

ELTWeekly

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Edited and Published by

Tarun Patel

Bhaskar Pandya

Kaushal Kotadia

Rajesh Bharvad

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Word of the week: Webquest

A webquest is an activity that requires learners to use the Internet in order to complete a task. Webquests can extend over an entire course, several classes or be integrated into a single lesson.

Example

The learners are discussing the topic of UFOs. They use a webpage of eyewitness accounts to answer true or false statements. They then choose one account to explain to other learners. They finish by writing their own article about UFOs.

In the classroom

Webquests are a useful tool but some teachers are cautious of technology-based resources. Because of this, webquest lessons are often planned with non-technological, emergency activities included.

[retrieved from <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk>]

Video: Shaping the Way We Teach English: Module 02, Building Language Awareness

The focus in Module 1 was on the importance of contextualizing language. In Module 2, the focus is on the need to be aware of the specific language within that context. That is, the awareness, the attention, and the noticing of the particular features of language that add to learning. This means that it is important to pay attention to language form, for example, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. However, teaching these formal aspects of language through rules, exercises, memorization, and drills does not appear to be entirely effective. Research shows that selectively focusing on aspects of language use within a given context can be even more effective. Language awareness is the name for this kind of focus. And, because language awareness is a focus on the pragmatic uses of language, the language input must be in context. Two additional requirements of language awareness are that: * The context should reflect language that learners are most likely to use. * And, language practice in context should be accompanied by conscious effort and reflection on that practice.

An innovative offering from the Office of English Language Programs, Shaping the Way We Teach English, is a 14-module teacher training video series developed and produced in cooperation with the University of Oregon.

Watch the video at <http://www.eltweekly.com/elt-newsletter/2010/10/72-video-shaping-the-way-we-teach-english-module-02-building-language-awareness/>

Book of the week: 'Working with English Language Learners: Answers to Teachers' Top Ten Questions' by Stephen Cary

If you teach English language learners, you probably have too many unanswered questions to count.

- How do I assess a student's English?
- How do I get my reluctant speakers to speak English?
- How do I teach grade-level content to English beginners?

Fortunately, second language acquisition expert and teacher coach Stephen Cary has answers to your most pressing concerns. In *Working with English Language Learners* he responds to teachers' ten most frequent and most problematic questions with essential information, ready-to-use ideas, and helpful new professional development supports.

Cary takes on the big questions in *Working with English Language Learners, Second Edition*. He answers them thoroughly with:

Classroom Stories: examples drawn from actual classes that demonstrate outstanding ELL practices.

Reflections: coaching commentary that highlights key teaching strategies and ties together theory and practice.

Discussion & Application: professional reflection questions and action items, new to the second edition, that encourage strong, responsive ELL practices.

With all this plus updated and expanded lists of teacher resources, ELL references and acronyms, new samples of student work, helpful tools, templates, and self-assessment rubrics for teachers, *Working with English Language Learners, Second Edition*, is perfect for any professional development setting or for self-study. Read it and, finally, get your most important ELL questions answered.

About Stephen Cary

Stephen Cary is the author of the Heinemann titles *Working with English Language Learners, Second Edition: Answers to Teachers' Top Ten Questions* (2007) and *Going Graphic: Comics at Work in the Multilingual Classroom* (2004) and provides professional development through Heinemann Speakers. A second language learner specialist, Stephen has worked as a teacher, resource teacher, and administrator. Dr. Cary currently consults in schools throughout the U.S. and abroad and serves as adjunct faculty in the University of San Francisco's teacher education and international/multicultural education programs. As a consultant, Cary offers a variety of workshops, in-class demo activities, teacher coaching, and program planning and evaluation services. His other work includes parent education and involvement programs, Spanish language programs for teachers, family/community oral history projects, and teacher training institutes on peer coaching, CLAD (Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development), and CALLA (Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach).

Get more information and buy this book by clicking this link:

<http://www.eltweekly.com/elt-newsletter/2010/10/72-book-of-the-week-working-with-english-language-learners-answers-to-teachers-top-ten-questions-by-stephen-cary/>

Article: 'Pronunciation – the poor relation?' by Adrian Underhill

The point I want to make is that pronunciation teaching has been neglected and that we have all lost out through this. In spite of the development of interesting teaching materials by various people it remains the poor relation of language teaching, poorly related to the rest of what happens in the language classroom. I want to suggest two reasons why I think this is, and two corresponding ways of overcoming this and moving forward. In the second article I will pick up on the practical side of this and explore a strategy for action in the classroom, for laying the foundations of a mutually enriching integration of pronunciation with the rest of language. I intend to keep the concerns of NNS (non native speaker) teachers very much in mind, though I hope this will apply to pretty well everyone.

Is pronunciation the Cinderella of language teaching?

While much has changed in the last few decades in how we teach grammar, vocabulary, collocation, context and meaning I suggest that pronunciation is still rooted in an essentially behaviourist paradigm of listen, identify, discriminate and repeat. This is not wrong, simply insufficient, and so for most students and probably most teachers pronunciation remains a mysterious zone where the rules are not clear and it is difficult to make progress, or even to know if you have”...

Read the complete article at <http://www.elweekly.com/elt-newsletter/2010/10/72-article-pronunciation-the-poor-relation-by-adrian-underhill/>

Research Paper: 'Emotional Intelligence: The Key To Language Learning And Social Interaction' by Dr. G.A. Ghanshyam

This paper is submitted by Dr. G.A. Ghanshyam, Head, Dept. of English, Govt. M.L. Shukla College, Seepat, Bilaspur (C.G.) India 495555

The aptitudes you need to succeed start with intellectual horsepower- but people need emotional competence, too, to get the full potential of their talents. The reason we don't get people's full potential is emotional incompetence. (WEI 26)
Man being a social animal lives in a society wherein communication is the important link that links him to his fellow beings and society. When we speak of communication, the most important thing that comes to mind is the crucial role that language plays in communication. Language is the basis of communication; for communication to be effective, the language in use has to be clear, coherent, apt and most importantly expressive.

Expression is an important factor in language use. What we feel, for whom we feel, intensity of feelings; our emotions are in fact a key element in expression through language. Communication depends on socialinteraction and soft skills as much as it depends on language use. It is very important that for communication to be effective the right stress, punctuation, voice modulation, pitch, etc. have to be correctly incorporated into language use. These are greatly influenced by our emotions or feelings.

EI and ELT are co-related fields that have been a subject of study in the recent years. Popularised by Daniel Goleman in the mid-90s, the field of ELT has been revolutionized by the concept that takes into consideration for the first time the essential emotional quotient inherent in communication. Goleman defines emotional intelligence as “knowing what one’s feelings are and using that knowledge to make good decisions.” (EI 9). Goleman has himself chalked out five basic components of EI:

- Self-Awareness: The person recognizes his/her emotions and is able to handle them more appropriately and judiciously. This also makes the person aware of one’s own positive attributes, strengths, negative aspects and weaknesses.
- Self-Regulation: When a person becomes aware of one self, he/she can handle and regulate his/her feelings in a better and appropriate manner. The person becomes more responsible and develops positive attributes of novelty, flexibility, integrity and honesty.
- Motivation: Better level of EI makes a person positive and better equipped to handle failures and shortcomings for then he/she instead of blaming others or wallowing in self pity tries to overcome the situation in a positive manner. Optimism is engendered as are the qualities of excellence, perseverance, determination and cooperation.
- Empathy: Self awareness leads to an awareness and understanding of others that leads to more fruitful relationships. Group qualities are fostered and aids in the overall development of the individual as well as the group or institution.
- Adeptness in Relationships: Making and maintaining relationships require a sound level of EI. Self awareness and empathy aid the individual to understand oneself and others better, and thus work towards an amicable and complementary decision

thereby avoiding conflict and confrontation. Managerial ability, team work, leadership quality are garnered as a result by forming and maintaining relationships.

Communication is not a barren field but highly charged with emotions and feelings. Language students need to be trained not only in the technicalities of the target language but also in the nuances of it that can only be imbibed through proper recognition and employment of correct EI. The incorporation of EI in ELT takes into consideration the very basic essentials for language learning and enhances:

- **Social Skills**

Correct use of language is a necessary and crucial factor in developing effective and successful social skills. We live in society, and interaction on a daily basis involves interaction at various levels; family, friends, colleagues, superiors, juniors, business associates, etc. Communication and more precisely correct and effective communication or the lack of it can make or break a deal or relationship.

- **Enthusiasm**

Recognition and employment of EQ in ELT results in a greater level of motivation and interest for the language learning process amongst the students. Familiarity with the inherent nuances of the language enables the learners to be more enthusiastic towards the language learning process that they can emulate in their practical life and relations.

- **Expression**

Expression being a key element in communication, EQ helps in enhancing it further through correct and proper emotional content. It helps to identify and employ correct language form to convey the message intended effectively and efficiently.

- **Bonding**

Effective communication skills aided by EI helps the person to bond better and stronger in his/her relationships, both personal as well as professional.

EI is an important field of study that is not only helpful for the language students but also for the language teacher him/herself. In a language classroom the very first obstacle that the teacher and student face is the teacher himself/herself. EI helps the English language teacher to break this initial barrier and bond with the students. A higher level of EI in the language teacher gives him/her the pre-requisite awareness and sensitivity towards the students' mental status and their apprehension, making him/her more students oriented and better equipped to handle their emotional requirement.

A sensitive and aware teacher will always utilize his/her EI to make the learning process more learners oriented, through innovative and sensitized methods of teaching. It will enable him/her to handle the students' hesitation, fear and lack of enthusiasm, and overcome the same. He/she can incorporate various strategies and methods to cultivate a higher level of EI amongst the students and this is possible only when the teacher himself/herself has the requisite EI level.

The role of EI is crucial not only for the language classroom and the language learning process but is an important life skill that an individual requires to succeed in life. Language classroom specifically prepares a student, whatever the area of his/her specification might be to put into use or communicate his/her expertise effectively and efficiently. Unless one is able to convey one's knowledge, it's of no use or value. Emotional competence is a must and as Goleman says, "An emotional competence is a learned capability based on emotional intelligence that results in outstanding performance at work." (WEI 28).

EI or emotional intelligence thereby helps and contributes to a more conducive learning experience within the precincts of the language classroom as well as in the world outside. Contemporary global market is flooded with an abundance of skills and expertise but it is the presence of soft skills and EI that adds an edge to one's expertise and potentiality.

The foremost thing in language learning before embarking on any novel method is to understand the aim of learning the language, which in this case is English. Inclusive of the personal and professional aspects of our lives, the basic aim of language learning is to communicate; to interact socially and EI is the key to engender a positive, fruitful and effective interaction.

According to Goleman EI, “. . . seems to be largely learned, and it continues to develop as we go through life and learn from our experiences . . .” (WEI 8). As such EI is a factor or quality that can be learned or developed through proper training and guidance. A few guidelines that can be incorporated in a language classroom to learn the language as well as to stimulate the level of EI are:

v Plan – The areas and the means through which EI is to be developed in an ELT class needs to identified and marked out clearly. A proper plan is to be chalked out, wherein the process needs to be clearly laid out in the form of well organized steps or levels.

Example:-

Area: Team work.

Means: Role play. (Drama)

- Assess – Prior to the implementation of the plan, the class has to be assessed for its level of competence, IQ and EQ/EI. Proper assessment is crucial to the overall selection of process as a basic knowledge of language is required

as well as the strengths and weakness recognized in EI for potential areas of improvement or inculcation of skills.

- Motivate – Garnering an interest in the process and instilling a degree of interest is a must. The learners’ have to be motivated towards the project or team work. Confidence should be instilled in the learners’ mind as to their ability to effectively undertake and complete the work.
- Practice – Any kind of change or the process of learning itself cannot be expected to yield results overnight. Sufficient time and practice, both have to be given for the learners’ to incorporate EI in themselves and in their language. Continued practice that is practically oriented should be the indispensable feature of an EI and ELT training program.
- Change – A shift in attitude is required to usher in a shift in attitude and aptitude. However before aiming to bring in a change in the students’ learning it is essential that the teacher needs to direct the change towards his/her own self. The change should be in accordance with and as per the plan of action to be implemented in order to engender positive and tangible EI development.
- Feedback – Any program or training requires constant monitoring and feedback to ensure that it’s working as per the plan and to make us aware of shortcomings if any. Feedback will not only ensure that the program is running efficiently and on the right track but it will also help us overcome the obstacles and pitfalls in the process as well as boost our self confidence for progress made.
- Reinforce – As per the feedback received, the training program has to be reinforced with renewed enthusiasm and positivity through encouragement and motivation. Interest is to be sustained throughout so that the learners’

don't get distracted from the course undertaken; it has to be refueled on regular interval to generate better results.

- Evaluate – The level of competence that the students' originally had before the training and that they acquired after should be ascertained based on proper and viable evaluation process. Like the process of feedback that simultaneously follows the program, evaluation should be at the beginning and completion stages of the program and can be determined through projects, tests or reports.

The teaching process that incorporates EI into ELT benefits the students' and the learning process tremendously. It not only develops a healthy and positive attitude amongst the students' but also improves the teacher-student interaction, better coordination and understanding. It prepares the students' for life by enabling them to recognize, handle and express their emotions better and in an improved manner, thereby reinforcing them with the ability to handle the pressures of work and life, overcome stress and anxiety and bond better with their environment and society in a positive and productive manner.

The training program for a language classroom by incorporating EI along with ELT can follow certain guidelines as per mentioned above and innovate and reinvent as per their requirement and situation. A few techniques that can be incorporated within the program can include:

- **Introduction: informal and formal**
Helps to overcome their initial inhibitions and hesitations and works as a kind of ice breaker amongst the students' themselves as well as between the teacher and the students'.
- **Role play**
Proper recognition and expression of emotions can be learned and practiced through role play.
- **Group discussion**
Group discussion will train the students' to work in a team. It will help them to express themselves as well as train them to listen. Coordination, teamwork, leadership qualities and cooperation are the qualities that will be imbibed through the task.
- **Projects**
Projects should involve reports and presentation, and should primarily aim for practical approach.
- **Conversation: face to face and telephonic**
Conversational skills can be worked upon and improved through suggestive conversational simulations in the class. It will improve their EI while talking on a one to one level. Correct verbal as well as non-verbal skills can be improved and fostered amongst the students'.
- **Practical tasks: written and oral**
Expression is not restrained to speaking alone, the students' need to be trained for better expression in the written form as well. Practical tasks apart from the ones mentioned above can be used to enhance their written and oral skills in language use through a proper representation and expression of emotions.

Emotional intelligence or quotient (EI/EQ) is an important feature of communication. Communication is the bridge that connects us to our fellow beings, to society; as such it is the basis of social interaction. If language is the key to communication then EI is the key to language and social interaction. Here it becomes particularly essential and crucial for the language teacher, especially the L2 teacher to imbibe the quality in his/her self and impart it to the students'. EI being positioned at such a significant point in ELT, it is necessary that the teacher trains the students to distinguish, recognize and label feelings; learn to be responsible, empathetic, positive, respectful and grateful; and understand the way in which he/she is to express through language their feelings for and in a particular context.

Works Cited

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Research Article: 'Teaching Partition Fiction Through Technology' by Imran Surti

Genre is a key means by which we categorize the many forms of literature and culture. However, it is also much more than that: in talk and writing, in music and images, in film and television, genres actively generate and shape our knowledge of the world. It is a French term derived from the Latin words *genus*, *generis*, meaning “type,” “sort,” or “kind.” It designates the literary form or type into which works are classified according to what they have in common, either in their formal structures or in their treatment of subject matter, or both. The study of genres may be of value in three ways. On the simplest level, grouping works offers us an orderly way to talk about an otherwise bewildering number of literary texts. More importantly, if we recognize the genre of a text, we may also have a better idea of its intended overall structure and /or subject. Finally, a genre approach can deepen our sense of the value of any single text, by allowing us to view it comparatively, alongside many other texts of its type.

Genre is not an easy matter to discuss; on the one hand the term is relatively new for social scientists, while on the other it has a very long and at times confusing history in literature and the visual arts. There have certainly been some fundamental difficulties with the traditional conceptualization of genre in the humanities. The first is a surprising confusion in the meaning of the word ‘genre’ itself. The concept goes back to the basic distinction made by the Greeks between the dramatic, epic and lyrical forms of literature: that is, a distinction made partly in terms of mood and theme, and partly of mode of presentation and the relationship with the audience. The current meaning of ‘genre’, which dates from

the nineteenth century, is 'a style or category of painting, novel, film, etc. characterized by a particular form or purpose'. In literature, a genre can be defined by form (such as drama, poetry, proverbs, letters), by mood (as comedy, tragedy), or by content (as history, memoirs, autobiography); even though certainly these are usually closely tied together. Genre may also refer either to a type of text, or to an element within that text because all these definitions cut across each other. It has been impossible to agree on any settled definitions of genres, or to group them convincingly as major and minor genres and subgenres.

The problem of definition has indeed seriously concerned some of the most influential literary critics. Thus Northrop Frye wrote in 1957 in his classic *Anatomy of Criticism* that 'the critical theory of genres is stuck precisely where Aristotle left it'. Genre now seemed to many radical critics as an unacceptably superficial and external way of categorizing works of literature, especially for 'phenomologists', with their concern for exploring ideology, values, individual 'subjectivity', feelings, the subconscious and the irrational. Turning their backs on genre was helpful in allowing them to extend the whole arena of literary criticism and to analyze numerous texts which until then would not have been considered works of literature at all. On the other hand, perhaps more surprisingly, even those who still concentrated on major creative works had been uncomfortable with genre, for it seemed increasingly clear that the less original a work the more likely it was to fit comfortably into a genre category, while the greatest creative works defied such easy formal categorization.

It was evident that other literary forms besides autobiography, and most notably the novel, also drew on a mixture of experience, observation and imagination. For

many critics indeed, it seems better to treat both autobiography and the novel, alongside biography and other types of historical works, as particular forms of the major genre of narrative. From this perspective the study of 'the narrative construction of reality' is an approach which has brought literature increasingly close to history.

Genre is a privileged object because of its mediation between social and textual structure: 'Social patterning and textual patterning meet as genres' (Cope and Kalantzis 1993: 7).

"... Genre analysis is concerned primarily with whole texts and their social functions. Sentence and clause analysis is only performed in order to explain the workings of the whole text and how it realizes its social purpose." (Cope and Kalantzis 1993: 10)

Genres carry and organize their culture and fashion our sociality in the broadest sense. As Carolyn Miller puts it:

"What we learn when we learn a genre is not just a pattern of forms or even a method of achieving our own ends. We learn, more importantly, what ends we may have. ... We learn to understand better the situations in which we find ourselves and the potential for failure and success in acting together. As a recurrent, significant action, a genre embodies an aspect of cultural rationality." (Miller 1994a: 38)

Teaching literary genres to the students of literature poses a great challenge for a teacher, especially when it comes to teaching advanced level students. It may even be a baffling experience if the appropriate meaning of a particular genre and its characteristic features do not get communicated to the students. However, in order to ensure a meaningful communication, a teacher may use complementary technological devices like television or projector in order to display either genre related films or slideshow of photographs along with elaborate theorizing. As a research student working on Partition literature and as a teacher of Partition fiction at undergraduate level, I felt the need of utilizing the available resources at my disposal. I happen to teach one of the most celebrated Partition novels entitled *Train to Pakistan* written by Khushwant Singh. The task was difficult in the sense that I had to make an underlying, seamless relationship between the immediate present and 'the significant past' palpable to the students; to demonstrate the harrowing realities of the Partition; to show how fiction aesthetically incorporates such embittered, holocaust-like tragedy and simultaneously preserves essential human values.

Let me enumerate a few essential characteristics of Partition literature that I intended to communicate to my third year B.A. students before teaching them the said novel:

1) The best of the literature that emerged in the wake of the Partition bears the imprint of the struggle to grapple with pain and suffering on a scale that was unprecedented in South Asia. The Partition Literature became a repository of localized truths, sought to be evaded and minimized by the dominant discourse on the Partition. These narratives offer insights into the nature of individual

experience, and break the silence in the collective sphere. Trends in recent Partition research represent a shift away from the parleys and betrayals in the domain of High Politics, towards an emphasis on the subalterns as both victims and perpetrators of violence, the sociology and motivation for widespread rioting, the resulting psychological trauma, and most importantly, the feminist concern with recovering lost stories of sexually violated and abducted women during the Partition. New Archives of survivors' memories are being created to supplement the available sources such as autobiographies and biographies, poetry and fictional accounts.

2) Novelists who have written about the Partition, especially those who lived through its days of terror, take their stand beside those who suffered, in order either to bear witness or to offer solace, to call down damnation on those who were responsible for it, or lay a wagner on a life of good sense in the future, to memorialize nostalgically communities in the past or speak with bitter irony about the possibilities of life in post-colonial days. The best of them, however do not repeat what the historians already know—that there was violence of such fiendishness that each reminder of it still comes as a shock to our decencies and still violates our sense of a common humanity. Indeed, they seek to make connections with the social and cultural life of a community in its entirety within a historically specific period. That is why, these fictional accounts, unlike narratives of the historians, which move with certitude towards a definite end, contain all that is locally contingent and truthfully remembered, capricious and anecdotal, contradictory and mythically given. Their endings too are various. While some manage to find their way out of the realm of madness and crime, others either mark out the emotional and ethical map of our times with indelible lines of screams, ash,

smoke and mockery, or crumble into shocked silence. These narratives either assume the existence of a communally shared history in pre-partition India, or imaginatively set up, with the help of small remembered things, images of the sub-continent as a place of tolerant communities as structural counterpoints to the dispirited sense of exile and pain after the division. Their fictionalized life-worlds of villages and small towns invariably suggest that there was an essential feeling of relatedness between the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, not merely a passive acceptance of different customs and beliefs. That is why, perhaps, hardly any of these texts seriously concern themselves with defining the metaphysical identities of different groups, but assert that such identities only be forged in the social relationships established between human beings in the process of living together; that is in the daily interaction between people which gives to theological beliefs a significance and a value.

3) Another element that nearly informs all these narratives is the note of utter bewilderment. Each of these narratives finds the Partition and the massacres so completely without historical or social reason, that is to say, extremely absurd, that all they can sometimes do is to record that the place they called 'home' or 'basti' was reduced to, and that the memories of a society with collective rites and traditions, songs and legends, names of birds and trees, were tinged forever with acrid smell of smoke and blood.

4) Despite the enormity of violence around them unleashed by the demand for two separate nations, Partition literature is replete with characters who resist the pressures of theological bully-boys and ideological thugs, and refuse to migrate; refuse to leave their homes or their lands just because some politicians claim that

different forms of worship demand different cultural, moral, and political citizenships. There are other fictional works which speak about the pathos of the people, who refused to leave after the Partition; who refused to be coerced into believing that India could be divided into two religiously defined nations. There are countless characters in Partition fiction who are bewildered by the new borders India and Pakistan because for them their home was their 'basti' and, hence, their country. Attached to their 'home' were all the ideals of well-being and 'well-doing'. It was their sanctuary; their affective and moral space; and it was sufficient. Unfortunately, however, the politics of religious identity which surrounds these ordinary characters is hasty, restless, and crass.

5) In Partition literature, characters never aspire to be part of some exceptional religious group. Their understanding of their selfhood is that they are ordinary people with limited means and abilities, and that they are vulnerable. They are self-conscious about the fact that they live within a network of people with different religious convictions whose right to a share in their living spaces has to be acknowledged.

As a matter of experiment, I chose to teach the characteristics of Partition literature, with reference to one of the most celebrated Partition fiction of all times—Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*—keeping in mind the learner-centered approach. In order to make the process of teaching and learning, a two-way business, I decided to elicit responses from my students, instead of feeding them with elaborate theory on the essential characteristics of Partition literature. I prepared a worksheet containing two different set of Partition photographs, followed by a few questions—ranging from general description of the given

photographs and their common theme to the particular instances from the novel that resemble the given photographs.

QUESTIONS

1. Give a brief description of the above shown photographs.
2. What do you think is a feature common to all the three given photos? Can you suggest a word or a phrase that poignantly captures the above displayed tragedy?
3. Enumerate and comment on the situations that resemble the above shown tragedy from the novel *Train to Pakistan* written by Khushwant Singh.

I selected a group of 24 students for my purpose. As per the responses of these students, the first set of photographs deals with the cremation of the dead bodies of the persons who were brutally killed during the communal riots that followed the Partition. The streets are shown flooded with charred corpses lying around, and are then taken for cremation in a truck or are cremated on that very spot. The common theme in these photographs is 'mass-killing', 'mass-murder', 'massacre', 'carnage', 'genocide', 'annihilation', 'extermination', 'savagery or physical violence' etc.

There are three particular instances in the novel *Train to Pakistan* that resemble the given photographs. First, the arrival of the 'ghost train' from Pakistan, carrying the defiled corpses of Sikhs to the railway-station of the village Mano Majra, followed by the magistrate Hukum Chand's inspection of the train and his resulting psychological trauma at the horror of the bloody sight. Second, the villagers gather at the bank of the river in order to enquire about the flowing log-like objects in the water, which ultimately turns out to be the dead bodies. Third, the authorities ask the villagers to provide them with enough quantity of kerosene and wood for the

cremation of dead bodies in return of a good amount of money. Thus, the first significant characteristic of all Partition literature is the depiction of mass-killing that followed the Partition.

QUESTIONS

1. Give a brief description of the above shown photographs.
2. What do you think is a feature common to all the five given photos? Can you suggest a word or a phrase that poignantly captures the above shown experience?
3. Enumerate and comment on the situations that resemble the above shown tragedy from the novel *Train to Pakistan* written by Khushwant Singh.

The second set of photographs deals with the large-scale migration of people across the borders, covering hundreds of kilometers either on feet, or in a bullock-cart, or in a train. They give an idea of how the common people undertook the Herculean task of migrating either to their 'Promised Land' or to an 'Alien Land', whether out of willingness or coercing, whether forced or chosen. The common theme in these photographs is therefore, 'migration', 'exodus', 'uprootedness', 'dislocation' etc.

There are two particular instances in the novel *Train to Pakistan* that resemble the given photographs. First, the authorities shift the Muslim villagers of Mano Majra to a nearby camp, and later to be taken to Pakistan by a train, due to the fear of communal riots breaking out in Mano Majra with the continuous arrival of Sikh refugees and Sikh fanatics. Second, in the last scene of the novel, Jugga, the real hero sacrifices his life for his beloved Nooran, and thereby saves all the Muslim passengers on the train. Thus, the second significant characteristic of all Partition

literature is to show large-scale movements of people in the quest for shelter, safety, life and even identity.

The third important characteristic of the best of Partition literature, however, deals with the optimistic side of life in the midst of such terror, that is to say, with the preservation of essential human values. The novel *Train to Pakistan* provides at least two such instances. First is the scene of an emotional farewell given by the Sikh villagers of Mano Majra to their Muslim brethren on their way to Pakistan. They depart grief-stricken from their ancestral village. Second scene is of Jugga's supreme self-sacrifice at the call of love, call of humanity, and the call of God. Instead of indulging into the ongoing communal frenzy, Jugga redeems himself by being the chosen one of God. It is people like Jugga, who provided the silver lining amidst the dark clouds of communalism on the horizons of sky. Both the scenes basically suggest the 'life-preserving' and 'life-enhancing' quality of culture and language. They re-assert the fact that prior to the Partition, the two major communities of India shared thousand years of solidarity and companionship. The fourth characteristic of Partition literature is poignantly presented in *Train to Pakistan*, that is to say, Mano Majra is not only a physical space; it is not merely a village for its inhabitants, but also a part of their mental construct. It is a place which they call 'basti' or 'home', which has nurtured and nourished them from within, with which a sense of familiarity and identification is possible. It is a place which not only structures their daily routine but also defines their very existence and identity.

All the four characteristics are brilliantly presented in the 1998 film-version of *Train to Pakistan* directed by Pamela Rooks. Instead of elaborate theorizing, the

method of displaying the Partition photographs and the film complemented me as a teacher in making my students feel interested in perhaps the most momentous and even unprecedented period of South Asian history. Instead of simply being the passive receptor of information, this experiment helped me in stimulating appropriate responses from my students, and thereby to make the class more learner-oriented.

Thus, the added feature of technology gave an opportunity to me as a teacher to mobilize the sensitivity as well as the sensibility of my students for comprehending the Partition literature and its essential characteristics, and thereby to make the teaching sessions more meaningful, interactive, and effective.

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