

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE



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## ROLE OF “NEWSPAPER’ FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

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### Abstrak

Learning a language involves the establishment of the links between the language forms and their meanings. The three factors involved in the process are the form, the content or meaning and their association. Language is a skill rather than a subject. Though a skill does not altogether prelude intellectual activity, it is more a matter of ‘doing’ than of knowing’. This skill of learning second language can be acquired by providing the students sufficient opportunities to hear / read the language being used in meaningful situations and to make them use it. This paper outlines a few exercised that can be designed to make language learning happen in the classroom and also help learners to enhance their vocabulary, grammar and idioms and phrases. Newspapers give scope for readers to understand the content better, easier and interesting as they have lot of choice in reading.

**Keywords:** Learning, classroom, newspaper, vocabulary, grammar.

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### Introduction

Teaching and learning is an important aspect in Education. The process may be summed up in the words of M.A.K.Halliday (2016)<sup>1</sup>. He says: ‘Teaching a language involves conjoining two essential features: the first, the learner must experience the language being used in meaningful ways, either in its spoken or written form, and the secondly, the learner must himself have the

opportunity of performing, of trying out his own skills, of making mistakes and being corrected. Those are the essence of language learning.” Though there are various methods to improve the two essence of language learning, the researcher tries to enforce the use of authentic material “The News Paper” to improve the skill of learning basic skills in second language.

One of the most important principles of teaching – any teaching – is linking the teaching item with life. As the newspaper contains the details of day-to-day happenings, the pupils may show interest to read it with involvement. Involvement makes them to acquire the language learning faster. It also involves physical activity. The pictures in the newspaper will also drive home its meaning without explanation.

At the initial level, the class teacher should make the students to read the headlines only for a week. By using dictionary, they themselves have to find out the meaning for the vocabulary. The students might be asked to pick out the words according to their word-class (White, 1991)<sup>2</sup>.

For example, there are some of the words listed below from the headlines of the Indian newspaper, “THE HINDU dt. 20<sup>th</sup> Jan.2018<sup>3</sup>.

### **Verbs**

- a) Hike – After a gap of six years, State government hikes bus fares.
- b) Uphold – SC upholds Farooqui acquittal
- c) Await – Thoothukudi seaport waits outer harbour project
- d) Stage- Fishermen stage protest with damaged nets.
- e) Hoist – Inspector hoists party flag, lands in trouble
- f) Evacuate- Goa Village evacuated.
- g) Resolve- Differences over Doklam resolved.
- h) Third SC judge recuses himself from Chandy case.
- i) Hammers – India hammers Zimbabwe.

### **Nouns**

- a) Sentence –Three get life sentence.
- b) Train – Man run over by train
- c) Sand quarries – HC confirms orders to close down all sand quarries.
- d) Human chain - RJD, Cong. To skip human chain.
- e) Proposal – ‘Will consider proposals on animal safety’
- f) Laxity – Laxity in examining witness of ’84 riots:SC
- g) Civilians – Jawan, 2 civiians killed on border.
- h) Refugee – Rohingya refugee leaders list demands ahead of repatriation.

- i) Spurs – Why the spurs are a sporting marvel

### Phrases

- a) Open up- U.S gymnasts open up on abuse.
- b) Run over – Man run over by train.
- c) Close down – HC confirms order to close down all sand quarries
- d) Dropouts- In Odisha, schools are the dropouts.
- e) Calls in – Voice calls in Indian airspace soon
- f) Crossfire – I had become victim of corporate crossfire: Raja
- g) Packs off – Kyrgios packs off Tsonga in electric clash
- h) Rub of the green (Word Play) – It is phrase commonly used in sport to suggest that an athlete or a team has been touched by good fortune.

By making the students to do the activity of collecting words and grouping them according to their word-class and finding the meanings either by reading the content or by referring the dictionary, the skill of reading can be enhanced. Picking out verbs, nouns and phrases help the learners to enhance their vocabulary and use them in other contexts creatively (Mohit, 2004)<sup>4</sup>. If the word is continuously done for a week, definitely they will come across repeated words. That will be helpful for better understanding.

When students read, it intuitively leads them to read which attracts more. According to their interest, they will choose and try to get the news on the particular day. Their curiosity on the content may help them to acquire the language. The reading material goes in automatically and lays a foundation on vocabulary, phrases and sentence construction. It becomes an inbuilt lay-out in their mind.

It is evident that the pupils can enlarge their usage of idiomatic expressions by reading the content after getting a proper training for a week in Headlines Comprehension. Some of the idioms used are given below.

- a) Spill the beans – *When the police enquired him, he spilled the beans*, which means he uttered the truth when the police enquired.
- b) Make a beeline – *As the rural and urban local bodies in the two districts started receiving applications since last week, women in large numbers made a beeline to the RTOs and their unit offices...*, which means there is a long queue. Dt 30<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2018
- c) To and fro – Last fortnight, I travelled by Pearl City Express to and fro from Thoothukudi. Dt 30<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2018
- d) Bring to book – A 48-year-old widow doused herself with kerosene and “attempted” self-immolation at the main entrance ----- on Monday accusing the police of failing to bring to book those responsible for her daughter’s death two years ago. Dt 30<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2018

Through this Newspaper reading class, a teacher can use their innovative methods to enhance other skills of learning. They can have debate, group discussion, questioning time and paragraph writing by using the same sentence structures and vocabulary on their own which may help them to master the structures and use them confidently in their writing. They will be creative, expressive, and confident in using words in a different context. If they are in need of vocabulary list instead of referring to the dictionary, it can be provided.

Many activities can be conducted by making them to read newspaper. The students can be asked to imitate the content of the newspaper by writing news report of an accident, or an inaugural ceremony of a shop, film review, and Common issues such as Growth of Economy, Education, and Women Empowerment etc. Through these exercises, all the four skills will be improved, in addition to this, their IQ will get sharpened. The teachers have their own liberty of designing activities based on the necessary skill they want their learners to improve in (Baruah, 2004)<sup>5</sup>.

Though a particular syllabus is followed in colleges systematically, it is necessary to make them to develop reading skill by having newspaper as the resource material. It motivates them without our drive. Our education system should provide opportunity for reading newspaper at least one hour daily in a semester.

By making the students to apply their mind, they may be able to grasp the mechanics of various constructions but to use these constructions naturally, which is equivalent to automatic response, they have to make language production and language comprehension a matter of automatic habit. As the staunchest advocates of the 'mentalist' school of language learning admit the importance of habits in mastering a language. Habits can be developed only through practice. Mere repetition of looking at particular vocabulary, phrase, and sentence structure may help the learner to develop the habit of learning automatically that sentence or phrase which will help them in producing and understanding similar sentences and phrases in actual communication situations.

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