A STUDY ON SYNECTIC MODEL OF TEACHING FOR ENRICHING VOCABULARY TO ENHANCE WRITING SKILL OF B.COM STUDENTS IN TAMIL NADU – AN EMPERICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the effects of the Synectic model on enriching vocabulary by improving writing skills. The research group consists of 1st year (2nd semester) students from B.Com. A total of 40 students participated in the study, 20 in the control and 20 in the experimental group. Pretest and posttest measures were undertaken for the collected data. The Synectic model was implemented for ten sessions in the experimental group. Malhotra and Kumari's language based creativity test was used for data analysis. When the best outcomes were compared, a significant difference was found between the control and the experimental groups with respect to creativity and efficiency in vocabulary. Results from the pre-test and post-test comparison of the experimental group revealed that there is a significant difference in creativity and efficiency in vocabulary learning. The vocabulary of the experimental group students has been enhanced from pretest to posttest after implementing Synectic model of teaching by the investigator.

Keywords: English Language Teaching (ELT), Vocabulary, Writing skills and Synectic model.

1. INTRODUCTION

Paul Meara (1980) described vocabulary learning as a 'disregarded part of language learning' but vocabulary acquisition has become the most active fields of second language acquisition research (Lightbrown & Spada, 2006). In this sense, teachers are responsible for expanding the use of conventional methods of teaching vocabulary to modern forms and strategies, in order to develop positive attitudes for students towards vocabulary learning and for inspiring students not only to acquire new vocabulary but also to practice it longer. This study uses the Synectic model as a vocabulary teaching approach that has been developed and generally used to improve creativity and problem solving skills.

The Synectic model is named after the Greek word "synecticos", which means 'to grasp together what seems different' (Gunter, Estes & Mintz 2007). The founder of Synectic model, Gordon, who defines it as an action theory, bases the entire theory on a conviction that parallel and metaphorical thought can be used to teach the creative process (Keyes, 2006). Gordon has established and built techniques that innovative individuals use unconsciously in teachable ways (Davis & Rimm, 1998).

1.1 History of English Language Teaching (ELT)

English teachers usually guide the foreign language either by explaining the meaning or by translating the text into the regional language in English. This kind of teaching assists the learner in understanding the book and decreases the teacher's job in describing the text. But the learners are simply incompetent to wean themselves away from the mother tongue, because the instructor has also made him more reliant on mother tongue as well.

English has historically been taught using the translation process of grammar. In the late 1950s, structurally graded syllabus was implemented into the state systems for teaching English as a major innovation. The idea was that language teaching could be systematized by organizing its inputs, as it might be the teaching of a subject like arithmetic or physics. British linguists argued that the use of languages required something more than grammatical skills; the word 'communicative skills' was used to indicate this extra dimension. The attempt to achieve communicative skills requires the existence of grammatical skills.

1.2 Traditional teaching methods

The conventional way of providing education was by recitation and memorization. The way traditional methods are taught makes it possible for students to reward their efforts, to use class periods efficiently and to use clear rules to manage their behavior. Traditional teaching methods were based on existing customs which were successfully used in schools for many years. The teachers shared the information and applied behavioral expectations.

1.21 The Grammar translation method

The method of translation by grammar has a long tradition in English instruction. Grammar awareness forms the heart, and the most basic type of exercise is conversion. A great authority is used in the study of written texts in classical languages. Language is focused on the grammatical system. The sentence is the key unit of reference, and it must regulate its morphological elements according to a sequence of authoritarian laws.

1.22 The Reading Method

The reading ability could be correlated with the rate of growth in vocabulary that has a substantial impact on a child's exposure to new words. Learning through reading may affect vocabulary as measured in both oral and written activities, because words acquired by reading text are at least partially accessible to individuals for both written and oral use. Vocabulary frequency studies are the basis of graded readership. The method's goal is to provide the learners with basic language skills and reading skills. The procedure used is Oral introduction and L1 that allows for elucidations and intensive and extensive reading exercises to give meaning.

1.3 Importance of vocabulary

Language is important for learner in order to understand the language. Mastery of the language is required to communicate our ideas and to understand the words of others.

Vocabulary is a set of expression; possessing a wide range of vocabulary helps a person to articulate easily and communicate well with clarity. A linguistic vocabulary is also identical to a thinking vocabulary that helps a person to think correctly about descriptive thoughts. A vocabulary can be receptive or productive.

Receptive Vocabulary

Receptive vocabulary is words that are recognized and understood by the learners when used in context they see or encounter, but do not use it when speaking and writing.

Productive Vocabulary

Productive vocabulary is the words that the learners understand and are able to correctly express and use constructively in speech and writing.

Vocabulary instruction is an important part of learning the foreign language because the meanings of new words are illustrated very often. It is also central to language teaching and important to language learners. Recent research suggests that teaching vocabulary can be problematic because many teachers do not have faith in vocabulary teaching and sometimes do not know where to start.

1.4 Importance of writing skills

English is a common language that is understood throughout the world and used for communication. Writing is a skill in literacy, and a complex form of self-expression. Due to the lingual and cultural differences English writing is a difficult task for the students. Such discrepancies can lead to grammatical errors, compositional problems and inadequacy of presenting ideas in English. Writing is a highly complex activity involving multiple component processes, requiring both declarative and procedural awareness and a conceptual understanding of the nature and purpose of writing. Students may

only learn to write when they have adequate pre communication input, when they have something to write about and when they know what they want to write about. In reality, learning writing skills takes a conscious effort and practice to write, create, and evaluate ideas. Students may have trouble writing clearly in a second language, because their native language may have different tense requirements and sentence structure placement.

The most serious problems in grammatical rules were that of vocabulary loss, L1 intrusion and misunderstanding. The students encounter writing problems as they face reading difficulties. The complexities in writing English are also interrelated. Teachers should follow a diverse approach in teaching composition and creative methods of teaching vocabulary, and should train students in word selection.

Writing is considered a skill that is not easily mastered but slowly learned as a result of significant improvements in the basic composition skills of a writer. The learner should develop his / her writing skills and exercise self-regulatory or strategic behavior.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The goal of the review is to critically evaluate the section of published information by summing up, classifying and comparing previous research reports, literature reviews and theoretical papers.

2.1 Definitions of vocabulary

Richards and Schmidt (2002) define vocabulary as ''a set of lexemes (the smallest unit in the meaning system of a language that can be distinguished from other similar units), including single words, compound words and idioms''.

Kamil and Heibert (2005), vocabulary can be commonly described as awareness of words or word meaning. They affirm that vocabulary learning is the core component of language and without vocabulary; no one can learn any language. In the foreign language learning process, the readers are required to identify a considerable number of vocabulary items and the contextual meanings employed in a passage. A better understanding of the vocabulary would produce a better understanding of the whole meaning of the text. The information regarding the meaning of words is called vocabulary.

2.2 Methodologies in Vocabulary Teaching

Richards and Rodgers (2001), grammar translation method was first introduced to modem language teaching in the United States as the Prussian Method. The goals of this method were to prepare students to read and write classical material. Naturally, the vocabulary was included in classes which were conducted by this method. Vocabulary selection, according to Richards and Rodgers, is based on the type of the reading text being used, and words are taught through bilingual word lists, dictionary and memorization.

Zimmerman (1997), the role of vocabulary was limited to time when a word was used to illustrate a grammatical rule. When vocabulary difficulties were addressed, the explanation was mostly based on Latin and Greek etymologies and these roots were considered the most accurate source of word meaning.

2.3 Studies related to the Synectic Model of Teaching

Martis Anandi (1990) attempted to find out the effectiveness of the Synectic model in developing 'making strange familiar' (MSF) competencies and also its effectiveness in developing scientific and 54 general creativity of graduate students. It was found that the training in MSF significantly improved verbal, non-verbal and scientific flexibility and originality of the trainees.

Sucheta (1996) studied instructional and nurturing effects of Synectic model of teaching on creative ability in Hindi and English languages. It was found that Synectic model of teaching had its effect on improvement in all four factors of language creativity i.e. fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration. The model of teaching was effective in improving

general creative capacity of the students. There was significant increase in group cohesiveness. The results were similar in all three grades.

Krishna Murthy (2003) took up a study to find out the effectiveness of the first strategy ('making familiar strange') of Synectic model through teaching of physics in developing creative thinking ability. 40 students of a section of VIII grade of a school formed the sample. Pre-test, post-test experimental design was followed. It was found that there was a significant increase in fluency, flexibility and originality components of creativity. It was equally effective for both boys and girls.

Shreyashi Paltasingh (2008) conducted a study on "Impact of Synectic model of teaching in life science to develop creativity among pupils in Banpur town of Orissa". Jalota's group test of general mental ability was used to measure intelligence and Mehdi's verbal test of creative thinking was used to find out creativity. It found that there is significant difference between Synectic model of teaching and traditional method of teaching life science in development of creative thinking ability of the students.

Sesadeba Pany (2009) conducted a study on "Effectiveness of Synectic model of teaching in enhancing creativity, academic achievement and achievement motivation of learners". The study was done in two primary school of Bhubaneswar city. The experimental group was taught by the Make Familiar Strange (MFS) approach of Synectic model and control group was taught by traditional method. Comprehensive achievement test on general science and achievement motivation inventory were developed and standardized by the investigator. It was found that the Making Familiar Strange (MFS) approach of Synectic model found to be effective in enhancing the 59 creative thinking of the learners. But it didn't prove to be effective in enhancing the achievement motivation of the learners.

3. METHODOLOGY

The present research is an experimental research using the intact sample configuration with pre, post and retention tests of control and experimental groups. "The key issues with the design of the intact groups are that participants in comparative groups were neither randomly chosen nor randomly allocated to groups" (Nunan & Bailey, 2009). "Intact classes are typically and sometimes used for ease studies" (Mackey & Gass, 2005). The most ecologically stable venue for the study can be the actual classrooms. In this study the Synectic model, a new approach for vocabulary learning is used in intact class design for the best research analysis.

3.1 Method of study

The aim of the study is to see the creativity and achievement of 1st year B.com students in English by using a Synectic module prepared for teaching English. To assess the effectiveness of the Synectic model of the teaching technique, the investigator examines two simple pretest and posttest. The researcher prepares a regular classroom work through a lesson on the MSF Synectic module. The syllabus was analyzed and the topics were included in the selected topics. The selected English topics were analyzed and the MSF Module Plan was prepared. The overall plan was prepared to be implemented with available resources and time estimates. Each topic chosen was analyzed and the objectives were determined. Ten sessions of the investigation were scheduled.   Each session was framed for forty-five minutes. Ten modules of lessons were prepared in consultation with the supervisor and the senior educator. The time required for each specific objective was estimated and allocated. Necessary study materials and creative exercise sheets, brainstorming exercises were prepared and carried out. A total of 40 students participated in the study. The researcher took 20 students in the control group and 20 students in the experimental group. The standard conventional teaching method was planned for the Students in the Control Group. Synectic teaching technique model was used for experimental group students.

Before presenting the subject of English to the students, the researcher explained the importance of English and the need for creativity and achievement. The investigator scheduled 10 teaching sessions, which would take 45 minutes per teaching session. The researcher conducts the pretest 5 minutes before each session begins and then implements the Synectic module teaching plan.   Brainstorming session is held until the teaching program is implemented. The brainstorming

session is scheduled for 10 minutes. The researcher introduces the experimental group of 1st year B.com students to the principles of English based on the MSF Synectic model. The teacher expects students to cooperate more closely with him/her. In support of the idea, students are provided with an idea map, related activities, and some creative exercises. After applying the MSF Synectic model of the teaching technique program to experimental group students, the investigator performed a posttest for 5 minutes. The investigator sets up a design device with the supervision of the supervisor. It consists of three measures. They are poetic diction test, the dialogue writing test, and the vocabulary style test. Each student will be tested for creativity and their creativity will be evaluated using the following components: fluency, flexibility, originality and Elaboration. In consultation with the supervisor and the experts in the field of English, the investigator prepared a report on the English Performance Test Problem. The research question paper on the achievement of English consists of questions that focus on the principles taught by the investigator. It is made up of 100 questions. The tool was checked and developed for its reliability and validity. The Investigator has also implemented all methods of research to monitor students in classes. The only difference is that students in the control group are taught using the traditional teaching system.

Table 3.1 Research Design

NATURE OF THE STUDY	VARIABLES	SAMPLE	TOOLS USED	STATISTICS USED
Experimental study	**Creativity** (creativity components) Fluency Flexibility Originality Elaboration	80 1st year (II semester) B.com students	Language based Creativity test (S.P. Malhotra & Sucheta kumari) SMT – Pretest and SMT – Posttest on English structured by the investigator, achievement test and retention test.	Descriptive analysis. Mean. S.D score, group ratio. 't' test and 'F' ratio ANOVA. Multiple regression analysis.
	Treatments 1) 1) Teaching through MSF – Synectic model teaching technique) 2) Conventional method of teaching			

3.2 Objectives of the study

The primary objective of this study is to measure the impact of the Synectic model on vocabulary enhancement.

The secondary objectives of the study are:

- To study the impact of fluency on vocabulary enhancement.
- To study the impact of flexibility on vocabulary enhancement.
- To study the impact of originality on vocabulary enhancement.
- To study the impact of elaboration on vocabulary enhancement.

3.3 Research Question and Hypotheses Formulated

RQ.1: Does the dimensions viz., Fluency, Flexibility, Originality and Elaboration has impact on synectic model of teaching for vocabulary enhancement?

$H_{1.1}$: Fluency has no impact on synectic model of teaching for vocabulary enhancement

H₁.₂: Flexibility has no impact on synectic model of teaching for vocabulary enhancement

H₁.₃: Originality has no impact on synectic model of teaching for vocabulary enhancement

H₁.₄: Elaboration has no impact on synectic model of teaching for vocabulary enhancement

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRERATION

Data analysis and interpretation are the mechanism by which the information collected is given importance and the assumptions, meaning and implications of the results are decided. This is an important and exciting step in the research process.

According to C.R.Kothari (1989), "The term analysis refers to the calculation of actions and the search for relationship patterns between groups of data". Analysis involves estimating unknown population parameter values and testing hypotheses to draw conclusions. The collected data for this study is organized, analyzed and interpreted.

4.1 SYNECTIC MODEL OF TEACHING ENHANCES VOCABULARY LEARNING OF 1ST YEAR B.COM STUDENTS

The Mean, Standard Deviation was determined for the control and experimental group in terms of vocabulary enhancement tests in English and the same is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Summary of Results of Synectic Model of Teaching (SMT) gain index, vocabulary enhancement test on control and experimental group in English

Variables	Group			
	Control		Experiment	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Fluency	16.13	2.94	21.24	5.27
Flexibility	5.14	1.01	7.34	1.27
Originality	15.94	2.51	18.63	4.35
Elaboration	7.21	1.08	9.12	1.33
Academic achievement score	32.31	3.27	37.37	5.02
SMT gain index value	19.00	6.24	21.04	12.87

Table 4.1 displays the mean and SD scores of the creativity components; Academic achievement score and SMT gain index value of the control and experimental groups of 1st year B.com students. With regard to fluency, the mean scores of the experimental group (21.24) of the 1st year B.com students were higher than the control group (16.13). With regard to Flexibility, the mean scores of the experimental group (7.34) of 1st year B.com students were higher than the Control group (5.14). With regard to Originality, the mean scores of the experimental group (18.63) of 1st year B.com students were higher than the control group (15.94). With regard to Elaboration, the mean scores of the experimental group (9.12) of 1st year B.com students were higher than the control group (7.21).

From the table 4.1, it is found that with regard to the Academic Achievement score of English, the mean scores of the control group (32.31) were lower than the experimental group (37.37) of the 1st year B.com students. Here, the experimental group has given better results in the achievement test than the control group.

Table 4.1 also indicates, with regard to the SMT gain index value the mean score of the control group (19.00) were lower than the experimental group (21.04) of the 1st year B.com students. It could be concluded that the Synectic model of teaching technique that was applied by the investigator to the experimental group of 1st year B.com students was effective to learn the selected English concepts and vocabulary.

4.2 MEAN SCORE OF CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUP OF 1st YEAR B.COM STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO CREATIVITY TESTS.

The Mean, Standard Deviation was determined for the control and experimental group in terms of Creativity tests in English and the same shown in the Table 4.2

Table 4.2

Summary of results of creativity test score of control and experimental group of 1st year B.Com students

Creativity tests	Group				t-value	P value
	Control		Experiment			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Poetic diction test	5.77	1.93	8.94	1.73	4.764	.000
Dialogue writing test	20.24	4.39	34.57	4.73	5.745	.000
Vocabulary style Test	14.54	2.34	25.47	2.67	9.764	.000
Total Creativity test Score	46.92	4.37	67.74	6.53	11.567	.000

Significant at 5% level

From table 4.2, the P-value of Control and Experimental group of 1st year B.com Students with regard to the total creativity test score is lesser than 0.05 and hence significant at 5% level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant difference between the control group and experimental group of 1st year B.com English students with respect to the creativity tests.

4.3 MEAN SCORE OF CONTROL GROUP AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUP OF 1st YEAR B.COM STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO SMT– PRE TEST

The Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value were determined for the control and experimental group with regard to SMT Pretest and the same are given in Table 4.3

Table 4.3

Summary of Results of Control and Experimental group with respect to SMT – Pre test

Group	Mean	SD	t-value	P value
Control	15.65	2.34		
Experiment	25.12	3.76	8.787	.000

Significant at 5% level

From table 4.3, the P value of the SMT pretest is lesser than 0.05 and hence, significant at 5% level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is significant difference between the control and experimental group of 1st year B.com Students with respect to SMT pretest.

4.4 MEAN SCORE OF CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUP OF 1st YEAR B.COM ENGLISH STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO SMT-POST TEST

The Mean, SD and t-value were determined for Control and Experimental group with respect to SMT Posttest and the same are shown in Table 4.4

Table 4.4

Summary of Results of Control and Experimental group with respect to SMT – Post test

Group	Mean	SD	t-value	P value
Control	32.17	4.93		
Experiment	47.83	11.63	5.324	.000

Significant at 5% level

From the table 4.4, the P value of SMT posttest is lesser than 0.05 and hence significant at 5% level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant difference between Control and Experimental group students of 1st year B.com Students with regard to SMT posttest.

5. FINDINGS

• From table 4.1, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the control and experimental group students with respect to creativity components, academic achievement and SMT gain index. This shows that the Synectic model has helped the students to learn the vocabulary efficiently.

• From the table 4.2, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the control and experimental group students with respect to creativity tests. This shows that the Synectic model has helped the students to perform better in their achievement test.

• From table 4.3, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the control and experimental group students with respect to SMT-pretest. This shows that the Synectic model of teaching technique that was applied by the investigator to the experimental group of 1st year B.com English students was effective to learn the selected English concepts and enrich their vocabulary.

- From table 4.4, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the control and experimental group students with respect to SMT-posttest. This shows that the Synectic model of teaching technique that was applied by the investigator to the experimental group of 1st year B.com English students was effective to learn and enrich vocabulary through writing skills.

6. CONCLUSION

This study results suggested that the Synectic model was effective in improving the vocabulary learning performance of the first year (2nd semester) B.Com students. The Synectic model can also be useful for better vocabulary learning by differentiating conventional methods of working on books and articles into games such as researching and repeating vocabulary. The majority of students in the experimental group were interested in the new model during implementation of the model. However, it was not an easy method to enforce/implement the model. The teachers and students needed a long time to prepare. Through the implementation, it was found that the more proficient learners in English didn't require assistance from their teachers to enable a more robust implementation. In this study it was also proved that the learning through Synectic model allow students to have better performance in vocabulary enhancement. The study findings lead to the assumption that poetic imagination is required to grow. This should be done to research the various teaching styles and their role in promoting innovation. A specific innovation test can be created. Certain Indian language experiments can be developed and longitudinal research can be carried out on the efficacy of utilizing the Synectic teaching model, enhancing linguistic development at various educational stages. Therefore, efforts to improve vocabulary skills among the learners should be made by effective teaching techniques such as Synectic model of teaching.

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