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POST SENIOR SECONDARY LEVELS KRUSHNA CHANDRA MISHRA**

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Post +2 ESL Classrooms in India

Despite reasonable variation on a variety of fronts, Indian post +2 ESL classrooms enjoy a broad similarity in terms of the learner attainment level in English. Two public examinations, at Class X and class XI levels, are important witnesses to the somewhat satisfactory level of the learner achievement in ESL terms. Students by the end of Class XII are ordinarily able to read texts available in English (English newspapers), to listen, comprehend and reproduce spoken English (of the Indian variety at least) as presented in TV news and other media programmes. Basic writing involving simple expression and data interpretation (railway time table, market –price list etc.) etc. is something which average Indian post +2 level interactant is not ordinarily shy at. However, even at post + 2 level one area that attracts considerable attention and concern is the skill involving speaking – even here, simple conversations on greeting, self introduction, factual information

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–based question–answer (Yes –No type questions with 01 or 02 word answers) are remarkable success areas where English as it comes to be used by those adults shows some satisfaction.

The base level performance of most boys and girls here however leaves scope for maximum improvement and the need for ELS teaching to be done with better planning justifies itself.(Mishra: 2007)

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Beckoning not from afar

Indian job market scene in the wake of Globalization with the advantages and challenges before the youth at post +2 College education uniformly stands out as a single powerful motivating factor to let one and all feel that performing in English, they stand a chance of better employment and comfortable life. It is obsessing, but emphatically true that without English, mostly we are bound to sail slow and perish. The growing disfavour of the purist kind of RP (King's / Queen's / Oxbridge – London) English and increasing recognition of world Englishes have brought in a new era and Indian English as a powerful regional variety has come to enjoy a distinction today that would make the ESL students in our college and universities proud and comfortable. As far as the liberal approaches to written English evaluations are concerned, the American spelling in the Indian/ British English writings is tolerated, the use not being very much grudged with the advent of Computer English and electronic media channels.

Increasing importance of English in almost all fields of national life (in India) and international exchanges has led to an awareness that doing English well would augur well for our youth force. As a powerful extrinsic motivation this very realization has to offer much to allow learning in the ESL Classrooms to take place for sure. (Mishra: 2008)

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Firming up the Resolve & Bracing up for the Combat

The motivation - both extrinsic and intrinsic – being at its best of strengths, the college level +3 ESL teaching seems based upon a resolve - to perform with English and not to perish without it. The college classroom therefore is a veritable power house – creative, promising, dynamic youth conscious of the goal blooming in the horizon is eager to grab the world of opportunities on a secure career front under national and multinational employers. The readiness of the college-going career-conscious youth offers for the ESL teacher the hot iron which he has to strike. Knowing that marketable performance is in the masterly use of the LSRW skills in English, the teacher is well aware of the need to use the methods of teaching English in the eclectic way – to mix methods in a judicious way to make learning of English take place. (Mishra: 1996)

Since at post +2 level context-bound thematic development into patterned discourse is the test of language proficiency and the linguistic arsenal of the young students is reasonably equipped to respond in communicative situations to changing demands, the college ESL syllabus, as in most universities in India, as follow-up of the UGC guide lines, provides for teaching of general/ compulsory English with stress on composition writing of all forms and dialogues in all possible circumstances – grammar teaching ideally linked to how fluency development would take place with stage-by-stage in-built correction and feed-back almost naturally and constantly piling up to lead the students to the point of accurate or

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acceptable performance . The literature burden kept deliberately away from the syllabus, more practical situations in which one uses English for different purposes are kept in mind for dialogue writing , letter writing, media writing alongside paragraph writing, essay writing and précis writing – to account for elaboration and expansion and also summarizing. Reading comprehension passages are given with sections to test dictionary referencing skills, transcriptions, and vocabulary strength (as in synonyms and antonyms either as available in the given passage or as free supply items).

Learner-centered classrooms to democratize the teaching-learning atmosphere and in response to post-modern times recommending empowerment of the marginalized and oppressed, voiceless sections of the society in their development require the teacher to adopt group-work and peer-work procedures to bring the language classroom the spirit of people-to-people willing and involved issue-based dialogue and discussion while encouraging appropriate leadership qualities with every group properly represented by a leader who organizes groups, assigns the members appropriate work on various aspects related to the group work, coordinates discussion, formulates the final response and presents it for the classroom audience. Both talent-haunt and mediocre-training for purposes of better classroom performance by mostly average students are this way taken care of. (Mishra: 2005)

Assigned writing compositions made to progress through brainstorming, group efforts, teacher-mediated common outcome-harnessing, writing-time feedback to minimize errors in organization, coherence,

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grammar, vocabulary based on collocation needs, post-writing self-reading, revision and enrichment based on preceding feed-back already available , and feed-back subsequently received at the post-writing presentation for final comments by the class as a whole (or now groups already working on the same or similar problems) thus get the final shape as good readable written pieces mean to assume. Also with so much of vibrancy playing around inside the classroom, there comes to the experience of the students joy in place of traditional teacher-centered classroom's monotony, disenchantment and alienation. Involvement creating room for participatory learning thereby provides scope for consolidation of learning and its lasting retention and prompt application in demanding situations.

Integrated skills development , multipurpose reading and writing programmes, context-bound focus of text/test assignments and related student contribution promotion through severally arranged or monitored evaluative feedback support, covert grammar teaching for fluency development and exposure to English in connected speech or writing contexts etc. are class room practices developed on theories of SL acquisition , ESL teaching, classroom management , teaching as facilitation , monitoring and support, and writing errors correction in the liberal humanistic framework. The autonomy consideration comes to be better addressed here and the low proficient learners benefit as much as the bright and advanced achievers in this kind of a methodological exercise. (Mishra: 2005) , (Mishra : 2007- Autonomy ...)

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What is most desirable in Indian ESL/other ESOL situations?

To nurture with rules in application in real life contexts and not to torture with rules for rules sake may be today's appropriate ESL teaching methodology which with its basis in theory and research in fields of psychology, sociology, management, education and human rights and critical theory in its teacher-selected eclectic pattern suitable to different and difficult classroom situations at the college ESL education level where adolescent mind is at work on a tool that promises love and threatens loss promises learning occurrence and recurrence with the concurrence of the learning community present in the class and determined to achieve and excel through cooperative and collaborative techniques of solving real life problems with a magnificent wonder-working device like language, and that too, English, the most longed for means of empowerment. (Mishra: 2008)

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