using **multiple** (alternative) ways/techniques of language learners' assessment would be beneficial in many ways:

- Ensuring fairness, especially as far as learners' differences, talents and varying styles are concerned;
- Achieving meaningful and relevant learning (i.e. letting students think outside the box);

- Measuring a wide range of students' knowledge, understanding, competencies and skills;
- Enabling teachers and policy makers to take realistic, evidence-based decisions;
- Enabling teachers to improve teaching performance, and changing their strategies.
- Ensuring learners' active learning and performance;
- Making students apply theoretical linguistic knowledge in real situations (i.e. in context);
- Creating a friendly teaching/learning environment, by, for example, overcoming nervousness, apprehension and other negative feelings associated with test taking;
- Enabling **transfer** of skills from one arena or scope to another (i.e. **integrative** language learning);
- Improving academic self-efficacy and increasing learners' self-confidence;
- Developing both teachers' and learners' social, linguistic, cognitive, personal and professional skills;
- Fostering reflection and self-assessment;
- Strengthening both teachers' and students' communication skills and lifelong learning.

There are many alternative assessment strategies, methods and/or techniques that can be used by learners. These include:

- Portfolios and reflective diaries;
- Content area logs;

- Open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews;
- Dramatisation and role plays;
- Rubrics;
- Reading conferences;
- Online writing (i.e. through Blogs, Wikis, Facebook, etc,);
- Projects and hands-on activities;
- Journals;
- Inventories;
- Exhibitions;
- Formative and progressive essays;
- KWL charts;
- Active demonstrations;
- Re-telling and story-telling;
- Doing research (e.g. through online search engines);
- WebQuests;
- Outdoor and extracurricular activities;

CHAPTER FIVE

Social Networking & Language Learning

5.1 Introduction & Rationale

Social networking has become a normal everyday practice done by teachers and students alike. Facebook, in particular, has become very common and widely used in Egypt. Many teaching/learning approaches nowadays (e.g. CALL, mobile-assisted language learning or MALL, and learning with i-pad) draw on these new literacy practices. It has become too difficult and unrealistic nowadays for teachers to disregard the new ways or means that learners are currently using for learning and communication.

Generally, employing the Web within language learning contexts is driven by the assertion that the fundamental language skills can be empowered by a group of Web-based and social networking tools such as Wikis, Blogs, and Facebook. The Web provides a strong intrinsic motivation for the English language learning (ELL), and helps learners with developing essential literacy skills. These social networking websites: (1) support collaborative learning; (2) engage individuals in critical thinking; and (3) enhance communication and writing skills through activating members work in personalized environments.

Facebook, in particular, can: (1) resolve the problem of insufficiency of time inside the classroom; (2) help everyone to show up and participate; (3) help students to get rid of the tension and pressure associated with face-to-face

communication, and this will eventually improve actual performance; (4) help students to achieve better understanding by uploading and downloading supporting materials; and (5) provide language learners in particular with authentic (real) situations.

According to Philips, et al. (2011), educators need to direct learners into using social media in general, and Facebook with much caution and care. In this regard, they suggest 7 ways:

1. Help develop and follow your school's policy about Facebook;
2. Encourage students to follow Facebook's guidelines;
3. Stay up to date about safety and privacy settings on Facebook;
4. Promote good citizenship in the digital world;
5. Use Facebook's pages and groups features to communicate with students and parents.
6. Embrace the digital, social, mobile, and "always-on" learning styles of 21st Century students.
7. Use Facebook as a professional development resource.

5.2 How can Facebook Facilitate Language Learning?

The proliferation of digital, social and mobile technologies has created a culture in which youth participate more in creating and sharing content, profoundly changing the way students communicate, interact, and learn. In many cases students spend as much (or more) time online in an informal learning environment--interacting with peers and receiving feedback--than they do with their teachers in the traditional classroom (Philips, et al. 2011).

The main point here is that Facebook - and other social networking tools – has become a fundamental component of learners' daily digital practices. Therefore, educators have to take this reality into their advantage. In other words, they can integrate Facebook into the teaching-learning process since learners are already familiar with it as a means of communication in the digital world.

In this regard, Philips et al. (2011) report that in their conversations with teachers, many indicated that they were looking for ways to better understand students' emerging digital learning styles. Educators have also expressed that they were interested in learning how to integrate Facebook into their lesson plans to enrich students' educational experiences, to increase the relevance of the content, and to encourage students to collaborate effectively with their peers.

Facebook can provide students with the opportunity to effectively present their ideas, lead online discussions, and collaborate. In addition, Facebook can help you, as an educator, to tap into the digital learning styles of your students. For example, it can facilitate student-to-student collaboration and provide innovative ways for you to involve students in your subject matter. Moreover, Facebook can be a powerful tool to help you connect with your colleagues, share educational content, and enhance communication among teachers, parents and students.
Facebook, in particular, plays a very important role in the educational field, as we can use it as an instructional tool to facilitate the learning processes. We will try to show some of the benefits of using Facebook such as (see also Abdallah, 2013):

1- Unlike traditional frontal teaching that is limited to a specific time and place, Facebook is a ubiquitous communication tool that can be used at any time - whether day or night for teaching/learning purposes; through it teachers can communicate and follow-up with their students, and thus might cover parts or sections that they have not covered inside the classroom (Abdallah, 2013).
2- It can improve many of the learner's different language skills, such as pronunciation (through interacting with native speakers); researching skills; and writing skills (e.g. collaborative, connective, and reflective writing).
3- It gives shy learners, who cannot participate inside the classroom, the chance to talk, vent their ideas, and express themselves without fear or embarrassment.
4- It increases learners' motivation by urging them to participate through Facebook discussions; thus, they would feel motivated to share ideas, develop arguments, and build-up knowledge and competency.
5- Students can benefit from the different facilities and language learning resources which are found on Facebook, such as videos, presentations, pictures, chatting, educational pages and groups, and other many useful links shared by other users of similar interests.
6- Facebook, as a comprehensive, flexible, and multi-purpose application, is supportive and attractive to language learners; there, they can see things differently, and thus learn in an attractive, relaxing environment, which is totally different from the traditional classroom environment.

5.3 Working as a Community of Practice on Facebook

A Community of Practice (CoP) stands for a group of people who share a common concern or goal, a set of problems, or an interest in a specific topic or area; they come together to fulfil both individual and group goals.

Forming a CoP is a very vital practice at present, especially after becoming so easily done thanks to web 2.0 and social networking tools. CoP is important because it: (1) facilitates access to resources; (2) enhances learners' participation; (3) opens for them new horizons that widen their scope and deepen their understanding; (4) reinforces dialogue and communication; (5) supports collaborative learning; and (6) engages them in meaningful practices (Abdallah, 2013).

In particular, CoP facilitates an interactive language learning environment where community members can learning effectively. For example, it can reinforce *task-based learning* through the online administration of meaningful language tasks to all group members. Also, it can act as online platform for practicing language skills. Further, CoP is considered a further extension of the physical classroom environment, where learners can take further ideas and theoretical content.

5.4 How can Facebook be Useful to Language Teachers?

For language teachers, Facebook can be useful in many ways:

1- Teachers can recommend good resources for learners' studied topics, and suggest extra links for further knowledge and study; they can help their learners to overcome their mistakes and errors.
2- Facebook is a very good way for communication among teachers themselves, especially if continuous professional development (CPD). It helps them to exchange ideas through the online interest groups and language learning communities.
3- Through Facebook, teachers can follow-up with their students, and subsequently, evaluate learners' progress through online assignments and tasks.
4- Teachers can share with learners any remaining educational content of the previous lectures that they could not cover or explain thoroughly inside the classroom.
5- Facebook helps teachers to identify the best teaching practices and know the latest and different strategies used in language teaching, and which can improve the learning process.
6- Teachers can integrate Facebook into their lesson plans and teaching schedules in order to develop learners' understanding and improve their study skills.
7- Through Facebook, teachers can deal with all kinds of learners (e.g. gifted students, those with learning disabilities, and those with special needs), and meet their individual differences and language learning needs.
8- Facebook can provide teachers with innovative ways for dealing with students' disruptive behaviour and their communication challenges.

9- Language teachers can improve learners' listening and pronunciation skills through online video chats, and writing skills through written chat.

5.5 How can Facebook be Useful to Language Learners?

As for language learners, Facebook can be useful in many ways:

1- Learners can share ideas with specialists and obtain feedback from them;
2- Facebook design promotes social interchange and cross-cultural exchange between participants, thereby increasing collaboration between students working on the same activities and tasks;
3- Students can use the *peer correction* technique through employing Facebook as a publishing vehicle to express and share ideas, viewpoints as well as reflections about others' writings;
4- Students can develop their pronunciation and actual use of language through chatting with native speakers;
5- Shy students will find a great chance to participate and express themselves;
6- Gifted students will find a great opportunity to fulfil their needs through extra tasks and assignments;
7- Students can benefit from a wide range of online materials and resources;
8- Students can participate in the ongoing content-building conversations over the web.

CHAPTER SIX

Fun and Humour in English Language Teaching

6.1 Introduction

Foreign language teaching is not an easy, straightforward process. This difficulty is reinforced when the target language is not commonly used for communication purposes within society. In order for English language teaching/learning to be effective, the teacher should provide an optimum and relaxing language learning environment. This process involves many strategies and/or techniques that add fun and humour to the teaching/learning environment.

Some teachers use songs and rhymes to create humour and fun in the language class. Others employ cartoon and jokes. While others use authentic (real) materials to make the new content as much interesting and plausible as possible to learners. Using humour does not only increase students' understanding of unfamiliar words, but it also increases familiarity with the target language. It creates deep common sense knowledge of the target language. This knowledge is a result of the way native speakers think, laugh and act. Thus, a common cultural background can be created.

In the language learning process, teachers and students almost experience anxiety that has negative influences on the students' ability to learn, achieve and master the target language. With humour, learning becomes a supportive strategy, as it helps students to overcome anxiety and stress. According to Morrison (2008), humour might have the ability to:

- Reduce stress, anxiety, and tension;

- Promote psychological well-being;
- Raise self-esteem;
- Improve interpersonal interactions and relationships;
- Build group identity, solidarity and cohesiveness; and enhances memory.

Humour proceeds to build up positive aspects of the learning process. Furthermore, using humour can be one of the constructivist learning strategies that positively affect the students' attempts to build up knowledge on their own. This takes place in a collaborative context in which group dynamics develop side by side with developing individual talents.

Through the establishment of strong and healthy relationships, individuals are no longer under stress. This relief motivates each of them to initiate ideas and construct strong relationships through which the opportunity for further development takes place. In this context, language learning, that depends on positive interaction of ideas, promotes the meaning construction process and the interchange of ideas.

6.2 Using Songs & Rhymes

Using songs is part of the humour and variety that teachers should add to the language class. Using songs in ELL is important, both linguistically and affectively. Linguistically, using songs might enlarge students' vocabulary, develop their listening and speaking skills, help them to learn various language functions and recall grammatical points, and familiarize them with the target culture.

Affectively, it should add more fun and create a lively language learning environment, motivate learners to participate, and stimulate students' interests in the target language.

Criteria based on which songs are chosen include: (1) containing limited vocabulary; (2) including language that is compatible with that used in the classroom; (3) presenting a little musical challenge; (4) having a straightforward and repetitive rhythm; (5) including refrains and repeated stanzas; and (6) sometimes being accompanied with actions and dramatization.

Presenting a song includes: (1) planning, which involves indentifying its purpose (i.e. why it is used) and functions (i.e. what the song can help with as far as ELL is concerned...For example, will it help as a warming-up activity to introduce a new lesson? Will it revise specific language items? Will it reinforce and develop listening? etc.; and preparing learners for the song; (2) introduce any new language items; (3) speak the song line by line; (3) song the song (if you can) asking Ss to repeat after you (or sing with you).

An important question: *What should you do if you can't sing?*

6.3 Using Games

Games in general make language teaching interesting. Gibbs (1974) defines a game as "an activity carried out by cooperating or competing decision makers, seeking to achieve, within a set of rules, their objectives".

Games add an element of fun and help to stimulate thinking as well as to motivate learning. Language games can provide challenges to young minds and provide a competitive element that enhances effective learning. Language games can be used to engage children in cooperative and team learning.

Games can, therefore, be designed to simulate the different social contexts in the real world. Within artificially defined limits, games can provide an opportunity for real communication and bridge the gap between the classroom and the real world. Language games thus allow the use of meaningful and useful language which is used in real contexts and are able to provide a chance for pupils to use the language that they have learnt (Rama, et al., 2007).

Games make learning fun and relaxed. They are also highly motivating and help pupils to make and sustain the effort of learning. Another advantage of using games for the language class is that they encourage pupils to interact and communicate. In addition, language games can provide challenges to young minds and can be used to engage children in cooperative and team learning. Finally, games also provide a competitive element that enhances effective learning as they keep learners interested.

Word games in particular can be very useful in many ways. Vocabulary can be reinforced by using a variety of games formats. Focus may be placed upon word building, spelling, meaning, sound/symbol correspondences, and words inferred from sentence context. The full communicative potential of these games can be

realised through good spirited team competition. Working in pairs or small groups, students try to be the first to correctly complete the task.

These games can be used at the end of the lesson or before introducing new material as a *change of pace* activity. Teachers should allow sufficient time for class discussion after the game has been completed. These games include:

1. Word Building Games
2. Word Completion Games
3. Numbers Games
4. Puzzles (e.g. Cross-Word Puzzle)
5. Riddles.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Virtual Language Learning Environment

By Dr Rehab A. El-Sayed

7.1 Introduction

The implementation of innovative educational practices is a response to the social needs for educational change. Such needs emerge from the massive request and access to high education, the necessity to increase competitiveness and to take into account new approaches to learning. The implementation of technology in educational environments and in the learning process poses a real challenge for the training institutions undertaking it. One of these new technologies is virtual learning environment (**VLE**). VLEs have shown a great success in many fields, especially education (Barajas & Owen, 2000).

7.2 VLE definition

There are many definitions of VLE that are identified according to the different uses of it in learning. Following are some of these definitions. Barajas and Owen (2000, 39-40) stated that "VLEs have to be thought of as learning environments. The 'learning' aspect drives the activity; virtuality rather refers to the technology that is brought in to support learning. Thus, VLEs will mean (any combination of distant and face-to-face interaction, where some kind of time and space virtuality is presented)". In these types of environments, participants are experiencing new ways of learning and communicating with peers and teachers by organizing the

learning environment in a different way, based on several technological configurations.

The US-Based Learning Circuits Magazine defined VLE as "a wide set of approaches, applications and processes, such as Web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms and digital collaboration. It includes the delivery of content via internet, intranet, extranet, LAN, WAN, audio-and videotape, satellite broadcast, interactive TV, CD-Rom, and more".

The English Wikipedia defines VLE as "an education system based on the Web that models conventional real-world education by integrating a set of equivalent virtual concepts for tests, homework, classes, classrooms, and the like, and perhaps even museums and other external academic resources. It normally uses Web 2.0(1) tools for 2-way interaction, and includes a content management system".

As these definitions show, VLE includes many approaches, techniques and methods of teaching that enrich face-to-face learning.

(1) The term "Web 2.0" is associated with web applications that facilitate participatory information sharing, interoperability, user-centered design, and collaboration on the World Wide Web. A Web 2.0 site allows users to interact and collaborate with each other in a social media dialogue as creators (prosumers) of user-generated content in a virtual community, in contrast to websites where users (consumers) are limited to the passive viewing of content that was created for them. Examples of Web 2.0 include social networking sites, blogs, wikis, video sharing sites, hosted services, web applications, mashups and folksonomies.

7.3 The Effectiveness of VLE

It wouldn't be honest to claim that VLEs will improve the quality of education or reduce the costs of educational systems. These environments have some potential effects. However, the past tells us that it is very difficult to set up the conditions that turn potential into actual effects. The issue is not to prove the effects but to understand them. Dillenbourg et al (2002, 10-16) listed the following issues:

a- Media have no intrinsic effectiveness, only affordances.
b- Social interactions
c- Virtual places implicitly convey the communication contract.
d- Virtual interactions do not have to imitate face-to-face communication in order to be effective.
e- 'Non-Verbal' communication
f- Building virtual communities
g- Unlimited access to information
h- Collaborative learning is not a recipe.
i- «Does it work» is what matters.
j- Virtual space is a space for innovation

a- Media have no intrinsic effectiveness, only affordances

Studies show a slight advantage for computers especially when considering the time for learning. VLE effectiveness is bound to the pedagogical context of use:

the pedagogical scenario in which the courseware is integrated, the degree of teacher involvement, the time frame, the technical infrastructure, and so forth.

b- Social interactions

The first obvious opportunity of VLEs is that they support social interaction in many ways: synchronous versus asynchronous, text-based versus audio or video, one-to-one versus one-to-many…etc. This affordance too cannot be gained unless the teacher explores different new communication functionalities that are effective in VLEs.

c- Virtual places implicitly convey the communication contract

The social context in which interactions occur has a strong impact on the way students interact, sometimes even stronger than technological features. Virtual environments offer designers ways to specify implicitly this context to the students, namely the communication contract. Setting up implicit communication rules is one of the social affordances of virtual places.

d- Virtual interactions do not have to imitate face-to-face communication in order to be effective

Virtual space designers do not necessarily try to imitate physical space, the look for creating new affordances. Groups of users and tools form distributed cognitive systems and they self-organize to adapt to the context. Experienced users have developed ways to cope with the differences between VLEs and face-to-face interactions. The challenge is to understand these opportunities and integrate them where they are pedagogically relevant.

e- 'Non-verbal' communication

f- The specificity of VLEs is that, beyond direct text/voice/video messages, users may communicate in other ways: exchanging objects, moving in the space. These are often called 'non-verbal' communication.

g- Building virtual communities

The major interest of virtual learning communities may not be to create learners communities, but to make communities for teachers. Teaching has always been an individual work: teachers do not collaborate a lot, they rarely attend to each other lectures, do not much exchange teaching materials and so forth. The challenge is to turn teaching into a collective performance. Some very large running experiments specifically foster the creation of communities for teacher professional development. Involving directors, researchers, inspectors and parents are interesting affordances of virtual learning communities.

h- Unlimited access to information

The WEB provides learners and teachers with access to an amount of information that has never been accessible before and is developing at an exponential rate. The effectiveness depends upon the way the designer exploits this opportunity. S/he should consider setting up a page gathering the information considered as correct, relevant for the course, morally acceptable…etc. or providing unfiltered access to the WEB but teaching students how to search for information on the WEB, training them to be critical.

i- Collaborative learning is not a recipe

VLEs contain obvious affordances for collaborative learning. Collaborative learning is effective if the group members engage in rich interactions: when they argue about the meaning of terms and representations, when they shift roles… A

teacher can regulate the collaborative process to favour the emergence of these types of interactions in two ways: structuring collaboration or regulating interactions.

j- «Does it work» is what matters

The designers of VLEs should consider the fact that teachers always look forward to using the software which is easy to install and to use, and that is bug free. They also ask questions such as: Does it work with my students? Do the students 'play the game', i.e. feel engaged in the scenario and have a sustained interest along the software use? How long will I be able to keep the floor with this software, a few hours or a few months?

k- Virtual space is a space for innovation

For teachers, a virtual space is an open space; a space where they can try new approaches. The teachers, who worked part-time for the Virtual University, changed their teaching style even outside Internet, including more collaborative learning practices, viewing themselves less as knowledge providers and more as facilitators.

7.4 Requirements of implementing VLEs

Undertaking of VLE development within institutions of higher learning requires (Barajas & Owen, 2000, 40):

a- the attention of a variety of institutional actors. These range from developers to administrators and institutional factors. Designing and using VLEs require fundamental changes in the role of academic and technical staff. Academics have to acquire or develop new knowledge and skills to become teaching materials designers,

tutors, facilitators, etc. They have to cope with essential changes in the conception of time and space introduced by these technologies.

b- a trans-disciplinary approach engaging a multiplicity of disciplines ranging from subject matter specialists to instructional designers to system administrators

c- a careful consideration for the integration of socio-cultural elements.

7.5 Implementing VLE

In trying to implement VLEs in teaching, the teacher should answer some questions related to three general phases (Barajas & Owen, 2000, 45):

1st Phase: Teaching and learning issues

- What are the new strategies and methods applied for teaching in VLEs?
- What are the new "soft" and "hard" skills tutors/lecturers need in multidimensional and intercultural VLEs?
- What are the best assessment methods in VLEs?
- How do we manage lecturers' overload in VLE?
- Can we think on the emergency of a new conception of learning materials in VLE?

2nd Phase: Institutional issues

- Is there a need for additional valid research so as to establish which elements/issues are to be considered justifiable reasons for avoiding VLEs and how to overcome them easily?

- Should the relevant national bodies engage in efforts to overcome and lessen resistance?
- What are the factors that led institutions to consider using VLE?
- What type of networks is being formed for VLE?
- What type of institutional change is being sought?
- What is the management approach to institutional change?

3rd Phase: Cross-cultural issues

- Which methodologies should be used in order to overcome the language barrier problem?
- Which methodologies should be used to enhance the intercultural communication among tutors and learners?
- Which special measures should be taken when fixing the calendar and/or the syllabus of the programs?

7.6 Importance and advantages of using VLE

One model of learning that can be facilitated using VLE is the Cognitive Apprenticeship model; learning based on the way that apprentices learn from experienced skilled workers. Here, learning is "situated" in the contexts of culture and learning environment by involving the learner in realistic activities which involve collaboration with their peers and tutors, designed to assist them in adoption the specific culture and acquiring the tools needed to discuss and reflect upon practice (Stiles, 2000, 6).

VLE provides learners with opportunities to determine the suitable time and pace for getting the learning experience. Learners can also access the learning material and communicate with classmates and instructors through networked resources and a computer based interface, rather than face-to-face in a classroom .It is feasible to expand the traditional model of classroom-based instruction to include the variety of resources available in VLEs.

In VLEs technology is used to deliver learning material and to facilitate many-to-many communication among distributed participants. Text, hypertext, graphics, streaming audio and video, computer animations and simulations, embedded tests, and dynamic content are some examples of delivery technology. Electronic mail, online threaded discussion boards, synchronous chat, and desktop videoconferencing are some examples of communication technology.

VLEs rely on information and communication technology to create the venue of knowledge transfer and learning progress .Unlike computer micro worlds, VLEs are open systems that allow for communication and interaction among the participants. Unlike traditional classroom education, VLEs support student-to-student and student-to-instructor connectivity throughout the learning experience in a technology-mediated setting.

A certain degree of learner control can be built into traditional classroom instruction, but VLEs have the potential to provide for greater personalization of instruction and a much higher degree of learner control than traditional

classroom education. Traditional learning environments do allow students, when outside of the classroom, to control the pace and sequence of material, and the time and place of their study. VLEs, however, provide this flexibility during instruction as well (Piccoli et al, 2001, 404).

7.7 Implementing VLEs in teacher training:

Implementing teaching in VLEs needs comprehension in technological and organizational aspects, and new skills in applying relevant didactical methods. Future teachers must be introduced to technology and its applications in the educational area in order to be enabled to measure the whole range of possibilities available for organizing educational and teaching in this virtual context. Even when a sharing of work takes place within a team of specialists, a minimum competence of knowing what the others do is required. Some soft skills like working in inter-disciplinary teams become more important too in this context and are to be considered as well in teacher training (Barajas & Owen, 2000, 43).

Student teachers are particularly competent to comment on their learning within online context. Clarke (2009, 521), cited Laughran (1999, 19), asserted the primacy of student experience and the need for teachers at all levels to be attuned to student experiences. Student teachers are perhaps a singularly well-informed and perceptive student group whose interest and enthusiasm for education can serve to improve the quality of their opinions. Today's student teachers are more Information and Communication Technology (ICT) literate than ever before, possessing, as they do, a literacy which has been developed

through a mixture of school-based learning and through extensive leisure use of ICT. It is ironic that, as technology proliferates; multiple digital divides between teachers, students and pupils are exacerbated. One key divide is aptly described by Prensky (2001, 38) as that between digital natives (pupils) and digital immigrants (tutors/teachers):

The single biggest problem facing education today is that our Digital Immigrant instructor, who speak an outdated language (that of the pre-digital age), are struggling to teach a population that speaks an entirely new language.

Osler (2005) advocated the use of online environments to support teacher development across the three phases of early teacher education (Initial Teacher Education ITE, Induction and Early Professional Development EPD) and, indeed, beyond. In addition, a recent Department of Education Circular highlights the need for schools to explore "opportunities for teachers and leaders to undertake some elements of their continued professional learning online (DE, 2005, 3).

E-learning appears to stand in marked contrast to the standards/competences approach to teacher education which is used worldwide (Beyer, 2002). The competences/ standards approach is critiqued in a recent article by Yandell and Turvey (2007, 534) as having an abstracting, decontextualising effect, and as representing a narrowing conception of the teachers' role that involves an attempt to measure a uniformity of outcomes.

E-mail and computer conferencing have been shown to improve students' "ICT skills, promote reflective thinking and encourage debate (Clarke, 2009, 522). Lambe and Clarke (2003, 352) suggest that the use of a VLE can help not only to improve competence and confidence in the use of ICT, but also foster opportunities for high quality professional dialogue and be an important means of conversation and social interaction between the student group.

Clarke (2009, 522) asserted that the extensive use of a computer conferencing system encouraged collaboration, and could support and enhance critical reflective practice. Dutt-Donner and Powers (2000) found that using VLE led to high levels of participation and supported the development of community of caring individuals, where thoughtful interaction could take place. Barnett (2001) found evidence that "networking technologies" can reduce teacher isolation and support sharing, foster reflection on practice, influence teaching practice, and support the formation of communities of practice.

Most use of the asynchronous discussion areas – online forums are for three main purposes that are explained below (Clarke, 2009, 523):

1- Reflective writing and meta-reflection

The asynchronous conferencing tools of VLEs are used throughout teaching practice as a venue for reflective writing. Students are asked to reflect upon various aspects of their practice and to share a brief written reflection in the online discussion forums.

The researcher used the reflective writing as an assessment tool, the meta-reflective e-learning profile in which students are required to revisit all of their online postings and write (c.500 words) about what they have learned online and what they have taught others. The profile is clearly not a perfect assessment tool. In particular, it is summative and individual in nature, at a time when formative and peer assessment is being encouraged also. Thus, the researcher asked student teachers to reflect on their peers' performance and write about it online.

2- Sharing resources

The asynchronous discussion areas also serve as publishing tools, allowing student teachers (and tutors) to upload attachments. The VLE offers the potential for these resources to be retained and shared with members of future cohorts. This approach has resonance with communal constructivism (Holmes & Gardner, 2006) which is explained using two helpful metaphors. In traditional learning models students pass through a pipe leaving no trace of their passing (so there is no year-on-year transfer of knowledge between student cohorts), whilst a communal constructivist environment is analogous to "a river which enriches its flood plain with silt each time it floods". Each cohort of students contributes to the communal knowledge in a permanent form, leaving their own imprint on the course by producing communally generated resources which are shared with all future cohorts. They argue that students should become publishers and not just consumers.

It is clear that VLEs are very much capable of hosting learning within the students' discussion areas which can be used to build up libraries of resources (lesson plans, worksheets, web quests etc.). Holmes et al (2001) also highlight how, within VLE's framework, students cooperate rather than compete.

3- The 'Hidden Curriculum' of VLE– the non– compulsory online 'Coffee Bars'

In VLE students can also be provided with discussion areas which are designated as a non-compulsory part of the VLE course. It seems that these discussions are often put to good use. Clarke (2009, 524) asserted that "these discussions were an important source of serendipitous informal support between course members". The basic premise of the hidden curriculum is that learners learn much more from it than they do from the content of the formal curriculum.

The nature of VLEs is characterized by four values. They are (Clarke, 2009, 525):

a) Technologically enabled rather than technologically constrained;
b) Learning and learner-centred rather than teaching and teacher-centred;
c) Permeable rather than isolated and,
d) Alive.

Although effectiveness of using the internet and its applications has been proved by many studies (ex. Erben et al, 2009; Richardson, 2009; Abdallah, 2011b), only few teacher educators in the Egyptian universities ,are ready to incorporate literacies based on new technologies into EFL teacher education (England, 2007). Besides, educational technology courses delivered in the pre-service EFL teacher

education programs at Egyptian colleges of education still focus on general computer skills without practically relating them to ELL (Abdallah, 2011b).

Investigating the current Egyptian context of preparing EFL teachers, Abdel Latif (2009), Ibrahim (2009) and Abdallah (2011b) found that fixed instruction that drives students to memorize facts and learn by heart is still dominant. This is critical within a teacher education context that should target professional development and lifelong learning more than the mere memorization of specific contents.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Teaching Writing

8.1 Introduction

Generally, writing is a language skill, an everyday practice, a form of literacy, a communicative activity, and sometimes a means through which learners can be assessed, especially within the Egyptian context. As a method of communication, for example, writing can be used to establish and maintain contact with others, transmit information, express thoughts, feelings, and reactions, entertain, and persuade. As a personal or private activity, it can be a powerful tool for learning and remembering. It can be used to explore and refine ideas, organise thoughts, and record information. At school, learners are usually asked to use writing to display what they know, and thus, writing becomes the medium through which pupil learning is measured (Browne, 1999: p2).

Therefore, people write for different reasons and in a wide range of contexts. They normally write in order to:

- Get their message across;
- Convey important information and facts to others;
- Communicate their own intentions and purposes;
- Help and support others;
- Prove that they have mastered something;
- Put ideas on paper so that they are not lost;
- Plan for doing something by creating a schedule or timetable;
- Guide and direct others;
- Succeed in life and pass tests;

- Modify and re-draft something;
- Make money and earn living;
- Express themselves;
- Socialise and participate in different events;
- Organise ideas and say what one cannot communicate orally;
- Share ideas and experiences with others;
- State reflections and jot down personal diaries;
- Teach/Train others and provide them with feedback;
- Learn and internalise some linguistic aspects (e.g., vocabulary and grammar); and
- Simplify something.

According to Harmer (2007), composing or writing in a foreign language is always a ***demanding*** process where language learners need to employ many skills and strategies. As a productive skill, writing draws on other language skills such as listening and reading. That is why language teachers usually delay it until their students have done a great deal of listening and reading in the target language.

In its ***simplest*** form, writing may take the form of ***notation***: copying in conventional graphic form something already written, or reproducing in written form something that has been read or heard. This act hardly involves anything more than the ability to use the writing system of the language. Writing in the language becomes more ***complicated*** when it involves writing ***meaningful***

segments of language which might be used in specific circumstances by native speakers. This is the type of writing involved in things like grammatical exercises, the construction of simple dialogues, and dictation. In its most ***highly developed*** form, writing refers to the ***conveying*** of information or the ***expression*** of original ideas in the target language. These distinctions among the types of writing activities reflect the major areas of learning involved in the writing process. Students must learn the ***graphic*** system and be able to spell according to the conventions of language. They must learn to control the structure according the canons of good writing. They must learn to ***select*** from among possible combinations of words and phrases those which will convey the meaning they have in mind (Rivers, 1981).

Furthermore, it is important to be aware of the differences between ***spoken*** and ***written*** language. When people speak, they normally seem more relaxed and less formal. They are likely to express themselves in a simple language which is full of hesitations, pauses, repetitions, etc. In this regard, Holliday (1985) and Nunan (1991) state some of the features that distinguish spoken from written texts:

- Spoken language sounds ***simpler*** than written language; Transcriptions of spoken language look ***less structured*** because they represent '***unedited'*** language. The ***lexical density*** of written texts (i.e. the number of lexical or content words per clause) makes writing seem more complex;
- Spoken forms are in a sense more basic than the written forms; in writing, we have normally altered the normal state of events;

- ❖ Compared with speech, writing is often ***de-contextualised***; in communicating a message, writers are usually distant in time and place from the person(s) with whom they wish to communicate. Because of this lack of direct contact with the reader, they are unable to make use of feedback from others to adjust their message;
- ❖ People usually exert more ***effort*** during writing as they do their best to clarify their message. This absence of the physical and paralinguistic features that the speaker uses to support his/her utterance adds burdens to the writer.

8.2 The Writing Sub-skills

Writing is a ***broad*** skill that has many manifestations that might be referred to as 'writing sub-skills'. These are the concrete skills that language learners need to develop so as to be efficient writers in the target language. They include (see: *http://miguelbengoa.com/elt/?p=87*):

1. Manipulating the script of the language: handwriting, spelling, and punctuation;

2. Expressing grammatical (syntactic and morphological) relationships at the sentence level;

3. Expressing relationships between parts of a written text through cohesive devices (especially through grammatical devices such as noun-pronoun reference);

4. Using markers in written discourse, in particular:

- introducing an idea
- developing an idea

- making a transition to another idea
- concluding an idea
- emphasising a point (and indicating main or important information)
- explaining or clarifying a point already made
- anticipating an objection or contrary view

5. Expressing the communicative function of written sentences:
   - using explicit markers
   - without using explicit markers

6. Expressing information or knowledge in writing: both explicitly and implicitly;
7. Expressing conceptual meaning;
8. Planning and organising written information in expository language, which includes:
   - narrative
   - straight description of phenomena or ideas
   - descriptions of process or change of state
   - argument

8.3 Writing Fostered by New Technologies

The writing skill nowadays has been fostered by new technologies. In particular, some Web-based facilities have recently enabled new genres of writing and made it possible to share and develop ideas in an infinite fashion. For example, Wikis have enabled '***collaborative writing***' in which case learners collaborate together online to produce something. Through Wikis, language learners can add, edit, and delete the content in a developmental fashion that was not possible before. Similarly, through Blogs, learners have become able to practise '***connective***

writing' in which case they can post content and comment on posts made. Thus, the same post may raise a great deal of arguments connected together. This might result in ***threaded discussions*** in which the ideas are developed continuously with no end. Unlike the case in traditional, paper-based writing, students while writing online (whether connectively or collaboratively) write purposefully, sometimes in response to others' accounts, keeping in mind the potential audience. Besides, there is no end for the writing, as the dialogue will continue when others comment on what has been written and post new pieces that stimulate discussion.

This state of affairs has provided online spaces to practise writing and develop the different writing skills that learners need in the 21st century. Writing has become a ***collaborative*** activity rather than a ***static*** product that a student initiates and finishes individually with no interference from others. Besides, the way that learners write ***online*** is totally different from the way they write ***on paper***. Writing online enables writers to:

- Easily correct themselves (self-correction) while they are writing;
- Use many options such as checking spelling and grammar to produce accurate pieces;
- Exploit multiple resources while writing and copy and paste parts easily and flexibly;
- Reflect on what they are writing by employing different techniques such as the 'find' feature that enables them to locate any word/phrase in the text;

- Re-order the content they have written and fill in the gaps when necessary;
- View models of good writing that might help them with organising their ideas and developing their writing skills;
- Contrast different accounts and summarise what they have written;
- Establish an e-mail dialogue with other students who are reading the same content;
- Write to a real audience for realistic and communicative purposes;
- View written accounts belonging to different genres and practise multi-genre writing online;
- Make use of the authentic content available online while writing.

8.4 Teaching Writing

8.4.1 Writing as a process vs. writing as a product

Perceiving writing either as a process or as a product drastically determines how we teach writing. The '***product'*** approach to writing is a ***teacher-centred*** approach that focuses solely on ***accuracy***. It focuses on the ***end result*** of the learning process – what it is that the learner is expected to be able to do as a fluent and competent user of the language (Nunan, 1991: p86). In other words, teachers are concerned with the ***outcome*** or product that learners eventually produce. Thus, writing in the target language is seen more as a purely ***linguistic*** activity than as a ***communicative*** activity. It is viewed as a standard practice that can be easily measured and scored objectively based on some pre-determined criteria. Thus, the ***product-oriented*** approach favours classroom activities in which the learner is engaged in imitating, copying, and transforming models of correct language.

On the other hand, the '***process***' approach focuses on ***fluency*** more than on accuracy, and on ***quantity*** more than on quality. It focuses mainly on the various classroom activities which are believed to promote the development of skilled language use. Teachers adopting this approach, instead of looking at completed texts, are much more interested in the ***process*** writers go through in composing texts. They believe that competent writers do not produce final texts at their first attempt, and that writing is a long and often painful process, in which the final text emerges through ***successive*** drafts. Thus, beginning writers are encouraged to get their ideas on paper in ***any shape*** or form without worrying too much about formal correctness or grammar. Further, this approach encourages collaborative group work between learners as a way of enhancing motivation and developing positive attitudes towards writing (Nunan, 1991: p87).

Accordingly, writing is a creative, expressive, and ***learner-centred*** activity in which the learners' personal characteristics, attitudes, and feelings play vital roles. Thus, the student writer's ***voice*** comes to the fore as an essential component of the wiring process which is an individual process in the first place (Reid, 2009). In this sense, and as Harmer (2009: p113) states, writing is not a linear process that follows a pre-determined order; instead, it is a complicated, ***iterative*** process that might go in a ***chaotic*** order. Thus, writers may plan, draft, *re*-plan, draft, edit, *re*-edit, *re*-plan, etc before they produce their final version. This way, students are writing-for-writing beside writing-for-learning.

8.4.2 Factors influencing the teaching of writing

There are many factors that language teachers should consider for teaching writing. For example, the kind of writing they ask students to do and the way they ask them to do it will depend on learners' age, level, learning styles, and interests. Thus, they should not ask beginners to try to put together a complex narrative composition in English. As Harmer (2009) puts it, in order to help students to write successfully and enthusiastically in different styles, we need to consider three separate issues: genre, the writing process, and building the writing habit.

Generally, ***genre*** (the French equivalent of 'sort', 'kind', or 'type), according to Wikipedia, is the term for any category of literature or other forms of art or culture (e.g., music) and in general, any type of discourse, whether written or spoken, audio or visual, based on some set of stylistic criteria. Genres are formed by conventions that change over time as new genres are invented and the use of old ones is discontinued. Often, works fit into multiple genres by way of borrowing and recombining these conventions. As far as writing is concerned, a ***genre*** is a type of writing which members of a discourse community would instantly recognise for what it was. Thus, we recognise a small ad in a newspaper the moment we see it because, being members of a particular group, we have seen many of such texts before and are familiar with the way they are constructed. Therefore, one of the important decisions language teachers need to make is ***which genres*** are important and/or engaging for their students. Then, they can show them examples of texts within a genre to help them to see how typical texts within a genre are constructed. This knowledge will help them to ***construct*** appropriate texts of their own. At lower levels, learners might be given

clear models to follow and imitate. However, as their language levels improve, their writing should express their own creativity within a genre, rather than imitating it (Harmer, 2009: p113).

Teachers should also consider the issue of ***writing as a process***. They should encourage students to plan, draft, and edit in a dialogic, iterative fashion. In order to develop writing as a process, teachers need to be both ***patient*** and ***tolerant*** allowing learners sometimes to err and violate grammatical rules for the sake of producing a creative content that reflects self-expression and personal thinking. Thus, learners should be allowed to do many attempts before producing a final version.

Moreover, teachers should help their students to ***build*** the ***writing habits***. Often, students feel too bored to write or find it difficult to start. This is quite normal, and therefore, the teacher's role lies in encouraging them from the very beginning to make writing an essential component of their daily activities.

In addition, teachers should do their best to make writing ***interesting, realistic,*** and ***relevant*** to their students. For example, the more the writing topic is interesting to students and relevant to their daily lives, the more they are likely to develop their writing skills and produce reasonable accounts. In other words, writing should be ***contextualised*** within the learners' culture. Thus, it might be better to ask Egyptian learners to write in English on agriculture in Egypt or the

over-population problem there, than to ask them to write on the English weather or life in London.

8.4.3 Principle of teaching writing

The following principles should act as guidelines for language teachers while teaching writing:

- Teachers should do their best to develop writing as a habit for their students;
- Teachers should find ways to ***involve*** those learners who are ***reluctant*** to write (e.g., exposing them gradually to writing; asking them to write about something they like; and giving them rewards after producing a reasonable written account)
- Teachers should consider the goals behind the writing activities/exercises at hand and adjust their teaching accordingly;
- During free writing exercises, teachers should avoid over-correction and try their best to be encouraging, tolerant, and flexible all the time;
- Beside striving to obtain an accurate product from students after writing, teachers should also focus on writing as a ***process*** by understanding the overlapping socio-cultural, psycholinguistic, and personal aspects associated with writing;
- Teachers should do their best to make the writing activity ***interesting*** and ***relevant*** to their students;
- Teachers should involve their students in various ***genres*** of writing;
- Teacher should relate and integrate writing with other language ***skills/aspects*** such as reading and listening.

8.4.4 Writing activities

Deciding on writing activities by teachers depends on many factors such as: students' level, their average age, the future intentions for the writing (e.g., school tests), the specific writing skills in focus, the language aspects that a teacher wants to address, and the writing genre in focus. Thus, an important question to ask oneself is: What should the students be able to produce at the end of this exercise? (e.g., a well written letter, a report, an essay, an advertisement, a story, etc.). Another important question is: What is the focus of the exercise? (e.g., structure, tense usage, and creative writing). Once these factors are clear in the teacher's mind, the teacher can begin to focus on how to involve the students in the activity thus promoting a positive, long-term learning experience (see: *http://esl.about.com/cs/teachingtechnique/a/a_twrite.htm*).

Harmer (2007) mentions a reasonable range of writing activities. These include:

1-Instant writing activities: Using instant writing activities as often as possible, especially with reluctant writers, can help with building the writing habit. In these activities, students are asked to write immediately in response to a teacher's request. For example, students might be dictated half sentences to complete (e.g., 'My favourite hobby is …', and 'I will never forget the time I …'). Teachers can also give students three words and tell them to put them into a sentence as quickly as possible. Instant writing is designed both to make students comfortable when writing, and also to give them thinking time before they say the sentences they have written aloud.

2-Newspapers and magazines: Newspapers and magazines offer different kinds of text that allow for genre analysis, and then writing within that genre. For example, students might be asked to look at a range of different articles to analyse how headlines are constructed, and how articles are normally arranged. They then can write an article about a real or imaginary news story that interests them.

3-Collaborative writing activities: Students gain a lot from constructing texts together, especially through using online tools such as Wikis and Google Documents. For example, teachers can have them build up a letter on the board, where each line is written by a different student. Also, teachers can tell a story which students then have to try to reproduce in groups. When students have created their own versions of the same story they have already heard, they might compare their version with the original as a way of increasing their language awareness. Teachers can also set up a ***story circle*** in which each student in the group has a piece of paper on which they write the first line of a story (as dictated to them by the teacher). They then have to write the next sentence, and then pass their papers to the person next to them, and so on. Finally, when the papers get back to their original owners, those students write the conclusion. Another variety of the same activity might be to engage students in collaborative writing around a computer screen. They can use a Word processing application for writing, or an online tool such as Wiki to produce a written outcome.

4-Writing to each other: Students can be asked to write e-mails or any other kind of messages to each other. They can be also involved, under the teacher's supervision, in live chat sessions on the Internet.

8.5 Reflections and Ideas for Workshops

- ***Discuss*** with your instructor the above section on 'how to teach writing' to come out with ***practical ideas*** that you can use for teaching writing activities in your classroom.
- ***Select*** a writing exercise/activity from the textbook you are dealing with in your teaching practice sessions and ***demonstrate*** in the workshops (as a micro-teaching activity) how you will teach it. Please ***prepare*** your teaching notes for this exercise in advance based on both the ***guidelines*** that you concluded from the previous discussion with your instructor and the teaching notes included in the official Teacher's Guide you are using in your teaching practice. Also, please always consider the three stages of teaching writing: pre-writing, while-writing, and post-writing stages, and adjust your teaching accordingly.
- ***Select*** any of the writing activities discussed above, prepare for it, and then try to carry it out in the micro-teaching sessions.

CHAPTER NINE

CALL & Online Language Learning

9.1 Introduction and Rationale

Recently, computers in general and the Web in particular, have been gaining ground in terms of use and integration into classrooms. Attention has been recently paid to the Web as a massive development of networked computers. In language learning, the Web has become a widely used resource that enables students to study topics in English independently through tools that make English learning easier after adding a valuable extra dimension to it (Smith & Baber, 2005). It also provides some facilities that enable students to use the English language for real communicative purposes making it a lively language, especially when they learn it as a foreign or second language.

Based on an empirical study I conducted (Abdalah, 2011b), the ***rationale*** that my interviewed participants (i.e. some Egyptian EFL student teachers and teacher educators) provided for using the Web in education in general and in English language learning (ELL) in particular, revolved around the following points:

1. The unique nature of the Web as a multi-purpose, ubiquitous tool that can replace and complement traditional tools;
2. The great opportunities the Web can provide for exposure to language;
3. The powerful existence of the English language on the Web which should be exploited to the language learners' advantage;
4. The capability of the Web to involve many teaching approaches and/or techniques (e.g., constructivist learning and collaborative learning), and address and cater for many learning/teaching styles and needs;

5. The rich materials and resources the Web can provide and which can help students with developing their basic language skills; and
6. The ability of the Web to resolve students' psychological barriers to learning (e.g., feeling timid or shy).

These points are drastically consistent with some literature in the area. Generally, using the Web for language learning purposes is driven by the premise that the basic language skills (e.g., listening, reading, writing, and communication) can be fostered and developed by a wide range of Web-based tools and facilities including search engines, Wikis, Blogs, e-mail, and discussion boards (Erben et al, 2009; Smith & Baber, 2005; Warschauer et al, 2000).

Teeler and Gray (2000) argue that the Web can be useful in ELT/ELL in many ways. For teacher development, for example, it provides EFL teachers with a large reference library that enables them to access online journals and newsletters presenting innovative ideas in TEFL. This provides opportunities for English teachers all over the world to share ideas and useful practices. Another useful point is that it provides online courses, language content, and activities that can be employed in the English class. Further, Son (2008) argues that the Web provides language teachers with a network-based teaching environment where they can create meaningful tasks and use various materials for language learners tackling language aspects such as vocabulary, grammar, reading, and writing. In addition, using some Web-based applications and facilities including email, bulletin boards, and chat rooms can promote lively exchanges between native and non-native speakers and foster the scaffolding of ideas and grammar

(Toyoda & Harrison, 2002). In such contexts, language learners feel relaxed because they are less monitored by the teacher and their main focus becomes on getting their message across (Erben et al, 2009: p81).

Warschauer (2000) attempted to achieve a holistic, contextualised understanding of online learning in four language and writing classrooms in Hawaii based on a socio-cultural perspective to language learning and technology. His ethnographic study reports significant conclusions: Students did not experience new technologies represented in computers, the Web, and online tools principally as an aid to second language learning; rather, they saw themselves as developing new literacy skills in a new medium of critical importance for their lives. Further, it was not as if language existed independently of the computer and the Web which served as vehicles to help them to learn this autonomous language. Rather, learning to read, write, and communicate in the electronic medium was seen as valuable in its own right. Thus, the Web was seen as a new medium of literacy, not just as a language learning aid. Moreover, the study revealed that the existence of the Internet provides the potential for purposeful and powerful use of on-line communication in language and writing classes.

One of the important language aspects that the Web can enhance is teaching/learning writing composition. Perceiving the Web as a motivational tool, Trokeloshvili and Jost (1997) develop a rationale explaining the important role the Web plays in teaching EFL writing composition. They base their argument on the premise that any Web-based instruction should consider both students' needs and the teacher's goals, and that successful writing springs out

from motivation. For EFL students, the Web provides attractive features (e.g., pictures, colours, and videos) that motivate them to write. Besides, students need things like writing practice, authentic audience, peer evaluation, feedback, and creativity, all of which can be facilitated by the Web.

9.2 Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

According to Wikipedia, Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is succinctly defined in a seminal work by Levy (1997: p1) as "the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning". CALL embraces a wide range of ICT applications and approaches to teaching and learning foreign languages, from the "traditional" drill-and-practice programs that characterised CALL in the 1960s and 1970s to more recent manifestations of CALL, such as the virtual learning environment and Web-based distance learning. It also extends to the use of corpora, interactive whiteboards, and computer-mediated communication (CMC).

Since computers were publicised, many attempts have been made by educators and educational researchers to integrate them into the educational process in general and into language learning in particular. Thus, researchers and educators have been exploring the possibilities that computers can afford for improving language learning and teaching and enabling learners to achieve the maximum learning benefits, no matter whether the computer is used as a *tool*, a *learning environment*, or a *tutor* (Hanson-Smith, 2009).

CALL has gone through many stages that go side by side with the rapid developments occurring in new technologies which coalesced in the emergence of the Internet or the Web. These stages were identified by Warschauer and Healey (1998) as: (1) behaviouristic CALL, (2) communicative CALL, and (3) integrative CALL. Each stage corresponds to a certain level of technology as well as a certain pedagogical approach.

Structural CALL or ***Behaviouristic*** CALL marked the first generation in which the main focus was on employing some computer software and/or applications to help language learners with drilling and practising new language content (Warschauer & Healey, 1998). In this sense, computer programmes and/or software were devised mainly for drilling purposes; language learners were exposed to computers as an aid that should help them to internalise the traditional linguistic content at an individual pace.

The next stage, ***communicative CALL***, emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s, at the same time that behaviouristic approaches to language teaching were being rejected at both the theoretical and pedagogical level, and when new personal computers were creating greater possibilities for individual work. Proponents of communicative CALL stressed that computer-based activities should: focus more on ***using*** forms (content) than on the forms themselves; teach grammar implicitly rather than explicitly; allow and encourage students to generate original utterances rather than just manipulate pre-fabricated language; and use the target language predominantly or even exclusively. Communicative CALL corresponded to cognitive theories which stressed that learning was a process of

discovery, expression, and development. Popular CALL software developed in this period included text reconstruction programs (which allowed students working alone or in groups to rearrange words and texts to discover patterns of language and meaning) and simulations (which stimulated discussion and discovery among students working in pairs or groups). For many proponents of communicative CALL, the focus was not so much on what students did with the machine, but rather on what they did with each other while working at the computer (Warschauer & Healey, 1998).

Though communicative CALL was seen as an advance over behaviouristic CALL, it too began to come under criticism. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, critics pointed out that the computer was still being used in an ad hoc and disconnected fashion. This corresponded to a broader re-assessment of communicative language teaching theory and practice. Many teachers were moving away from a ***cognitive*** view of communicative teaching to a more ***social*** or ***socio-cognitive*** view, which placed greater emphasis on language use in authentic social contexts. Task-based, project-based, and content-based approaches all sought to integrate learners in authentic environments, and also to integrate the various skills of language learning and use. This led to a new perspective on technology and language learning termed ***integrative CALL***, a perspective which seeks both to integrate various skills (e.g., listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and also to integrate technology more fully into the language learning process. In integrative approaches, students learn to use a variety of technological tools as an ongoing

process of language learning and use, rather than visiting the computer lab on a once a week basis for isolated exercises.

9.3 Web-Based Facilities

Elsewhere (Abdallah, 2011b), I defined 'Web-based facilities' as:

> *All those available Web-based applications, features, resources, and services that the Web provides for education in general and for ELT/ELL in particular, and which can open many spaces for learning and language practice.*

Examples of these facilities include: e-mail and e-groups, chat, search engines (e.g., Google), Wikis, Blogs, and social networking tools and websites (e.g., YouTube, Facebook, and Delicious). In what follows, I will try to give an account on examples of these facilities and how they can foster English language learning.

9.3.1 E-mail and Yahoo Groups

Sometimes people get confused between e-mail and e-groups thinking that both refer to the same thing. Of course e-mail is different from an e-group. However, there is a great connection between the two...E-grouping cannot be done without e-mail, and using an e-group is quite similar to using an e-mail, albeit e-grouping facilitates communication at a wider level among a large number of people sharing similar interests. What distinguishes e-groups is that any e-email sent to the group mailing address is received by all group members or subscribers (see, for example, Yahoo! Groups at: http://groups.yahoo.com). There is an important point here: E-grouping is much more useful than just using e-mail since an e-group allows for a wider social interaction not enabled by the mere use of e-mail to contact certain individuals. Besides, e-mail alone is not a substitute for using

the Web itself and some relevant techniques such as Googling keywords to get information. In other words, using the Web can open wider horizons for people by enabling them to get a great number of contacts.

Generally, Web-based e-mail is the most widely-used free Internet application; nowadays, you can hardly find a person without an e-mail address, no matter how limited his/her technical knowledge is. E-mail can be useful in global communication that goes beyond the boundaries of the classroom and even the homeland, and as a tool for developing language skills. For example, e-mail can be used by Egyptian students for communication with other Arab students to take from them what suits their local contexts in Egypt. Literature indicates that e-mail is extremely useful for language learning/acquisition and inter-cultural communication in EFL learning (Mekheimer, 2005). E-mail as a very influential tool for improving and fostering students' writing and composition skills. The editing tools that the service provides within the ***compose*** box, such as grammar/spell-checkers and dictionaries, are very important in this respect. E-mail, in this way, can be used for teaching many language aspects such as reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and spelling...E-mail can simply foster communicative abilities, and even typing skills.

E-mail is a direct, straightforward, and more self-centred; it has effects on social behaviours such as collaboration and motivation as well as some meta-cognitive aspects central to the learning process, especially in writing. It enriches functions of easy editing, storing, and manipulating. Pedagogically, e-mail is capable of

bringing traditionally peripheral persons into the instructional mainstream; it offers users chances to develop positive attitudes.

A good advantage of e-mail is that it allows for the exchange of different types of files (e.g., Word, PDF, audio, and video files) that can be attached to e-mail messages. Also, e-mail can be used effectively by students for sharing/exchanging experience with their fellow students and teachers in any place in the world, something missing in traditional classes. E-mail also enhances the students' writing skills; it gives the students chance to socialise and get to know other students' cultures; it allows for collaborative work that can help to tackle some difficulties with understanding basic concepts of the course; and students can get help from each other while they are at home and co-operate in planning for teaching, for example.

E-grouping is a strategy that can be connected with cooperative and collaborative learning to connect together people interested in the same topic. An e-group is like Blog both of which allow for exchanging ideas and experience...It is like a forum. Whether to use a forum or e-group is a matter of personal preference and appeal. It can enable students to know professors and teachers in TESOL/TEFL, create contacts with them, and seek help, advice and consultation from others. Also, language material can be published by being uploaded to the group website. Through e-group one can receive focussed guidance and direct answers to his/her questions that may save much time and effort for him/her searching databases and search engines. E-mailing a question to the whole group, in which case answers from many members can be received, can be better than e-mailing

an individual person. An e-group can be used as an online study group and can be used for activating Special Interest Group (SIG). There are some features distinguishing e-groups: they are daily updated and informative; they allow the members to receive information via their personal e-mail addresses.

Yahoo! groups is a good example of e-groups. Anyone can create his/her own group using this link: *http://groups.yahoo.com*. You can start creating your own group by clicking on the ***'Start your group'*** link. Then, by following some easy steps, you will have your own group and you will be able to invite anyone to join it.

Also, you can click on: *http://help.yahoo.com//l/us/yahoo/groups* for detailed help topics on how to start, use, and manage your Yahoo Group. Just click on the topic you want to know more details about and read the useful account. Also, in the same page, you can type in the search bar any keywords that you might need information on.

9.3.2 Chat and language learning

According to Sharma and Barret (2007), chat belongs to a type of computer-mediated communication (CMC) called ***synchronous communication***, while e-mail belongs the other type commonly known as ***asynchronous communication***. 'Synchronous communication' refers to communication that takes place in real time, such as chat and ordinary telephone calls. Asynchronous communication, on the other hand, refers to communication that takes place at different times.

Hence, sending an e-mail and replying to it is asynchronous. Each mode has its own advantages and uses within a language learning context.

Text chat is a synchronous form that involves people communicating through writing to each other using their computer keyboards as the mode of input. One of the commonest types of text chat is chatting with others in a chat room. This tool becomes extremely useful when language learners communicate with native speakers. It enables them to learn language as it is used in authentic contexts and learn vocabulary and idiomatic expressions from those native speakers. It also allows them to practise their English for realistic communicative purposes which might not be (properly) provided in their regular English classes.

Chat can be easily done by downloading a chat software (e.g., Yahoo Messenger, MSN Messenger, and Skype). The best way to know more about these applications is to go to their official websites: Yahoo Messenger at: *http://messenger.yahoo.com*; MSN Messenger at: *http://uk.msn.com/iat/us_gb.aspx*; and Skype at: *http://www.skype.com*

If you already have an e-mail account on these websites, you will use the same ID and password to access chat through the software. After you add people to your contact list, you will be able to see who are online and offline. Nowadays with Yahoo you do not even need to download the Messenger software if you are using Yahoo Mail. While you are still within your e-mail account, you can use text chat only. This is a new service that has been recently added. The great thing which I noticed about this service is that from your e-mail you can also text someone already in your address book even if s/he is using the Messenger!

Voice chat is a very good service that these applications provide for free. Egyptian students are quite familiar with this service since most families now use it as a very cheap alternative to normal international telephone calls to contact their relatives abroad once they are able to afford a normal Pc and an Internet connection. Moreover, the benefit of this service becomes so great when it comes to language learning. Listening to native speakers and speaking to them help language learners with modelling their pronunciation and using English in direct conversation. On the psychological level, this might increase their motivation to learn, especially because the Egyptian social environment does not provide them with opportunities to practise their English language. All of us might agree that language is practice. Thus, it is possible that anyone's language, including English specialists, might deteriorate after sometime of idleness and non-use.

I do not want to provide much technical details here as I am sure that many readers and practitioners nowadays are experts in Chat. However, newbie[1] (i.e. those who are new to chat) can make use of their colleagues' experience. Even better, they can learn that independently using the "Help" menu, online tutorials, and/or video demonstrations available on YouTube, which will guide them step-by-step into the whole process. Now, let's move to this important question: **How *can chat be useful for language learning?***

[1] 'Newbie' is a slang term for a newcomer to an Internet activity, for example online gaming. Thus, it refers to someone new to something; A new user or participant; someone who is extremely new and inexperienced (to a game or activity) (see also Google Definitions).

Sharma and Barrett (2007) argue that chat can offer learners a chance to develop their language abilities. For instance, during text chat, they are using the keyboard in real time, and thus concentrating on fluency and communication. When text chat conversation partners do not understand what a learner has written, they will tell them, forcing the writer to rephrase his/her message. This 'negotiating of meaning' can arguably work towards improving learners' language abilities. However, if there is no teacher, it is quite likely that learners will continue to replicate their mistakes or not take advantage of the learning opportunity provided by the activity. One of the main benefits offered by chatting is the fact that some learners who are normally shy in a face-to-face class may actually become less shy, and hence might go ahead with expressing themselves in a different way through a different medium. The use of chat outside the classroom may help to make the group get together, and could have a socially cohesive purpose. You (as a teacher) can offer to be in a chat forum at a certain time. Anyone in the class who wishes to log in and communicate can do so.

Further, it is possible to print out the complete chat conversation. This gives you the chance to analyse the learners' input and give feedback accordingly. Remember that in Chat software like Yahoo! Messenger, which I have been using for more than 10 years now, there is an option that enables one to save all exchanged texts in the archive or history, but always remember to enable this option in the software settings!

9.3.3 Google and locating data

At present, Google is on top of the most widely used search engines. Its relevance ranking is frequently cited as the best among all search engines; one is likely to find useful sites within the first ten matches rather than going through hundreds of irrelevant matches. Other search engines have recently moved to incorporate link analysis as part of their ranking algorithm, but they have not matched Google's success yet (Moore, 2003: p9). In addition, some features exist that make it very friendly to Internet users, such as its development of what is known as 'artificial intelligence', a feature that makes a search engine smart enough to understand what one is looking for, helping him/her to locate it (Rosencrance, 2003).

Throughout personal experience, this has been evident in some suggestions automatically made by Google such as "Do you mean…?" when a misspelled word is inserted, as well as another suggestion to remove the quotes (" ") when there are no results returned to a quoted query. Besides, in addition to being an efficient search engine, Google presents many services such as Google Documents (for writing collaboratively), Google Images, Calendar, Google Books (for reviewing books online), Google Translation, Google Scholar (for obtaining academic articles in different subjects), Google Video and You Tube (for video sharing), and Google Earth. Google has become a default search engine for locating needed information, and hence the present common use of Google as a verb when people say "Google it" instead of "search for it online"!

Locating information is a crucial stage in online reading. Mastering the skills and strategies needed for locating needed information is a prerequisite for Web users. In this respect, the ever-increasing availability of information requires the development of effective information-seeking strategies, and hence, there are many skills and strategies needed to deal successfully with search engines which usually turn up too many results (Henry, 2006: pp615-16). Besides, because search engines differ in their search algorithms and features, it is important to understand how several popular ones work and know when to use them (Eagleton & Dobler, 2007: p118). That is why many experts strongly suggest that users should always check the "HELP" menu within each search engine to understand how it works! Consequently, students, in particular, should be guided and trained in developing strategies for identifying Web resources, choosing search tools, selecting the appropriate keywords, and selectively picking up the most relevant search results. This, in fact, will save much effort and time for our students who always report being lost on the Web.

In this context, Henry (2006: p618) suggests a framework called SEARCH for the essential search skills needed for reading and locating information on the Web. ***SEARCH*** stands for six steps:

1. **S**et a purpose for searching;
2. **E**mploy effective search strategies;
3. **A**nalyse search engine results;
4. **R**ead critically and synthesize information;
5. **C**ite your sources;
6. **H**ow successful was your search? (Evaluating your search).

How can you search the Web to locate data?

Very simple! You have many techniques to use:

- Just insert one word in the search bar if the topic is very general (e.g., honesty, policy, globalisation, etc.)
- Sometimes you need to use Boolean operators to narrow down your search. For example, if you want to search for globalisation as related to Egypt, you should insert both keywords (globalisation and Egypt) separated by a Boolean (logical) operator (i.e. AND, OR, NOT) which can also take the following signs, respectively (+, OR, -). So, you should insert: globalisation +Egypt or globalisation AND Egypt.
- You might need the search engine to do the opposite (i.e. display ALL possible results EXCEPT Egypt). In this case, you will insert: globalisation NOT Egypt (or globalisation -Egypt).
- Sometimes you need to locate the EXACT phrase. For example, sometimes I do this when I need to locate any resource in which an exact sentence or phrase was mentioned as it is. Try "to be or not to be", for example...It's likely that all returned results will be related to Shakespeare's Hamlet as a text or literary articles citing this quotation from Hamlet.
- You can even narrow down your search more and more by using the 'advanced search' option adding more complications to better refine your results (i.e. you can determine: the number of results that should be displayed per page; the language that you want the results to be displayed in; the file format that you need, etc.)

9.3.4 Wikis and Wikipedia

> *"Imagine a world in which every single person on the planet is given free access to the sum of all human knowledge. That's what we're doing." -- Jimmy Wales, Wikipedia founder (Wales, 2004)*

A Wiki is a website that allows the easy creation and editing of any number of interlinked web pages via a Web browser using a simplified mark-up language or a text editor (see Wikipedia definition at: *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki*). The most famous Wiki that has been gaining ground for more than 10 years is Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia (*http://en.wikipedia.org*). Wikis are typically powered by Wiki software and are often used to create collaborative websites, to power community websites, for personal note taking, in corporate intranets, and in knowledge management systems.

Wiki is a tool or technology connected with the Web 2.0 or Read/Write technology. "Wiki" is a word for "fast" in Hawaiian slang, but it has been backronymed[2] by some to "What I Know Is" (Richardson, 2009). Erben et al. (2009) defines Wiki as "a collaborative website that many people can work on or edit". The idea was originally conceptualised by Ward Cunningham in 1994. The computer programme allows users to access the original postings and add or change content. The original intention of such shared writing was to allow as many participants to contribute and make changes, therefore resulting in a

[2] 'Backronym' is a word that is either not an acronym, but is taken to be one and for which a full form is invented by back-formation, or is an acronym and for which an alternative full form is invented by back-formation (Source: en.wiktionary.org/wiki/backronym)

webpage that could be constantly updated. It is the product of collective community involvement.

Nowadays, things have become even easier as the creation and management of a Wiki can be easily done free online with no need to any software. A famous website that provides this service is Google.

The environment enabled by a Wiki allows for collaborative writing in which case all the people all over the world have equal opportunities to add, edit, or delete any content. The most famous Wiki is Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia that was created by people for people all over the world! Therefore, it sounds very reasonable to see how Wiki is defined on Wikipedia (Erben et al, 2009; Richardson, 2009).

Wikis may exist to serve a specific purpose, and in such cases, users use their editorial rights to remove material that is considered "off topic". Such is the case of the collaborative encyclopaedia *Wikipedia* in which anyone can publish anything. I tried to publish something on it on 'Web-based new literacies'. I managed to do that and the content stayed for a while, but, later on, the editorial team and many members suggested that my page could be merged with the broader page titled, 'new literacies'. Soon they merged it, and as a result, my independent page disappeared completely; every time I bring it back using 'history' and the 'undo' options, someone deletes it stating the reason for deletion. I am narrating this experience for two reasons: First, I want to say that

publishing on *Wikipedia* is a totally monitored process, and thus, though anyone can easily publish anything, only the content that the world community sees as accurate, appropriate, and valuable will stay.

Second, I want to draw the attention to the complexity of writing, editing, and uploading content on Wikipedia. For me, compared with other flexible and easy-going websites, the process was so complicated that it needed some specific skills/techniques. To understand how to create internal links with other pages and list references, for example, I had to use a strange technique; I opened an already published page on Wikipedia and clicked on 'edit' as if I was editing it just to see how the content should look like in this mode. Meanwhile, I opened the same page in another window, but in the normal published mode to allow for comparison. This way, I could understand how the content was written by others, and subsequently I could do the same to my new page. I definitely think that the technology and editing features used in Wikipedia should be updated to make things smoother and easier for users.

Educational uses of Wikis in language learning

From a learning perspective, participation in a Wiki is a good example of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development or ZPD in action as participants are socially mediated by others in a problem-solving situation. Vygotsky (1978) highlighted the fact that the ZPD need not be a relationship between a novice and expert, but can be the relationship between like-level peers, who mediate each other. The English language learners' use of a Wiki fits nicely within this concept because, as they work together, their writing community is formed and the

mediational process is enriched. In the end, knowledge is shared and collectively constructed. To facilitate ideas exchange and knowledge sharing, many Wikis offer an option called “Discussion” or “Comments” in which students can discuss issues with each other, give reasons for changes, and disagree with what someone else has written (Achterman, 2006).

Generally, Richardson (2009) summarises all those things that can be done through Wiki as follows: If you have some knowledge about your favourite hobby, for example, that isn't on Wikipedia, **add** it. If you read something you think isn't correct, **fix** it. If you don't like the way one of the entries is written, **erase** it. If there is something big just happen in the news that is history making, **start a new entry**. Drawing on these functions of adding, editing, deleting, and starting, there are many uses inside the classroom:

- Teachers can set up a wiki for use as the class dictionary;
- Learners can use class Wiki to insert vocabulary and a content-area grammar Wiki;
- Language learners can use Wikis to develop their online writing/editing skills;
- A language teacher can use a class Wiki as basis for quizzes, homework assignments, and so forth.

Wikipedia

Wikipedia has become a major resource that most people nowadays refer to when they want to know about anything. It is a world-wide encyclopaedia, and hence the name Wikipedia which captures both terms: Wiki and Encyclopaedia. Personally, I use at as a start whenever I want to investigate anything new to me. Based on empirical data resulting from some semi-structured interviews that I

conducted with some EFL teacher educators and student teachers at Assiut University College of Education, I reached the following conclusions about Wikis in general and Wikipedia in particular:

Many participants were familiar with Wikis, especially Wikipedia which they were using to get definitions and written texts about a variety of topics. Generally, Wikis can inform students of all what they need to know about and help them with developing some research skills. They allow everyone to participate and keep track of all participations, and also update the participants via e-mail of every change. In this environment, students and language learners can motivate one another. In the same vein, a teacher educator gave details on how he was using Wikipedia in his career; as a practising translator, he was using it for getting the new technical or specialised vocabulary, and thus, building his schemata in the target language when faced with a new topic before starting translation. In his viewpoint, what distinguishes Wikis, with specific reference to Wikipedia, is that they are both "a rich resource of information, and a platform for sharing knowledge": a rich resource in the sense that they "cover a vast array of topics providing basic information" that anyone needs to know about anything new, and a platform on which "people all over the world can share what they know in all walks of life".

A student teacher regarded Wikipedia as very useful because in it, he could find "complete subjects and clarifying pictures and images". Anything related to this subject is simply written and easily stated. For him, what distinguishes Wikipedia is that its content is usually true and that it addresses many fields and is available

in 250 languages. Similarly, another student teacher looked upon it as "the first standard tool" because in it, he can easily find any single piece of information, even if it is simple, and can get more than one page providing detailed information about the topic written in a standard language.

However, the recently increasing use of Wikipedia (*http://www.wikipedia.org*) for research and study purposes has raised many arguments. Throughout my discussions with many participants, I could come out with some conclusions in this regard. Academically, it is not advised to cite anything from Wikipedia, any other Wiki, or any other non-academic resources like Blogs and e-groups. As with any source, especially one of unknown authorship, one should be wary and independently verify the accuracy of Wikipedia information, if possible. For many purposes, but particularly in academia, Wikipedia may not be an acceptable source; indeed, some professors and teachers may reject Wikipedia-sourced material completely. This is especially true when it is used without corroboration. However, much of the content on Wikipedia is itself referenced, so an alternative is to cite the reliable source rather than the article itself. Though the information included in Wikipedia can be academically accurate, we cannot cite from it simply because anyone can edit the written content. Then, how can Wikipedia be useful to students and scholars? Based on personal experiences of some participants, it is evident for them that Wikipedia is one of the best resources to resort to. Some teacher educators use it as a starting point whenever there is anything new that they would like to know about.

Suppose, for example, that one has just seen a term like Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) for the first time. If new to the field, one should first seek to have a simple idea about the topic (i.e. definition, meaning, significance, characteristics, etc.) before going through more specialised academic resources, such as articles, books, and online journals. Additionally, one may want to know who the main authors and/or pioneers in the field are just to Google them to know to what extent they are famous and recognised in the field, to get their contact details so as to contact them, or just to have a look at their homepages to see their publications. One last thing might be to identify the most important references, books, and/or resources in the field to refer to after finishing this useful, dictionary-like account written on Wikipedia. These factors make Wikis in general and Wikipedia in particular important for EFL student teachers in the course of their academic study at colleges of education.

9.4 Network-based language teaching (NBLT)

This approach can be regarded as an extension or a variety of CALL. But due to the unprecedented influence of the Internet or the Web on our life in general, and on language learning in particular, it sounds reasonable to me to distinguish NBLT as a separate approach. Shetzer and Warschauer (2000) coined the term 'NBLT' to describe their electronic literacy approach to language teaching and learning (see also Chapter 1). NBLT refers specifically to the pedagogical use of computers connected in either local or global networks, allowing one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many communication. This approach highlights the learning opportunities that language learners are provided with when computers are connected with each other, both locally and globally. The Web enables great

opportunities for communication which are vital within second and foreign language learning situations.

According to this approach, language learning is conceived from a ***socio-cultural perspective*** where the learning process is mediated by the Web. It assumes the existence of an interdependent/transactional relationship between the Web and language. This relationship has become so strong that it is hard to identify both as two isolated identities. Thus, it is hard nowadays to isolate language learning from the Web as a technological reality that needs some skills and strategies that are quite relevant to the English language.

9.5 Web-Mediated Language Learning (WMLL)

Elsewhere (Abdallah, 2011b), I argued that Web-mediated language learning refers to this type of learning that employs the Web (and its tools and facilities) as a means of instruction and language practice. Rosen (1998: p1) argues that the Web is merely a tool like a chalkboard; tools do not teach, but when effectively implemented, they assist in the learning process. The degree to which a learning tool has been successful draws heavily on how much it helped students. Educational forms of using the Web vary in terms of the degree to which it is used (Aggarwal, 2000: p19; Warschauer et al, 2000), and hence distinctions sometimes exist between terms like Web-*based* learning and Web-*assisted* learning. This is consistent with the three metaphors of computer-based educational activities posited by Crook (1994): a tutorial metaphor, a construction metaphor, and a toolbox metaphor.

Web-based learning (WBL) is a prominent label used in literature to refer to online learning employing the Web as the main medium of learning and instruction (McCormack & Jones, 1998; Wesson, 2002; You, 2004). Whatever the definition of WBL is, it must refer to that learning which takes place mainly through the Web as an electronic environment that includes some features and facilities, which enable many affordances that help learners to learn effectively on an individual and constructive basis.

However, I prefer the label 'Web-mediated learning' (WML) that can encompass any form in which the Web can be used to facilitate learning. As far as language learning is concerned, the term can refer to any Web-associated learning forms that highlight the human component in learning. In other words, under the umbrella of Web-mediated learning, while the Web is addressed as a main tool that mediates language learning, the main focus is still on the human outcome rather than on the Web in itself as a technology. Besides, no matter how frequently the Web is used in the learning process, its mediational function, in socio-cultural terms, is highlighted. This way, users are linked with the machine from a social, interactive standpoint, rather than from a behaviouristic, input-output standpoint (see also Nardi, 1996). According to Erben et al (2009), this mediation is what helps English language learners to interact easily and reconstruct their socio-cultural, linguistic, and professional discursive practices and promote their socialisation into the target knowledge communities.

As a learning/teaching tool, the Web has its own affordances and constraints. Hence, Bates (1995) argues that newer technologies are not necessarily better (or worse) for teaching/learning than older technologies. They are just different, and their choice should be driven by real learning needs, not just by novelty. The context of learning and students' needs, in my opinion, rationalise the use of new technologies making it clear whether they are used merely as additional luxury to cope with modern advancements, or in response to some realistic needs or persistent problems imposed by the learning context. Hence, it is unfair to disregard the affordances the Web holds, and, at the same time, it is unrealistic to claim that it is a magical solution or panacea to all deficiencies experienced within formal learning settings.

The affordances and/or advantages of the Web can be evident if contrasted with the shortcomings of using traditional, face-to-face instruction only (Hijazi, 2003). The general benefits of Web-mediated learning when compared to traditional training are represented in being: self-paced, highly interactive, and able to increase retention rates, reduce travelling costs, and cater for individual differences (Kruse, 2004; Stennes, 2008).

On the other hand, some constraints and limitations exist that make the Web still unable to totally replace face-to-face instruction, and which give rise to blended learning. Reviewing literature (e.g., McKimm et al, 2003; Stennes, 2008), I classify them into psychological/physical and academic/professional constraints. Some psychological constraints were identified by McKimm et al (2003) such as

students' feelings of isolation in a WBL environment compared with traditional instruction, and frustrations experienced by learners because of poor equipment. In the same vein, Stennes (2008) argues that because it is cold and impersonal, WBL does not replicate or replace the alive experience of a real classroom, or what Blanchard (2004: p2) refers to as the "caring and engaging teacher" who offers effective opportunities for learning.

However, the educational use of the Web has provided learners and educators with a wide range of new experience and learning environments, not possible in formal education (Khan, 1997). Within an electronic environment, social interactions unconstrained by limitations of space and time have been enabled and fostered to encourage collaborative learning among students (Cecez-Kecmanovic & Webb, 2000: p308). Hence, Brown (2000) conceives the learning environment fostered by the Web as a 'learning ecology', an open, complex and adaptive system comprising dynamic and interdependent elements, the power of which, as Richardson (2002) suggests, lies in its diversity and its ability to offer a learner-centred experience in which students access resources and features that address their specific needs. Within this environment, theories of social and active learning along with collaborative online activities that promote communication and interaction among students can be fully employed (Sudweeks & Simoff, 2000; Tiffin & Rajasingham, 1995).

The WBL environment differs from the traditional learning environment requiring many new skills. In this regard, Clarke (2004) identifies two main types of online skills: e-learning skills and communication skills. E-learning skills are

required for independent, personal interaction with the Web and include time management, acceptance of responsibility, planning, self-assessment, problem solving, coping with stress, reflection, and research skills. Communication skills are required for online interaction with other people, whether synchronously or asynchronously. They involve e-mail communication styles, skills for managing e-groups and newsgroups, and skills for participating in threaded discussions.

E-learning skills include an important aspect called 'netiquette' (Internet Etiquette) that students need to understand. It refers to the accepted and proper online behaviour, especially when online interaction with other people takes place (Dreamcore, 2008). Netiquette involves some core principles and standard practices, such as using a proper non-offensive language, avoiding flaming[3], using emoticons to convey real intentions, not annoying other people with long, detailed messages, respecting other people's privacy, viewpoints and feelings, forgiving others' mistakes, and exchanging useful expert knowledge (Shea, 1996; Teeler & Gray, 2000: p9).

Using the Web in higher education[4] has become a widespread practice nowadays. The main reason for this, as Ryan et al (2000: p4) note, is the current pressures imposed upon higher education institutions, especially those related to the globalisation of higher education. Such pressures have been driving these

[3] 'Flaming' refers to sharp criticism or dry comments that distress or annoy other users.

[4] 'Higher education' here refers to universities, high colleges and teacher education institutions.

institutions to rethink and improve their educational practices through using ICTs, especially the Web, as the prime means of course delivery. This has become a standard practice in some UK universities that offer courses and/or programmes in two modes: the on-campus mode and the online mode (e.g., Exeter Graduate School of Education, 2009; Oxford Online Courses, 2008; the Open University, 2008).

This new practice is also most evident in the emergence of what is known as 'virtual learning' or 'virtual universities' (e.g., Virtual University, 2007), which act as global learning communities that provide higher education programmes through ICTs. Their main goal is to provide access to that part of the population not able to attend a physical campus for reasons such as distance, which prevents students from attending regular classes, and need for flexibility, as some students need the flexibility to study at home whenever convenient (Ryan et al, 2000: pp1-5).

9.6 Connectivism: Connectivist Language Learning

Connectivism is a quite new learning theory that proposes the existent of networks (i.e. nodes and links) that frame human knowledge acquisition (Abdallah, 2018). It views learning as the process of creating connections and expanding or increasing network complexity (Siemens, 2005). What is interesting about this theory is that it connects or combines relevant elements of many learning theories to create a powerful theoretical construct for learning in the digital age (AlDahdouh, 2015). It recognises the internal processes of learning, but focuses more on the external world, especially digital networks, that

continuously alters the person's knowledge and changes how they understand and manipulate content (Siemens, 2005). Thus, *connectivism* presents a model of learning that acknowledges the tectonic shifts in society where learning is no longer an internal, individualistic activity. How people work and function is altered when new tools are utilized (Abdallah, 2018).

English language learning has been greatly influenced by new web generations that have brought many interactive applications. These applications have been enabling free writing, meaningful participation and sharing linguistic knowledge with the whole world. In other words, the message can be easily conveyed to others, and immediate feedback on production has become possible.

In line with *connectivism*, mobile technologies have revolutionized the ways social networks can be used. On smart phones, for example, learners can easily access many applications (versions designed for tablets and smart phones). In this regard, Wright (2010: p. 10) argues that because Twitter was accessible via mobile phones, tweets could be sent when students were "walking in corridors," "in cars at the end of the teaching day" or "during lunch breaks". Thus, they can use Twitter to share their personal reflections and write flexibly as if they are using a Pc.

Thus, language learners are able to enhance their language skills due to the different avenues that new social media have created. Social media – as proved by many previous studies (e.g. Borau, et al., 2009; Cheng, 2012; Henderson, Snyder & Beale, 2013; Ahmed, 2015) - provides the learner with the possibility of

participating in genuine, immediate and relevant online conversations, and practicing the target language while supported by experienced teachers and external audience.

Language acquisition – as indicated by research – is socially constructed and interactive by nature (Reinhardt & Zander, 2011; McClanahan, 2014). That is why the term *Social Media Language Learning* (SMLL) has appeared to express interactive relationships between social media channels and language learning processes. In this sense, language learners are able to extend English practice beyond classroom boundaries. In their study, Henderson, Snyder and Beale (2013) conclude that social media - especially when used for collaborative purposes - is best utilised when: (a) it does not repeat ongoing practices, but offer something new; (b) strategies are there to support students' collaborative work; and (c) the tasks are appropriate.

Moreover, social media extends learning through offering new opportunities such as: (1) contact with outside experts; (2) purposeful interactions among students in different locations; (3) a means to enhance learners' participation; (4) a means for extending time; and (5) a facility for timely feedback from teachers and peers.

9.7 WebQuest Strategy

The dominance of the Web in education and language learning has motivated many scholars, researchers and language learning to develop educational models that effectively employ the Web (and its facilities) to foster students' understanding, acquisition and learning. In other words, the increasing use of the

Web as a main information resource has motivated researchers to create instructional models that employ the Web to improve students' learning and enquiry skills. A prominent Web-based model that was devised for helping teachers to incorporate Web-based resources into classroom practices is the WebQuest model. The use of this model was empirically investigated in many studies (e.g., In science education, Gaskill et al, 2006 conducted two experiments in an American rural high-school setting to compare learning using WebQuests versus conventional instruction; Ikpeze and Boyd, 2007 used WebQuests for facilitating thoughtful literacy for 6 middle-class European American students in an elementary school in a small middle-income sub-urban neighbourhood in the US; and Mekheimer, 2005 who investigated the effect of using WebQuests on developing essay writing skills for EFL student teachers within the Egyptian context). They identified WebQuest as ideal for teaching students how to use the Web effectively and access resources to answer specific questions or solve problems. According to these studies, tasks based on the model helped students to improve their learning and motivation (Abdallah, 2011b).

WebQuest was developed in the early 1995's at San Diego State University by Bernie Dodge with Tom March. Dodge (1997) defines a WebQuest as *"an inquiry-oriented lesson format in which most or all the information that learners work with come from resources on the Internet*". He also presented the concept of two types of WebQuests: short-term and long-term ones. The major differences between them are: the instructional goals and the duration of WebQuest.

An instructional goal of a short-term WebQuest is related to knowledge acquisition and integration, whereas an instructional goal of a long-term WebQuest is related to extending and refining knowledge. A short-term WebQuest is designed to be completed in 1-3 class periods, while a long-term one typically takes between 1-4 weeks in a classroom setting.

March (2003. 43) also defines a WebQuest as

> *a scaffolded learning structure that uses links to essential resources on the World Wide Web and an authentic task to motivate students' investigation of a central, open-ended question, development of individual expertise and participation in a final group process that attempts to transform newly acquired information into a more sophisticated understanding. The best WebQuests do this in a way that inspires students to see richer thematic relationships, facilitate a contribution to the real world of learning and reflect on their own metacognitive processes*".

Laborda (2009, 8) indicates that a WebQuest's design is based on a constructivist philosophy, and it promotes cooperative learning and scaffolding of instruction. It allows students to construct their knowledge of the language through exploring structured web resources on their own.

Using WebQuest strategy is significantly important because it can help to create the distinguished teacher of the future. For students, it might help with: (1) improving student' motivation to learning; (2) developing thinking skills and problem solving; (3) encouraging cooperative learning; and (4) supporting their language learning.

There are many reasons for using WebQuest as a learning strategy since it: (1) creates effective learning; (2) is an attractive strategy of learning; (3)

accommodates students' needs;(4) is an organized source;(5) saves time and effort;(6) saves time and effort; and (7) promotes problem solving skills.

According to Hockly (2008) there are some reasons for using WebQuest in the language classroom, they: (1) integrate between the internet and language classroom; (2) afford cooperative learning;(3) motivate learners; (4) encourage critical thinking skills;(5) can be used as a linguistic tool. While according to March (1998, 12), WebQuest (1) increases student 'motivation. Students face an authentic task and work with real resources; (2) develops students´ thinking skills; and (3) fosters cooperative learning.

In a nutshell, and according to Halat (2008), the following points represent the strengths of WebQuest: (1) being "an alternative teaching technique that enhances students' motivation in class; (2) serving as an alternative assessment tool of student's learning; gives teachers an idea of the students' knowledge acquisition degree of and implementation of the knowledge; (3) providing teachers with an opportunity to see and assess students' ability in using technology for learning; (4) enhancing teachers' creativity in thinking and writing, such as finding interesting and funny stories or scenarios and combining these with math or other subjects; (5) enhancing teachers' higher-order thinking skills, such as finding a topic-related websites and examining and selecting professional, well-prepared, and reliable websites; (6) requiring students to be active learners; and (7) allowing students to use the Internet as a vital tool (Abdelghafar, 2018).

There are many criteria and standards that would guide effective use of WebQuest; Dodge (2001) identifies five: (1) defining specific sites; (2) organizing or harmonizing your learners and resources; (3) Using medium;(4) Stimulating learners' abilities to think; and (5) Scaffolding high expectations.

Many WebQuests developed by many teachers in different subject areas are available online (Young & Wilson, 2002). Thus, teachers may choose to incorporate ones developed by others, or develop their own as a way to get their students reasoning at higher levels. In spite of the many forms and variations a WebQuest might take, generally the structure of a WebQuest always encompasses (see Figure 1 below) five main sections (Dudeney, 2003; Smith & Barber, 2005):

1) *Introduction*. At this stage, the teacher should set the scene for his/her WebQuest by arousing learners' curiosity and motivation to do the task. S/he should also introduce the overall theme of the WebQuest that involves giving background information on the topic and, in language learning contexts, introducing key vocabulary and/or concepts that learners should understand in order to complete the task.
2) *Task*. This section explains clearly and precisely what the learners should do as they work their way through the WebQuest. The task should be highly motivating, interesting, and firmly anchored in a real-life situation. At this stage, students should know the required output (e.g., a presentation, a report, or a summary).
3) *Resources*. Usually these resources are Web-based and are normally given to learners in advance to use during the task.

4) *Process*. This is the stage where the teacher outlines what the learners will go through to accomplish the task, including the resources they will use, and guides them through a set of activities using some pre-defined Web-based resources. In a language-based WebQuest, the process stage may introduce (or recycle) lexical areas or grammatical points essential to the task. It will usually have one product or more that learners should eventually present.
5) *Conclusion*. This is the evaluation stage that can involve learners in self-evaluation, comparing and contrasting what they have produced with other learners and giving feedback on what they feel they have learned or achieved. It should bring closure and encourage reflection (Abdallah, 2011b).

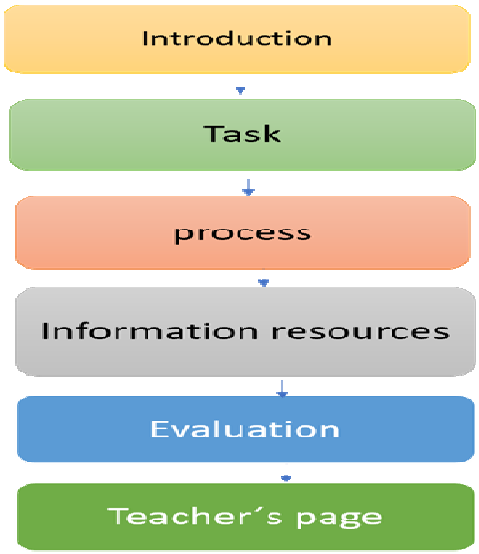

Figure 1: WebQuest Components

Table 1: Teacher's and learners' roles in WebQuest stages

Components	***Teacher's role***	***Learners' role***
Introduction	Designing and formulating the task based	

	on curricular goals and students' prior knowledge. Reviewing and filtering Internet sources.	
Task	Presenting and explaining the task to students using students' prior knowledge	
Process	Providing procedural guidance and cognitive tools to complete the task	Collaboratively and/or cooperatively negotiating the processes to complete the task
Information resources	Placing reviewed and filtered Internet sources onto a webpage or in print form	Use procedural guidance and cognitive tools to synthesize information from reviewed and filtered Internet sources
Evaluation	Designs and uses a rubric to assess students' completed task	Collaboratively and/or cooperatively using a rubric to complete and self-assess task requirements
Conclusion	Reflects on completed task in reference to curricular goals, students' prior knowledge, and their newly constructed knowledge and plans for further activities	Presenting their completed tasks. Reflecting on the significance of the completed task in reference to curricular goals, their prior knowledge, and their newly constructed knowledge
Teacher's page	Designing WebQuests for other lessons.	Asking some questions or sending any comments

CHAPTER TEN

Multiple Intelligences-Based Language Learning Strategies

10.1 Introduction

Generally, *Multiple Intelligences-Based Instruction* refers to any teaching strategies, activities, and/or techniques that are tailored and designed in the light of Gardner's Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory. MI theory is a theory of cognition that proposes a new perspective on the human ***intellect*** to replace the traditional belief of the existence of a general intelligence (g) that can be easily measured through IQ tests (Gardener, 1983); thus, it suggests that within any human mind, there are at least seven or eight intelligences (i.e. multiple intelligences) that operate in harmony with each other. Moreover, the theory seeks to explain how individuals use their relative intelligences in different ways to solve problems and formulate results or products recognised as valuable by a certain community or culture (Gardner, 1993).

In a recent book (Abdallah, 2010), I argued that MI theory had been gaining momentum as a revolutionary theory in education that has been transforming the ways in which people teach and learn. This involves an ***individualised*** outlook upon the learner that goes contrary to the traditional teacher-centred approaches to learning, which assume the uniformity of all learners. According to MI theory, a learner posses a set of intelligences that work together in the learning process, and hence each learner has his/her own profile that determines

the way s/he learns. This way, the theory has been sometimes used as a framework for determining the dominant intelligences within each individual learner so as to tailor instruction accordingly.

Besides, though all of these intelligences biologically exist in every individual from birth, no two individuals (even identical twins) possess the same degree in them. This diversity can be attributed to the environment which provides two types of experiences: (1) ***crystallising*** experiences that strengthen specific intelligences; and (2) ***paralysing*** experiences that extinguish certain intelligences (Armstrong, 1994). This highlights the role that the environment, and subsequently the social interactions and the teaching-learning processes, can play in cultivating certain intelligences and extinguishing others in learners. Thus, if the environment provides linguistic experiences everyday that entails the use of language for different communicative purposes, children are likely to develop stronger verbal-linguistic intelligence than others who are not exposed to the same experiences (Abdallah, 2010).

English language teachers are better aware of the fact that students bring with them specific strengths, unique learning styles, and different learning potentials. MI Theory offers them a way to examine and form their best teaching techniques and strategies in light of human differences. There are many teaching strategies and activities that can be used in English language teaching which address the different intelligences.

10.2 The Multiple Intelligences

1-Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence

Verbal-linguistic intelligence involves sensitivity to spoken and written language, the ability to learn languages, and the capacity to use language to accomplish certain goals. A person with well-developed verbal/linguistic intelligence usually (1) listens and responds to the sound, rhythm, colour, and variety of the spoken word; (2) learns through listening, reading, writing, and discussing; (3) listens effectively, comprehends, paraphrases, interprets, and remembers what has been said; (4) reads and speaks effectively, comprehends, summarises, interprets or explains, and remembers what has been read; and (5) exhibits ability to learn other languages and uses listening, speaking, writing, and reading to communicate, discuss, explain, and persuade others.

Teachers can use lecturing, discussion and brainstorming. They can involve students in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and communicative activities.

2-Logical-Mathematical Intelligence

It entails the ability to reason either deductively or inductively, recognise and manipulate abstract patterns and relationships. It is applied to those who investigate issues scientifically. A person with well-developed logical-mathematical intelligence usually (1) demonstrates skill at logical problem-solving; (2) enjoys complex operations such as computer programming, or research methods; (3) thinks mathematically; and (4) expresses interest in

careers such as accounting, computer technology, law, engineering, and chemistry.

Teachers can teach using deductive methods, and problem-solving-based activities. They can encourage students to think logically, especially when they are learning grammar.

3-Spatial Intelligence

It is the ability to create visual-spatial representations of the world and transfer those representations either mentally, or concretely. It features the potential to recognise and manipulate the patterns of wide space as well as the patterns of more confined areas. A person with well-developed visual-spatial intelligence usually (1) learns by seeing and observing; (2) recognises faces, objects, shapes, colours, details, and scenes; (3) uses visual images as an aid in recalling information; (4) enjoys drawing, painting, etc; (5) creates concrete or visual representations of information; and (6) expresses interest or skill in being an artist, photographer, engineer, architect, and designer.

Teachers can use visual aids that help students to learn. For example, they can use flashcards to present new words and check understanding. They also can involve students in imagination activities.

4-Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence

It entails the potential of using one's whole body or parts of the body (like the hand or the mouth) to solve problems or fashion products. In other words, it

involves using the body to solve problems, create products, and convey ideas or emotions. A person with well-developed bodily-kinesthetic intelligence usually (1) explores the environment and objects through touch and movement; (2) learns best by direct involvement and participation and remembers most clearly what was done, rather than what was said or observed; (3) enjoys concrete learning experiences such as field trips, model building, or participating in role play games; (4) is sensitive and responsive to physical environments and physical systems; (5) demonstrates skill in acting, athletics, dancing, sewing, etc; and (6) may express interest in careers such as those of an athlete, dancer, surgeon, or builder.

Teachers can use body language (movements, gestures, etc.) in teaching. They can involve their students in hands-on activities that require them to act out and move.

5-Musical-Rythmic Intelligence

It entails skill in performance, composition, and appreciation of musical patterns. It includes sensitivity to pitch, timbre, and rhythm of sounds, as well as responsiveness to the emotional implications to these elements. A person with well-developed visual-spatial intelligence usually (1) listens and responds with interest to a variety of sounds; (2) enjoys and seeks out opportunities to hear music or environmental sounds in the learning environment; (3) responds to music kinesthetically by performing and moving; (4) collects music and information about music in various resources; (5) develops the ability to sing

and/or play an instrument alone or with others; (6) enjoys playing with sounds, and when given a phrase of music, can complete a musical statement in a way that makes sense; (7) may offer his/her own interpretation of what a composer is communicating through music; and (8) may express interest in careers involving music such as being a singer, instrumentalist and sound engineer.

Teachers can sing to class or use background music while they are teaching. They can ask students to sing rhymes or sentences.

6-Interpersonal Intelligence

It denotes a person's capacity to understand other people (i.e. their intentions, motivations, desires, hidden goals, etc.), and consequently, to work effectively with others. A person with well-developed interpersonal intelligence usually (1) forms and maintains social relationships and recognises and uses a variety of ways to relate to others; (2) perceives the feelings, thoughts, motivations, behaviours, and lifestyles of others; (3) influences the opinions or actions of others; (4) understands and communicates effectively; (5) adapts behaviour to different environments or groups; and (6) expresses an interest in interpersonally-oriented careers such as teaching, social work, counselling, management, or politics.

Teachers can use techniques or strategies based on this intelligence such as peer teaching and cooperative learning. Teachers may ask students to do anything in the English language (e.g. reading, writing, and speaking communicatively to get their message across).

7-Intrapersonal Intelligence

It involves the capacity to understand oneself (i.e. one's own desires, fears, and capacities). It also involves using such information effectively in regulating one's own life. A person with a well-developed intrapersonal intelligence usually (1) is aware of his range of emotions; (2) finds approaches and outlets to express his feelings and thoughts; (3) works independently and is curious about the "big questions" in life: meaning, relevance, and purpose; (4) attempts to seek out and understand inner experiences; (5) gains insights into the complexities of self and the human condition; and (6) strives for self-actualisation.

Teachers may involve his/her students in individualised activities, such as: personal reflections, self-expressions, and writing personal journals and diaries.

10.3 Multiple Intelligences-Based Instruction in ELT

Elsewhere (Abdalah, 2010), I provided an argument on the educational implications and/or applications of MI Theory in general, and how it can be employed in English language teaching (ELT) and learning in particular. I said that Multiple Intelligences Theory and its applications in the educational settings are growing so rapidly. Many educators began to adopt MI-Based Instruction as a way to overcome the difficulties which they encounter with their students as a result of their individual differences and their learning styles. These difficulties may be represented in their inability to reach most of their students. As a result, they become frustrated and their students lose interest in the teaching-learning process as a whole. These difficulties may be caused by the uniform way in which

they teach their students: "There are currently thousands of MI teachers and ten thousands of students undergoing MI-based classroom instruction" (Campbell, 2000:12).

Once Multiple Intelligences Theory is understood, it can be applied in education in a variety of ways. There is no one definite way through which the theory can be applied in education. The theory is very flexible and it can be adapted to the context in which it is applied. The theory can be implemented in a wide range of instructional contexts, from highly traditional settings where teachers spend much of their time directly teaching students to open environments where students regulate most of their own learning (Armstrong, 1994:51).

Thus instruction can be modified and organized in the light of MI Theory. The theory in this case acts as a framework for teaching upon which teaching is organized:

> *On a deeper level…MI theory suggests a set of parameters within which educators can create new curricula. In fact, the theory provides a context within which educators can address any skill, content, area, theme, or instructional objectives, and develop at least seven ways to teach it. Essentially, MI Theory offers a means of building daily lesson plans, weekly units, or monthly or year-long themes and programs in such a way that all students can have their strongest intelligences addressed at least some of the time (Armstrong, 1994:57).*

An MI approach means developing curriculum and using instruction that taps into students' interests and talents. Students are given options, different ways to learn, and they share responsibility in their learning (Hoerr, 2000:12).

Gardner (1999:151) proposed another alternative to the traditional way of learning called 'individually-configured education'. This way considers individual differences seriously and crafts practices that can be useful to different kinds of minds. In this type of education, the human individual differences are given primacy to anything else. The students are not obliged to learn in a uniform way in which the student who has a different kind of mind is viewed as a stupid one This is a very limited view of this student who is not linguistically or mathematically talented. This unfair view does not allow the other talents to come out. Instead, the individual talents and interests are given more focus, and are also allowed to come out.

In the traditional classroom, the teacher lectures while standing at the front of the classroom, writes on the blackboard, asks students questions about the assigned reading or handouts, and waits while students finish their written work. In the MI classroom, the teacher continually shifts her method of presentation from linguistic to spatial to musical and so on, often combining intelligences in creative ways (Armstrong, 1994:50).

Using MI theory in education involves using it as a content of instruction and as a means of conveying this content at the same time. This indicates that using MI Theory can take many forms. The ultimate goal of any form in which the theory is used is to facilitate instruction as much as possible, and reaching all the students at the same time:

> *Under MI Theory, an intelligence can serve both as the content of instruction and the means or medium for communicating that content. This state of affairs has*

> *important ramifications for instruction. For example, suppose that a child is learning some mathematical principle but that this child is not skilled in Logical-Mathematical Intelligence. The child will probably experience some difficulty during the learning process…In the present example, the teacher must attempt to find an alternative route to the mathematical content-a metaphor in another medium. Language is perhaps the most obvious alternative, but spatial modeling and even bodily-kinesthetic metaphor may prove appropriate in some cases (Walters & Gardner, 1999:74-75).*

In English language teaching (ELT), Multiple Intelligences-Based Instruction can be effective in many ways: first of all, the students are given many options and opportunities to express themselves in the English language. Second, students are not confined to answer their exams using only two types of tests. To base the instruction of the English language on MI Theory means that the teacher should use a variety of teaching strategies which should be used in a way that makes this instruction address the intelligences which the students possess. In this way, the English language is taught in a natural atmosphere. This is a model of instruction which applies the MI philosophy:

> *On one level, MI Theory applied to the curriculum might be best represented by a loose and diverse collection of teaching strategies. In this sense, MI Theory represents a model of instruction that has no distinct rules other than the demands imposed by the cognitive components of the intelligences themselves. Teachers can pick and choose from (many) activities, implementing the theory in a way suited to their own unique teaching style and congruent with their educational philosophy (as long as that philosophy does not declare that all children learn in the same way) (Armstrong, 1994:57).*

This means that those successful and experienced teachers do not deal with some concept or some content area in a uniform way. Rather, they diversify their methods of presentation in such a way that the same concept or content area is dealt with in many different ways. This will result in the involvement of more of the students' multiple intelligences at the same time, and thus, involving more

students in the teaching-learning process. Thus, they provide the learners with several opportunities to understand and learn the same concept.

The best way to approach curriculum development using the theory of multiple intelligences is by thinking about how we can translate the material to be taught from one intelligence to another. In other words, how can we take a linguistic symbol system, such as the English language, and translate it--not into other linguistic languages, such as Spanish or French, but into the languages of other intelligences, namely, pictures, physical or musical expression, logical symbols or concepts, social interactions, and intrapersonal connections (Armstrong, 1994:57-58).

The following seven-step procedure suggests one way to create lesson plans or curriculum units using MI Theory as an organizing framework (Armstrong, 1994:58-60):

1. Focus on specific objectives
2. Ask key Multiple Intelligences Questions
3. Consider the Possibilities
4. Brainstorm
5. Select Appropriate Activities
6. Set Up to a Sequential Plan
7. Implement the Plan.

Although the multiple intelligences theory provides an effective instructional framework, teachers should avoid using it as a rigid pedagogical formula. One

teacher who attempted to teach all content through all eight modes every day admitted that he occasionally had to tack on activities. Even students complained that some lessons were really stretching it. Instructional methods should be appropriate for the content (Campbell, 1997).

This means that the theory is very flexible and has many ways of application in the teaching process. Also we should keep in mind that it is not obligatory to use all the intelligences to teach a certain content. This may take so much time. Also, this makes the learning process boring instead of making it interesting to the students. Therefore, we should always ask ourselves about the main idea of this model in the teaching-learning process. The main idea lies in the fact that we can teach anything in a variety of ways. This makes our teaching appeal to many students:

> *The master code of this learning style model is simple: for whatever you wish to teach, link your instructional objectives to words, numbers or logic, pictures, music, the body, social interaction, and/or personal experience. If you can create activities that combine these intelligences in unique ways, so much the better (Armstrong, 1994).*

Gardner (1999) indicated three positive ways in which MI can be – and has been - used in schools:

1. The cultivation of desired capacities.
2. Approaching a concept, subject matter, or discipline in variety of ways.
3. The personalization of education.

To begin lesson planning, teachers should reflect on a concept that they want to teach and identify the intelligences that seem most appropriate for communicating the content (Campbell, 1997). This is the main strategy which I

adopted in order to teach and develop the speaking skills (Abdallah, 2010). To teach speaking effectively using MI-Based Instruction, the teacher should determine the intelligences which are the most closely related to the speaking skills. Of course all the intelligences are related, but there are some intelligences which are more related to the speaking skills than others. Besides, some intelligences might come into play in one situation more effectively than others.

There are many intelligences which are closely related to the speaking skills. These intelligences are interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, verbal/linguistic intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence. For example, the interpersonal intelligence is concerned here because it entails the person's ability to communicate with other people. This ability is needed to develop speaking skills because speaking involves an interactive communication with other people. This interaction can be fostered if the teacher uses some activities which are based on the interpersonal intelligence. The intrapersonal intelligence is involved here because it my enable the individual student to reflect upon something and then express himself/herself using the target language. The bodily-kinesthetic intelligence is also involved because it can be used to make students move and act roles while they are speaking.

Acquiring or learning language is not a one-way street; it does not depend solely on the direct instruction delivered by the teacher. There are many other vital components which are involved in this too complicated process: Language learning is a two-way street. Learners, and all the mental and physical machinery

they come with, comprise one dimension. The environment, including the teacher, the classroom, and the surrounding community, is the other (Burt & Delay, 1983:38).

To develop their speaking skills in English, students need an effective environment which enables them to speak and interact with each other freely; that is to say, classroom environment should encourage students to speak up and participate in speaking activities without feeling anxious, threatened or stressed:

> *Children acquire a second language in a socially stimulating environments where freedom and flexibility to interact and meet a wide variety of needs are fostered. The social and interactive nature of language is an integral aspect of language acquisition that allows the learners to evolve as they collaborate and negotiate meaning, problem solve, and think critically (Poole, 2000:535).*

MI-Based Instruction provides both the teacher and the learners with the suitable environment for developing the speaking skills. This environment should be characterized by being more natural and more encouraging than the traditional classroom environment. The MI classroom offers a holistic, integrated, stimulating, multi-modal, and cooperative learning environment for all children (Poole, 2000:11). This environment allows students to be more active and more involved in learning.

Another point is that students are motivated when they are more involved in the learning process. They are also motivated when they receive instruction which enables them to be reflective about their own learning (Schaller & Callison, 1996:2). Modifying instruction in the light of MI Theory enables students to be active while they are learning. This is required for teaching speaking because it requires that students should be active and responsive. This is needed so as to

achieve the maximum benefit of teaching a foreign language. Research conducted on teaching speaking suggests that learning to speak in a second or foreign language will be facilitated when students are actively engaged in attempting to communicate (Nunan, 1991:51).

A learner-centred classroom enforces teaching English in general, and teaching the speaking skill in particular. When the students find that their personalities, including their needs and interests, are put into consideration, they will be willing to speak and communicate inside the classroom. In a learner-centred environment, students become autonomous learners, which accelerates the language learning process. A learner-centred environment is communicative and authentic. It trains students to work in small groups or pairs and to negotiate meaning in a broad context. The negotiation of meaning develops students' communicative competence (Altan & Christine, 2001).

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Glossary of Some Educational Language Learning Terms

-Augmented Reality (AR):

Its main concept revolves around enhancing the real world vision with additional digital objects. An augmented reality system mixes real world with fully virtual reality to improve learning opportunities (e.g. by, for example, enabling more interactions and simulations, mainly through image processing).

-Authentic materials:

Nunan (1999) defines authentic materials as spoken or written language data that has been produced in the course of genuine communication, and not specifically written for purposes of language teaching.

-Body language:

It refers to the use of facial expressions, body movements, etc. to communicate meaning from one person to another. In linguistics, this type of meaning is studied in PARALINGUISTICS.

-Comprehensible input:

It refers to spoken language that can be understood by the listener even though some structures and vocabulary may not be known. According to Krashen's theory of language acquisition, comprehensible input is a necessary condition for second language acquisition.

-Contextualized Teaching and Learning (CTL):

Berns and Erickson (2001: p2) view it as a 'conception of teaching and learning that helps teachers relate subject matter content to real world situations'.

-Classroom Management:

Classroom Management is a term used by teachers to describe the process of ensuring that classroom lessons run smoothly despite disruptive behaviour by students.

-Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL):

According to Richards and Schmidt (2013), CALL refers to the use of a computer in the teaching or learning of a second or foreign language. CALL may take the form of :

a) a activities which parallel learning through other media but which use the facilities of the computer (e.g. using the computer to present a reading text);
b) activities which are extensions or adaptations of print-based or classroom based activities (e.g. computer programs that teach writing skills by helping the student develop a topic and THESIS STATEMENT and by checking a composition for vocabulary, grammar, and topic development); and
c) activities which are unique to CALL.

-Content-Based Instruction:

It is generally linked to the beginning of language immersion education in Canada in 1965. However, this type of instruction is an old practice. We know that schools and higher education in colonized countries were conducted in the language of the colonizing empires. With the rise of nationalism, local languages began to take place in education. Thus, English and other languages of the great empires were gradually divorced from content. Swain and Johnson (1997, p.1) said, "until the rise of nationalism, few languages other than those of the great empires ... were considered competent or worthy to carry the content of a formal curriculum' (1997, p.1).

CBI is not immersion in which subjects are taught entirely in the foreign language. It is a method of teaching foreign languages when language instruction is integrated with teaching the content areas. Therefore, the foreign language serves as the medium for teaching subject content from the regular classroom curriculum. CBI is specifically defined as "...the integration of particular content with language teaching aims....the concurrent teaching of academic subject matter and second language skills" (Brinton et al., 1989, p. 2). CBI approaches view the target language as the tool through which content is learned rather than as the immediate object of study. CBI aims at using a language, and hence is viewed as an approach to language instruction that integrates the presentation of topics or tasks from subject matter classes (e.g., math & social studies) within the context of teaching a second or foreign language" (Crandall & Tucker, 1990, p. 187).

-Direct Test:

A test that measures ability directly by requiring test takers to perform tasks designed to approximate an authentic target language use situation as closely as possible. An example of a direct test of writing includes a test that asks test takers to write an essay; an ORAL PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW (OPI) is an example of a direct test of speaking, which is conducted face to face between an interviewer and an interviewee.

-E-learning:

E-learning refers to the use of electronic media and information and communication technologies (ICT) in education. E-learning is broadly inclusive of all forms of educational technology in learning and teaching. E-learning is inclusive of, and is broadly synonymous with multimedia learning, technology-enhanced learning (TEL), computer-based instruction (CBI), computer-based training (CBT), computer-assisted instruction or computer-aided instruction (CAI), internet-based training (IBT), web-based training (WBT), online education, virtual education, virtual learning environments (VLE) (which are also called learning platforms), m-learning, and digital educational collaboration. These alternative names emphasize a particular aspect, component or delivery method.

-Experiential education:

Experiential education (or "learning by doing") is the process of actively engaging students in an authentic experience that will have benefits and consequences.

Students make discoveries and experiment with knowledge themselves instead of hearing or reading about the experiences of others. Students also reflect on their experiences, thus developing new skills, new attitudes, and new theories or ways of thinking. Experiential education is related to the constructivist learning theory.

Experiential learning is the process of making meaning from direct experience. Simply put, it is learning from experience. As we are involved in direct contact with real experience in life, we usually learn. Aristotle once said, "For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them." Experiential learning is learning through reflection on doing, which is often contrasted with rote or didactic learning. Experiential learning is related to, but not synonymous with, experiential education, action learning, adventure learning, free choice learning, cooperative learning, and service learning.

Experiential learning focuses on the learning process for the individual (unlike experiential education, which focuses on the trans-active process between teacher and learner). An example of experiential learning is going to the zoo and learning through observation and interaction with the zoo environment, as opposed to reading about animals from a book. Thus, one makes discoveries and experiments with knowledge firsthand, instead of hearing or reading about others' experiences.

Experiential learning requires no teacher and relates solely to the meaning making process of the individual's direct experience. However, though the

gaining of knowledge is an inherent process that occurs naturally, for a genuine learning experience to occur, there must exist certain elements. According to David A. Kolb, an American educational theorist, knowledge is continuously gained through both personal and environmental experiences. He states that in order to gain genuine knowledge from an experience, certain abilities are required:

- the learner must be willing to be actively involved in the experience;
- the learner must be able to reflect on the experience;
- the learner must possess and use analytical skills to conceptualize the experience; and
- the learner must possess decision making and problem solving skills in order to use the new ideas gained from the experience.

Experiential learning can be a highly effective educational method. It engages the learner at a more personal level by addressing the needs and wants of the individual. Experiential learning requires qualities such as self-initiative and self-evaluation. For experiential learning to be truly effective, it should employ the whole learning wheel, from goal setting, to experimenting and observing, to reviewing, and finally action planning. This complete process allows one to learn new skills, new attitudes or even entirely new ways of thinking.

Most educators understand the important role experience plays in the learning process. While a fun learning environment, with plenty of laughter and respect for the learner's abilities, also fosters an effective experiential learning

environment, it is important not to confuse experiential learning simply with having fun, laughing, and being respected. While those factors may improve the likelihood of experiential learning occurring, it can occur without them, for example, prison inmates may benefit from experiential learning in the absence of fun, laughter, or respect. Rather, what is vital in experiential learning is that the individual is encouraged to directly involve themselves in the experience, and then to reflect on their experiences using analytic skills, in order to gain a better understanding of the new knowledge and retain the information for a longer time.

According to learning consultants, experiential learning is about creating an experience where learning can be facilitated, a requirement shared with any pedagogic theory. And while it is the learner's experience that is most important to the learning process, it is also important not to forget the wealth of experience a good facilitator also brings to the situation. However, while a "facilitator", traditionally called a "teacher", may improve the likelihood of experiential learning occurring, a "facilitator" is not essential to experiential learning. Rather, the mechanism of experiential learning is the learner's reflection on experiences using analytic skills. This can occur without the presence of a facilitator, meaning that experiential learning is not defined by the presence of a facilitator.

-Feedback:

It refers to any information that provides information on the result of behaviour. For example, in PHONETICS, feedback is both air- and bone-conducted. This is

why we do not sound to ourselves as we sound to others and find tape-recordings of our own voices to be odd and often embarrassing.

In DISCOURSE ANALYSIS, feedback given while someone is speaking is sometimes called back channelling, for example comments such as uh, yeah, really, smiles, headshakes, and grunts that indicate success or failure in communication.

In teaching, feedback refers to comments or other information that learners receive concerning their success on learning tasks or tests, either from the teacher or other persons.

-Formative evaluation

Formative evaluation/assessment or diagnostic testing is a range of formal and informal assessment procedures employed by teachers during the learning process in order to modify teaching and learning activities to improve student attainment. It typically involves qualitative feedback (rather than scores) for both student and teacher that focuses on the details of content and performance. It is commonly contrasted with summative assessment, which seeks to monitor educational outcomes, often for purposes of external accountability.

-Fluency (fluent adj.):

The features which give speech the qualities of being natural and normal, including native-like use of PAUSING, rhythm, INTONATION, STRESS, rate of

speaking, and use of interjections and interruptions. If speech disorders cause a breakdown in normal speech (e.g. as with APHASIA or stuttering), the resulting speech may be referred to as dysfluent, or as an example of dysfluency.

In second and foreign language teaching, fluency describes a level of proficiency in communication, which includes:

1. the ability to produce written and/or spoken language with ease;
2. the ability to speak with a good but not necessarily perfect command of intonation, vocabulary, and grammar;
3. the ability to communicate ideas effectively; and
4. the ability to produce continuous speech without causing comprehension difficulties or a breakdown of communication.

It is sometimes contrasted with accuracy, which refers to the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences but may not include the ability to speak or write fluently.

-Functional Linguistics:

The term emerged to refer to the pragmatic use of English to accomplish a variety of realistic purposes. In other words, it refers to the usage of the English language required to perform a specific function or reach a certain social goal.

-General Secondary Education:

It refers to that type of secondary education, as an educational stage which precedes tertiary (higher) education.

-Indirect Test:

A test that measures ability indirectly by requiring test takers to perform tasks not reflective of an authentic target language use situation, from indirect test which an inference is drawn about the abilities underlying their performance on the test. An example of an indirect test of writing includes a test that asks test takers to locate errors in a composition; an example of an indirect test of pronunciation is a test where test takers are asked to select a word that has the same pronunciation as the one in the STEM.

-Language learning strategies:

Cohen (1998) defines *language learning strategies* as ‘‘the conscious thoughts and behaviours used by learners with the explicit goal of improving their knowledge of a target language” (p. 68).

-Lifelong learning:

Lifelong learning is the "ongoing, voluntary, and self-motivated" pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons. Therefore, it not only enhances social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development, but also competitiveness and employability. The term recognizes that learning is not confined to childhood or the classroom but takes place throughout life and in a range of situations. During the last fifty years, constant scientific and technological innovation and change has had a profound effect on learning needs and styles. Learning can no longer be divided into a place and time to acquire

knowledge (school) and a place and time to apply the knowledge acquired (the workplace). Instead, learning can be seen as something that takes place on an on-going basis from our daily interactions with others and with the world around us.

-Peer review

(It is also referred to as *peer feedback* & *peer editing*): It is (in the teaching of composition, particularly according to the PROCESS APPROACH) an activity in the revising stage of writing in which students receive FEEDBACK about their writing from other students – their peers. Typically students work in pairs or small groups, read each other's compositions and ask questions or give comments or suggestions.

-Peer teaching

(It is also referred to as *peer mediated instruction*): It refers to classroom teaching in which one student teaches another, particularly within a learner-centred approach to teaching. For example, when students have learnt something, they may teach it to other students, or test other students on it.

-Pragmatic writing:

It is perceived as an interactive process that involves accomplishing in writing a particular social function within a specific cultural context (e.g. transmitting information, applying for a job, and writing a letter/e-mail expressing a particular concern).

-Proficiency test:

A test that measures how much of a language someone has learned. The difference between a proficiency test and an **ACHIEVEMENT TEST** is that the latter is usually designed to measure how much a student has learned from a particular course or SYLLABUS. A proficiency test is not linked to a particular course of instruction, but measures the learner's general level of language mastery. Although this may be a result of previous instruction and learning, these factors are not the focus of attention. Some proficiency tests have been standardized for worldwide use, such as the American TOEFL that is used to measure the English language proficiency of international students who wish to study in the USA.

-Progress test:

An ACHIEVEMENT TEST linked to a particular set of teaching materials or a particular course of instruction. Tests prepared by a teacher and given at the end of a chapter, course, or term are progress tests. Progress tests may be regarded as similar to achievement tests but narrower and much more specific in scope. They help the teacher to judge the degree of success of his or her teaching and to identify the weakness of the learners.

-Rating scale:

In testing, it is a technique for measuring language proficiency in which aspects of a person's language use are judged using scales that go from worst to best performance in a number of steps. For example, the components of FLUENCY in a foreign language could be rated on the following scales:

Naturalness of language: unnatural 1 2 3 4 5 natural
Style of expression: foreign 1 2 3 4 5 native-speaker like
Clarity of expression: unclear 1 2 3 4 5 clear

For each component skill, the listener rates the speaker on a scale of 1 to 5. Overall fluency can then be measured by taking account of the three scores for each speaker.

-Situated language learning:

In general, it approaches language learners as 'active constructors of knowledge who bring their own needs, strategies and styles to learning, and skills and knowledge are best acquired within realistic contexts and authentic settings, where students are engaged in experiential language learning tasks'. Thus, it focuses on the role of the context and situation in language learning and knowledge construction.

-Social Media Language Learning (SMLL):

SMLL has appeared to express interactive relationships between social media channels and language learning processes. In this sense, language learners are able to extend English practice beyond classroom boundaries. Moreover, social

media extends learning through offering new opportunities such as: (1) contact with outside experts; (2) purposeful interactions among students in different locations; (3) a means to enhance learners' participation; (4) a means for extending time; and (5) a facility for timely feedback from teachers and peers (Abdallah, 2018).

-Standard-based communicative language teaching:

It is a communicative language teaching approach/methodology that is based on some specified standards. It is the current approach employed in Egyptian secondary schools nowadays, which is based on the standards-based curricular reform; it aims to fulfil the standards set out in the Ministry of Education Standards Document.

-Synchronous learning:

An online communication tool, instructor-to-student or student-to-student, that occurs at the same time but not necessarily in the same place; similar to electronic "chat".

-Task:

Nunan (1999) defines a task as a piece of meaning-focused, communicative work, which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing and interacting in the target language so as to connect them to the real-world of language use.

-Task-Based Language Learning:

It is viewed as an approach to language learning according to which the tasks done by students become central to the learning process. It requires the teacher to organise classroom activities around those practical tasks that language users will engage in when they are 'out there' in the real world (Oura, 2001).

-Teaching strategies:

A combination of instructional methods, learning activities, and materials that actively engage students and appropriately reflect both learning goals and students' developmental needs.

-Virtual Learning Environment (VLE):

It is a standardized, computer-based environment that supports the delivery of web-based learning and facilitates on-line interaction between students and teachers. A VLE might consist of a variety of components designed both to assist in conventional classroom learning as well as support distance learners gaining remote access to course and assessment materials.

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