STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING THE USE OF TEXTBOOKS IN LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS AT THE TERTIARY LEVEL

Md. Kamrul Hasan* and Mohd. Moniruzzaman Akhand**

Abstract

The majority of the literature of English Language Teaching is fundamentally derived from published course books. In many language teaching situations, much of the materials fail to meet the instructors' expectations, and the materials are criticized for their isolation, irrelevance on taking into account of personal and local contexts and inadequate coverage of the essential aspects of language learning/teaching. Moreover, the existing materials are almost all developed and flourish in the western context, which pose some difficulties both for the teachers and for the learners to bridge them into various local contexts. This paper explores some of the strategies for ESL/EFL teachers that they might incorporate to enhance the use of textbooks in the classroom. For this, we examine some of the popular textbooks that are commonly used by different English Language teachers at the tertiary level and we pilot some of the strategies in the classrooms in a controlled situation to observe the outcome of the implementation of these strategies. It is found that in almost all cases learner-centred work with a course book and extension of text-based tasks with real life experience have produced positive results.

Key Words: Teaching strategies, EFL/ESL teachers, language Classrooms, text-based tasks, controlled situational classes

*Md. Kamrul Hasan has been working as an assistant professor in English of English Language Institute at United International University, Dhanmondi, Dhaka, Bangladesh. He has been teaching English, Linguistics at different private universities for more than four years. He has got six international conferences paper under his belt. He has done his M Phil and M.A in Linguistics and B.A (Hons) in English from University of Delhi, India. His interests cover ELT, Sociolinguistics and SLA.

**Mohd. Moniruzzaman Akhand has been associated as an assistant professor in the department of English of Eastern University, Dhanmondi, Dhaka, Bangladesh. He has been teaching English, Applied Linguistics and ELT for more than four years. He has presented papers in two international conferences. He has been graduated from the Department of English, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh having major in Applied Linguistics and ELT. His interests cover ELT, SLA and issues of Teacher Development.

Md. Kamrul Hasan and Mohd. Moniruzzaman Akhand

บทคัดย่อ

     วรรณกรรมที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการสอนภาษาอังกฤษส่วนใหญ่มีพื้นฐานมาจากหนังสือเรียน
ที่ตีพิมพ์ ในหลายสถานการณ์ของการสอนภาษา สื่อการเรียนจำนวนมากไม่ตอบสนองความคาดหวัง
ของผู้สอน และสื่อการเรียนได้รับการวิพากษ์วิจารณ์ว่ามีความแปลกแยก ไม่ตรงประเด็นเมื่อคำนึงถึง
บริบทของผู้เรียนและท้องถิ่น และไม่ครอบคลุมประเด็นที่สำคัญของการเรียนการสอนภาษา
นอกจากนี้สื่อการเรียนที่มีอยู่ได้รับการพัฒนาและเติบโตในบริบทตะวันตกซึ่งทำให้เกิดความยากลำบาก
สำหรับผู้สอนและผู้เรียนที่จะเชื่อมโยงไปสู่บริบทท้องถิ่นที่หลากหลาย งานวิจัยนี้สำรวจกลยุทธ์สำหรับ
ผู้สอนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาที่สอง/ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างชาติ (ESL/EFL) ที่จะนำไปใช้
เพื่อเพิ่มพูนการใช้ตำราเรียนในห้องเรียน ผู้วิจัยได้ตรวจสอบตำราที่เป็นที่นิยมจำนวนหนึ่งซึ่งใช้โดย
ผู้สอนภาษาอังกฤษในระดับอุดมศึกษาและศึกษานำร่องการนำกลยุทธ์บางประการมาใช้ในชั้นเรียน
ในสถานการณ์ที่มีการควบคุมเพื่อสังเกตผลของการใช้กลยุทธ์เหล่านี้ ผลการวิจัยพบว่า เกือบทุกกรณี
ที่มีการเรียนรู้โดยเน้นผู้เรียนเป็นศูนย์กลางร่วมกับหนังสือเรียนและการขยายกิจกรรมไปสู่ประสบการณ์
ชีวิตจริงทำให้เกิดผลในทางบวก

INTRODUCTION

    Towards the mid-nineteenth century, several factors, like increased opportunities to communicate and travel across different nations, contributed to questioning the approach and method of language teaching in English as a Second Language (ESL)/ English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. This created a demand for communicative proficiency among the speakers of foreign languages. Initially this opened a market for different conversation books and phrase books intended for private study, but language experts also turned their attention to different types of course books being used in different language classrooms. By this time, a new approach for language teaching, namely the *Communicative Approach*, emerged on the scene that put light on the various approaches to language teaching from a different point of view. Existing materials demanded to be revised to fit into the new approach.

    Writers and publishers quickly realized the need to adapt to the current trend and began to produce materials that would befit this new approach to the language classroom. As the focus shifted from the structure and form to the function and use, the new instructional materials contained more tasks embedded in the context and enhanced the use of 'discourse' rather than simply strings of sentences connected to each other. Gradually the role of instructional materials within a method or instructional system begins to become a very important part that not only specifies the subject matter and exercises but also sometimes presets the objective(s) and acts as a

2

major source for input.

Though many popular materials which are used in the language classrooms like the *Headway Series, Intermediate English Grammar, Oxford Practice Grammar, English Skills with Readin*g etc. are very effective in providing sources for input, yet in some contexts the texts themselves provide ideas that are alien to a particular local context. Hence, in many language teaching situations, much of the materials used fails to meet the instructors' expectation and the materials are often criticized for their isolation from the real world, irrelevance on taking into account personal and local contexts and inadequate coverage of the essential aspects of language learning/teaching. Moreover, the existing materials are almost all developed and flourish in a western context, and these adopted materials pose some difficulties both for the teachers and for the learners to bridge the gap into the local context. Cultural barriers, as well, sometimes hinder the smooth operation of a language classroom.

The Objective/Research Question (RQ):

This paper researches two areas, namely (a) the compatibility of the course materials and (b) effective teaching strategies in ELT (English Language Teaching) classrooms:

a) The first research question is whether published course books and materials provide any positive impact, i.e. their compatibility with ESL/EFL teaching situations. The text books and reading materials we employed to use in our classrooms for the present study were mostly internationally published. Some of them are available as in Indian version in many publishing houses in Bangladesh. We assume that these materials do provide us with relevant, useful and stimulating materials for meaningful and enjoyable language learning in addition to their shortcomings. We are not promoting here the blanket acceptance of all published course books. We are advocating an approach which works constructively with what the books provide for us. Certainly, there may be numerous occasions where the best course of action is to reject a course book item; however, there may also be times when we are able to select key parts of a course book unit, or amend the provided text or task or supplement what is there. In any case, the effectiveness of a task relies in large part on the strategy that a teacher implements in a particular classroom.

b) The second research question concerns the strategies that can be effectively implemented in ELT classrooms i.e. whether the employed strategies in our present study can be effectively implemented in ELT classrooms. Though the English that ESL students are taught is academic English, recently, many students are getting admitted into various job-oriented courses in different private universities in Bangladesh. And they all want to achieve academic success and ful-

fill their expectations for the future. The whole scenario demands effective teaching strategies on the part of the teachers to help the students achieve in learning the English language and academic material since overall proficiency in English helps the students in a greater way to reach their expectations. Along these lines, we also believe that every teacher who teaches their subject matter in English to ESL students is not only a teacher of the content area but also is a teacher of English as well. As educators, we must continually reflect on our teaching and update our practice to address the needs of the students, so we must focus on the students and find ways to arrange their learning to help them achieve success.

Hence, in this paper we try to explore some strategies that ESL/EFL teachers might incorporate in their lesson plans to help them conform to and enhance the triangular interaction of teacher-learner-textbook (TLT) in the classroom. For this, we examine some of the popular textbooks (like *Headway Series, English Skills with Reading, and Complete Course in English* etc.) that are commonly used by different English Language teachers at the tertiary level and we pilot some of the strategies in the classrooms in a controlled situation to observe the outcome of the implementation of these strategies. It is found that in almost all cases learner-centred work with a course book and the extension of text-based tasks with real life experience have come out with best overall result.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language learning is an interactive process that requires various mental operations to be performed concurrently or very closely in time (Cohen, 1994). When students learn a language, they are likely to proceed from processing the input in smaller units to larger conceptual units. Instructional material that is commonly comprised of a course/text book is an ideal source for input for the learner in a language classroom. The syllabus defines linguistic content in terms of language elements – structures, topics, notions, and functions, in some cases learning tasks as well (Johnson 1982, Prabhu 1983). The instructional material on the other hand specifies the subject matter and defines or suggests the intensity of the coverage of items, the time required, focus of the teaching/learning procedure and tasks required. For example, the role of instructional materials within a functional/communicative methodology (like the Communicative Language Teaching, Content Based Approach, etc.) can be specified in the following terms: 1. Materials will focus on the communicative abilities of interpretation, expression, and negotiation. 2. Materials will focus on understandable, relevant, and interesting exchanges of information, rather than on the presentation of grammatical form. 3. Materials will involve different kinds of texts and different media, which the learners can use to develop their competence through a variety of different activities and tasks. (cited from

4

Richards & Rodgers, 2002)

Published course books, especially the recent ones, provide a lot both for the teachers and for the learners. These texts offer a ready supply of (McPherson, 2005):

> "topics – including dangerous past-times and family relationships; texts – including extracts from novels and travel brochures, letters, postcards, news reports; tasks – including deducing grammar rules from examples of use and guided role plays" (Kate McPherson, 2005:13). Thornbury and Medding (2002) describe how each of these – the topic, or the task – can be taken as a very useful starting point for planning a lesson. Apart from the function of the language, there is also a deliberate focus on the language form: the grammar of the language is central. For instance, in *Headway-Upper Intermediate* (Soars & Soars, 2004) there are units that begin with 'Test your grammar task' which is then followed by 'Language in Context' where students work out rules through carefully structured grammar questions. In addition to topics, texts, tasks and a grammar focus, a course book also presents (McPherson, 2005):

> "a framework – leads to guidance and support; a syllabus – language skills and language systems; a convenient package – one main text rather than multiple texts, or bundles of photocopied papers which may easily be lost" (Kate McPherson, 2005:14).

In the classroom, a text book offers students with a sense of security. They know where to start, what to expect and are familiar with the layouts and the techniques and methods. Outside the classroom the materials give a wide boundary of freedom to the students to learn and have access to different tasks that give a tangible measurement of their progress. For the teacher, a course book may prove to be a device for professional skill development and knowledge. It also acts as a medium of repertoire between the teacher and the students. A course book also brings an option for methodology and strategies to a teacher for improving effectiveness in the classroom. In this sense, we can see the textbook as an extension of the teacher skills rather than deskilling – and on this level at least, the course book may be seen as a very effective agent of change (Hutchinson & Hutchinson, 1997).

In addition, it seems necessary to take a preliminary look at two different approaches to the question of the role of teaching materials. There are two views regarding the use of materials in a classroom: the *deficiency view* and the *difference view* (Allwright, 1980). The deficiency view holds the theory that materials save learners from our deficiencies as teachers and to make sure that the syllabus is properly covered and that exercises are well thought out. On the other hand, the difference view holds that we need teaching materials "as 'carriers' of decisions best made by someone other than the classroom teacher, not because the classroom teacher is *deficient*, as a classroom teacher, but because the expertise required of writers is importantly *different* from that required of classroom teachers – the people who have to have the interpersonal skills to

make classrooms good places to learn in". (Allwright, 1980:6)

Both the views have enough truth in them to be worth holding in mind simultaneously as we consider the use of instructional materials in the classroom. However, there may be many views and hypotheses regarding the use of materials in a language classroom. But in a classroom situation during the real-time teaching process it all is dependent on the strategies that a teacher deploys to utilize the text/course books. Certainly, there may be occasions when the rejection of a particular course book item is the best action. On the other hand, there may be times when we are able to select key areas of a course book, or revise the provided text or task, or supplement what is there. So it is primarily about how we do it rather than what and why we do it.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Study

The primary goal of a language classroom is to teach and provide learners with tools for learning/acquiring the target language. Text/course books have been playing a key role in this process and are a key tool for enabling this objective to be achieved. The study is carried out to overcome the discrepancy between what an instructor expects and the result that is produced from following a text in a class. There are many times when the materials are criticized for their isolation, irrelevance in terms of taking into account of personal and local contexts and inadequate coverage of the essential aspects of language
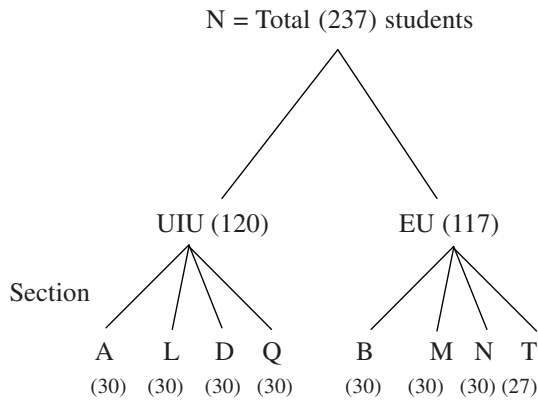
learning/teaching. So some strategies were followed in the classroom to minimize the gap between the instructor's expectations and the feedback that comes out in the class.

The approach adopted in the research is essentially qualitative. We relied on non-participant observation, analysis of documents and other materials for gathering information used as data. In non-participant observant, by providing impression, we examined the data, and interpreted it via forming an impression.

Participants

In order to probe the teaching strategies to determine which are most effective, the study was done with 237 first year undergraduate students of two private universities in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The participants were divided into eight classes; out of the total students, 120 students were from United International University (UIU), and 117 were from Eastern University (EU). They were in the age-group of 16-19 years and had completed 12/14 years of formal school education. The first four groups of students, 120 in number, were drawn from first-semester students at United International University (UIU); out of them 80 were female and 40 were male students. The other four groups, consisted 117 students, who were first semester students from Eastern University (EU); out of them 65 were male and 52 were female students. The authors selected their own students for the study.

Figure 1 provides the details of the sample design:

N = Total (237) students

Figure 1: Sample Design

Table 2: Students from EU

Sections	Course Taken	Department	Number of Students
B	Basic English	BBA	30
M	Basic English	English	30
N	Writing	English	30
T	Listening & Speaking	CSE, EEE and ETE	27
		Total	**117**

We selected four groups of 30 BBA (English non-Major) first semester students from United International University, Dhaka, Bangladesh comprising four sections who were doing Basic English (Fundamental Course), and 30 first year (second semester) students from the English Department, Eastern University, Dhaka doing their Basic English course and 30 first year (final semester) students from the English Department, Eastern University, Dhaka, doing their Writing course. And we also selected 27 students doing a Listening and Speaking course from the BBA faculty and 33 students doing a Reading and Grammar course from the Science and Engineering Faculty, Eastern University, Dhaka, Bangladesh. The following tables present the distribution of students in the study:

Table1: BBA students from UIU

Sections	Course Taken	Number of Students
A	Basic English	30
Q	Basic English	30
L	Basic English	30
D	Basic English	30
	Total	**120**

The research was conducted in the form of a classroom case study. It took almost one semester (18 weeks) to practice the strategies and to analyze the feedback. The case study started in late September 2008 and ended in late January 2009. Classroom observations were implemented for data collection. The researchers selected their own students for their study. The regular teaching time for the students is four and a half hours per week and is divided into three sessions.

The Strategies

What can enhance the language teaching/learning in a language classroom is potentially a question that could continue to bother ELT practitioners until they give up the very thought of it. But no doubt "if we convey enthusiasm, interest, and some degree of passion for the materials, then the students are more likely to feel positive and curious about what they are going to be working on". (McPherson, 2005). Personalizing the material (partly/fully) whenever possible has been used as an effective strategy in the EL classroom. This allows learner-centered tasks and reduces the space between the student and the text. To incorporate local context into the language

7

activities always helps to overcome the primary inhibition of students and encourage them to take part freely in the activities. Group-work/discussion (free/guided) is an effective strategy for a heterogeneous classroom in which students feel free to express them and the weaker students are guided by their peers. 'Inferring, interpreting and predicting' is a strategy that helps in teaching writing and vocabulary following the theory of 'learning by doing' school. Inductive grammar teaching is helpful and effective strategy for teaching grammar where the grammar rules are not taught in isolation rather the situation brings forth the grammar items. Besides these, Warm-up strategy, Building up personal rapport strategy and using visual aids strategy are also helpful in a language classroom.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Analysis of the Texts Books for Strategies

Warm-Up Strategy for Student-Centred Work

From the *Complete Course in English* by Robert J. Dixon, the researchers picked the reading passage "The Lady or the Tiger?" by Frank. R. Stokton (page-17). By guiding the students to the pages of the book (page-17), we are able to guide them to read the text in the context. By increasing the students' familiarity with the whole of the chapter, we are also able to increase the user-friendliness of the material. In the classes (2/3), we ask the students to look into the vocabulary, and grammar review (page-22-24) about present tense. Next, in other classes, we take *Headway Pre-Intermediate* Student's Book (unit 1; page-6-8) by John and Liz Soars (2000) for listening to follow warm-up strategy. Here, the students are taught about "Getting to know you" and they learn things in their every day life.

We also tell them to look at the pictures in the book (page-9), and then write something first about themselves, and then speak individually to enhance their speaking and writing skills. The use of pictures is termed as a "warming-up with picture" strategy.

Building Up Personal Rapport Strategy

We ensure building-up a personal rapport with the material meant for the students in two or three classes. A brief warm-up task can build up the students' relationship with the material. For example, unit-9, Food you like! in *New Headway Elementary* (Soars and Soars, 2000, page-66), the starter activity includes the task:

What's your favourite? vegetable? drink?
Compare with a partner, then with the class.

The grammar-review portion of *Complete Course in English* by Dixson, (page-5-6) deals with questions formation, negatives related to present, past and future tense. For example, we see the following sentences:

I am a nurse. Am I a nurse?

This section provides a warm-up task in which the students are focused on the content and are fairly relaxed.

Using Visual Aids Strategy

Unit-2 of *Headway Pre-Intermediate* Student's Book provides the students with pictures of the national flags of six countries, including the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Scotland. By drawing the students' attention to these pictures, we can easily engage them in the class activities. Here, we use the group-work strategy for the students to work in groups of three or four, and ask them to use their background knowledge to identify the countries in the pictures. In justifying the new version of *New Headway Upper-Intermediate* (Soars & Soars, 2002), the Teacher's Book describes how it makes use of recent developments in language teaching such as: "Communicative approaches which emphasize the importance of individual student's contributions to work out rules for themselves, and to express personal opinions" (pg.4). So, rather than a dry presentation of grammar rules, the students are directed back to examples of use from which they can formulate rules for a particular form in that particular context.

Personalizing the Material Strategy

Personalizing the material strategy was enacted by using pictures given by the researchers to the students. The researchers gave students pictures of "how people feel" obtained from the internet search engine Google. Then in two or three classes, we asked the students to look at the pictures of "how do you feel" in Pre-Intermediate Headway Student's Book (pg.44-45). Then the students were asked to do a matching exercise after listening and making a comparison between the pictures given to them by the researchers and the pictures in the book.

Incorporating Local Context Strategy

To use the incorporate local context strategy, page 53 of *Pre-Intermediate Headway* Student's Book tells the student about getting and giving directions. Then the students were asked to get specific directions related to their university campus from a nearby supermarket. We have witnessed a very active lesson where students readily offered interesting information about getting and giving directions related to the university campus.

Group Work/Discussion Strategy

Group Work/Discussion Strategy is employed to deal with difficult topics like faulty parallelism, misplaced and dangling modifiers, and run-on sentences from *English Skills with Reading* by John Langan. For example, the classes were divided into four sections to study sentence fragments, and each of the sections received one type of fragment. After that the students were re-grouped to share information in turns about the text. One person from each of the groups was asked to present their topic to the entire class. The students' discussion was built around a genuine information gap; consequently, the content of each discussion varied slightly. For further exercise, the students were presented with 'A Tale of two millionaires' from *Pre-Intermediate Headway* Student's Book (pg. 50-51). This was pair work in which one stu-

dent read one part of the story and the other the rest of the story. Then they answered the questions together based on the text. This group work strategy allows for more heterogeneity in the classroom.

Inductive Grammar Teaching Strategy

For teaching conditionals to students, we take the listening practice of Unit-12, (pg.94) of *Pre-Intermediate Headway* Student's Book. Learners heard the speech of Nicola, aged 7, and they were asked to do a fill in the blanks exercise on the same page. Next, they were asked to consult units 38, 39, 40, 41 of Intermediate English Grammar by Raymond Murphy. Here, the learners worked out the grammatical rules in the relevant contexts, including from the given pictures of the text. In other classes, to give the students more knowledge of how the conditionals are used, we give the reading passage "Fact or Fantasy?" by Charlotte Warman in *Complete Course* in English by Robert J. Dixson. The students worked out the conditional statements in the grammar review section of the chapter.

All the preceding strategies were used in the classes used for the research, and we closely observed the proceedings and the resulting feedbacks. Although all the strategies worked well, there were also some shortcomings of the strategies that we noted. In one class (students from Eastern University, doing the Writing course), we faced a problem because the divergence of the proficiency level of the students made it almost impossible to use the material effectively in the class. Sometimes in group works, the students completely missed the point that we were trying to achieve in the class as some of them were very passive and reluctant to participate actively in the group. Lack of participation also hindered the smooth operation of some classes, especially in Listening and Speaking courses.

Findings and Analysis

Case-Study 1: In order to develop speaking and listening skills (2-3 classes), we gave the students a listening extract from Pre-Intermediate Headway (Student's book) by John and Liz Soars (2004, OUP) from Unit one ("Getting to know you"-page-06). After they listened to the example, we told them to introduce themselves with necessary modifications with the help of the information they had heard so far. At first they hesitated, but when the teacher started to build the rapport, the students came out of their shells. While introducing themselves, their information had some errors which were duly corrected individually.

From the above mentioned book (unit-1: page-12), we also employed a role play. In connection with this, after they listened to the conversation between Mrs. Snell and Steve, the students were told to think about their own neighbours and with necessary modification of the information, they had to play the roles. A girl played the role of Mrs. Snell and a boy played the role of as Steve.

We deliberately chose this extract to differentiate our culture from the western world. A session of group discussion (guided) followed it and the students felt at ease to hold a discussion contrasting our

own culture with those of western countries and India.

From the same book, Unit-1 (page-13) was chosen to teach Everyday English in social expressions, and it was found that most of the students failed to say 'thanks' in reply to 'how are you?'; they only said 'fine'. Drilling helped them to overcome the problem.

Case-Study 2: For the Reading and Grammar course (2 classes), 'The Lady or the Tiger' (by Frank R. Stockton) from *Complete Course in English* by Robert J. Dixson was used in the class. When the students were asked to read the story carefully, they faced difficulty with the unknown words. The passage was deliberately chosen because students love reading short stories. Without giving the meaning of the new words, the teacher told the students to read the passage carefully and mark the new words with a pencil, and then guess the meanings of the new words in their context. This was done to increase their tolerance of ambiguity. Then the teacher asked the students to provide us their lists of the new words, which he wrote on the board to create a master list. He asked the students to give their inferred meanings, and it was found that some of the students knew the meanings. The teacher then provided the correct meanings, sometimes only needing to modify the inferred meaning a bit. If any difficult words were encountered and nobody knew the answer, the students were advised to consult among themselves through brainstorming to come up with some answers. This brain storming session along with inferring strategy helped the students to understand and learn the new words effectively. They also used dictio-

nary in order to check how closely they could guess the meanings. This was followed by answering the questions from the extract that demanded they find out general and specific information. Grammar was also taught from the extract. The students were asked to notice the use of verbs in the passage and to compare them with the situation. At the end of the lesson, the students were asked to think about what happened next in the story and were asked to present (informal presentation) it in a class. This was a part of the extended work done on the unit (McPherson, 2005).

Case-Study 3: In writing classes, it is always safer to start getting the students acquainted with what is expected from them. So, for teaching story writing (2 classes), the help of Intermediate Headway (Student's book) by John and Liz Soars (2004, OUP) (page: 24; unit: 3), that tells a story, was employed in the class. After they listened to the tape scripts, they were told to produce any interesting story they had in their life. As the teacher went through their works, apart from a few basic grammatical and organizational mistakes, many errors involving faulty parallelism, misplaced modifiers, dangling modifiers, and run-on sentences were found. So the teacher discussed these from *Sentences Skills* by John Langan (Fifth edition, 2005). Later, the students were asked to correct their own errors and then when they rewrote the story, the writings were completely new works from the previous ones. The whole progress of the student-writers was kept in a portfolio for their future enhancement in writing stories.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, it's useful to remember that the material we take into our classrooms is one component of the complex teaching-learning interaction that occurs in our lessons. The course-book or any teaching material for that matter, does not teach itself. What makes the difference is our teaching strategies/approaches, our ability to be enthusiastic, and our ability to establish connections between ourselves, our learners, classroom learning and real-life language use. We can see how important the concept of connectedness is in ELT situations.

By following the aforementioned teaching strategies employed in our present study, we observed a marked improvement in the language skills of the students. Moreover, in the process, the use of the previously mentioned course books has ensured that our students are able to use English accurately, fluently and appropriately. The chosen course-books and employed teaching strategies have provided us with much to bolster the achievements of these aims. The teaching strategies employed by us have been effective because they have provided our students as individual users of language with personal experiences to provide a strong support for effective language learning. We also observed that we are able to make the most of the potential inherent in the materials with which we worked. In our study, we saw that by using the strategy of ensuring personal relevance to the material i.e. by using a brief warm-up task, we were able to change the student's relationship with the material, and we were able to promote a communicative atmosphere.

By using the identifying local relevance strategy, we find clear evidence of the enhanced attention and involvement of the students in various classrooms; moreover, the students readily offered fascinating accounts/stories on various issues which showcased their spoken skills. By working with a variety of tasks with a degree of open-endedness, we provided opportunities for the students to find that they are able to use English to establish and convey their own meanings. By allowing for heterogeneity in the classroom/group-work strategy, we found that the students regroup to share information about their texts and to bridge their genuine information gaps. The whole process makes the employed tasks very interesting as our students' individual experiences and their specific learning needs are accommodated and capitalized upon. By using the building up personal rapport strategy and using the visual aids strategy, we found that the students were able to maximize their oral proficiency as a learning priority as they successfully formulated rules for a particular form in a particular context.

Sometimes, a list of unfamiliar words is presented at the start of a lesson and highlighted. In terms of a teaching vocabulary strategy, we find that by rewriting or explaining the text of unfamiliar materials helps the students learn successfully as the improvement can be seen in their academic success, and the whole process helps lighten the 'language load' of the students.

The language bath strategy enhances the warm-up strategy by involving the teacher in doing the initial talking about a new topic and students listening before any brainstorming or other activity is assigned.

In our present study, this strategy proved to be effective with English speaking students as it prepared students to participate by helping to familiarize them with vocabulary and allowing them to develop their thoughts on a topic.

For all these strategies, reflection on the teaching process is a key way by which teachers can evaluate their implementation of tools, i.e. the strategies, in order to refine or enhance the interaction of teacher, learner and textbook (TLT). Sometimes the students themselves can provide the sources of materials for the language classroom. It is essential, however, to remember that a course/text book forms only a part of a very complex and intertwining process of language learning/teaching. Taking into account the individual differences in the class and the potential aid a material can provide, an instructor can reinforce the use of a textbook in a class in even more effective ways. And what makes the key difference is how we implement it: "our ability to enthuse and to establish connections between ourselves, our learners, classroom learning and real-life language use" (McPherson, 2005). It is, thus, very vital to remember that the course book is not a 'sacred text' (Graves, 2000), rather it is a document to be thought about and to be experimented with. So for enhancing the triangular Interaction of Teacher-Learner-Textbook, the best strategy is to corroborate the language teaching with life.

REFERENCES

Allwright, R. L. (1981). "What do we want teaching materials for?", *ELT Journal* 36(1), 5-18.

Cohen, E. (1994). *Designing Groupwork: Strategies for the Heterogeneous Classroom*. Global Learning Communities. NYC, NY.

Eastwood, J. (2000). *Oxford Practice Grammar*. New York: OUP.

Graves, K. (2000). *Designing language courses*. Boston: Heinle and Heinle.

Hutchinson, T. & Hutchinson, E. G. (1997). *Textbook as agent of change*. OUP.

Johnson, K. (1982). *Communicative Syllabus Design and Methodology*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Langan, J. (2002). *English Skills with Reading*. (Fifth Edition). New York: Mc Graw- Hill.

Langan, J. (2005). *Sentence Skills*. (Sixth Edition). New York: Mc Graw- Hill.

McPherson, K. (2005). "Maximising student attention to classroom learning materials". Paper presented in the CamTESOL Conference on English Langauge Teaching.

Murphy, R. (2004). *Intermediate English Grammar*. CUP.

Prabhu, N. (1983). "Procedural Syllabuses". Paper presented at the RELC Seminar. Singapore: Regional Language Centre.

Richards, J. C. and Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: CUP.

Soars, L. & Soars, J. (2000). *New Headway Elementary*. OUP.

Soars, L. & Soars, J. (2000). *New Headway Pre-Intermediate*. OUP.

Soars, L. & Soars, J. (2003). *New Headway Intermediate*. OUP.

Soars, L. & Soars, J. (2004). *New Headway Upper-Intermediate*. OUP.

Thornbury, S. & Meddings, L. (2002). "Using a course book the Dogme way". *Modern English Teacher*, 11(1), 36-40.