

MOULDING AND REFINING THE CAPABILITY OF CREATIVE WRITING ACTIVITIES LIKE BLOG WRITING THROUGH COLLABORATIVE WRITING IN CLASSROOMS

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Abstract-The paper highlights on the steps to be taken in a classroom to practice creative writing tasks like blog writing that can be done through collaborative writing tasks. Planning happens to be a very important part in writing and such new tasks done as a group would be able to pull over a better result than individual writing. The question of the task is in giving genuine expression to thoughts. Quality writing has to be invested and the quality in writing can be enhanced through collaborative writing practice.

Key words-Blog writing, collaborative writing, peer views, professional outlook.

The demands of the 21st century expect a lot more important skills than the current skills accomplished by students to establish themselves. *To think out of the box* is one scope of expectation and *to think into the box* (the media and computer) is another aspect of language command. Innovative thinking has always been considered very important but this media age has made innovative questioning and innovative solutions as the focus of the hour that create way for individuality in expression of thought. The idea of innovative solutions must be extended into English teaching classrooms too. The teacher needs to raise multiple questions and find innovative solutions to make the learner teacher classroom effective. The teacher needs to rope in activities that are practical, flexible, creative and technologically alert. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) views language as a tool for communication. It insists that interactive speaking activities in classrooms provide fine opportunities to create a real communicative environment. It ensures that students have sufficient exposure to the target language. Thus, application of CLT in classrooms would bring about positive outcome to the students as well as the teachers. The activities are tailored with student centred pedagogy and not result oriented approach. Hence an effort to mould and refine the skill of writing Blogs by engaging them with activities that would help them to assess their learning graph in creating an idea to express views through blogs.

as cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 129 “communicative activities have three salient features: (1) some type of information gap, (2) a degree of choice and (3) the existence of feedback”. Learning or practicing to write a blog has become another important genre of writing that takes an engineer to the people around through his/her experience or ideas of life and its development. Blogs in particular are a powerful way of communicating research. Recognizing Francis Bacon’s maxim that ‘knowledge is power’, knowledge needs to be distributed beyond the walls of academic learning. A Blog almost takes the position of a personal diary that can have all views of an individual posted to be cherished and looked back whenever needed or a step further even to be read by friends connected through media. When mail ids have become the address of a professional I strongly believe that Blogs are the personal diary of any individual which showcases the thought sparks running hot in their minds. Blog is also being accepted as a platform of professional expression and hence there comes the dire need for an engineer to master the skill.

Learning engineers are more connected to the mobile and computer that a theoretical explanation of what a Blog is? , the steps to start a blog may not be a difficult task to explain. The difficulty arises when a teacher needs to specify on the style of writing, vocabulary and tone that a writer needs to invest while writing a Blog.

Chandrika Mohan, www.languageinindia.com12 : 2 February 2012 - Updating the English Classroom with Techniques and Communication Skills Language in India , “The training which learners should receive should prepare them to direct the course of their own learning, that is, it should take them from their states of varying degrees of dependence to the state of the greatest of independence or autonomy which is possible in a given set of circumstances”. The activity to be executed in the classroom has to suit the innovative style of learning that would attract the students and also help them gain an instant learning with motivating credits for their writing skills. Planning happens to be a very important part in writing and such new tasks done as a group would be able to pull over a better result than individual writing.

The activity may not fully accomplish the learning target but would set the direction in the right part to channelize the effort to be put forth. A heterogeneous class of engineers to be would set the confused state of hesitation, ambiguity, limited proficiency of language and awkwardness when asked to come forward with blog writing. An activity can be extended into the class just to set the idea of starting to write for a blog. The activity would be divided into two parts, the first one would be innovative question

and the second one would be innovative writing. The activity would be a collaborative writing task that would be done in groups. There is a common view that collaborative writing may not be of a successful target achieving effort but it actually boosts the performance of such creative writing tasks. Working with others can provide the opportunity for learners to work at a level slightly above their usual capacity, as co-operating with others who know a little more can boost achievement.

A class can be split into groups wherein each group would consist of five to six members. The students will first have to brainstorm and write one issue or event that could be personal, social, political or global that they would like to share opinion about. The first set of task just needs five minutes for the students to invest time to write a topic. The members then circulate the note written, in the clockwise direction, so that each friend would write a single line view about the topic chosen. The peer view about the choice of topic will help the student analyse his level of thinking and approach to very phases of life. Now depending on the views of the peer members in the group the student can make changes or alterations in the topic chosen. Once the first task is done the second part of the activity starts, the student would now write a paragraph of five lines sharing his/her views about the topic chosen. The task would need a minimum of 15 minutes and once the writing is completed the written text would be circulated among the group members to gain their view about the content written, the members can add points to the content or even point out a few correction or write their opinion about the write-up. The final part of the activity would be where the students in each group select one of the topics in the group and start their collaborative writing by contributing their opinion about the topic at a minimum of one sentence each.

At various activities it is found that group works appear to be more productive than individual work. The result of better writing with grammar accuracy is because of the productive feedback given by the group mates. Collaborative writing can be a lot of fun, with the growth of web tools for collaboration (not my personal expertise!), it is becoming increasingly popular.

After a twenty minute schedule of collaborative writing the task can be analysed by the members of the group to get a cue of the varying graph in writing from the point of selecting the topic and to the culminating point of writing content for one topic selected. The gradual transformation of the task from individual task to group activity would spotlight a view of different opinions, different views and varied style of writing for a blog. This simple task can be a triggering point for students to realise their level of performance and initiate the idea to make changes in their writing. There are different kinds of blog, personal, academic, political and professional. Many a time pompous and flamboyant words can deter the essence of a blog and distract the reader. Whatever be the genre of the blog the common criteria of writing has to be a backdrop of genuine shade, a tinge of creative outlook and a canvass of perfect vocabulary that would give away the exact crux of the content to the reader leaving no space for ambiguity.

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