Transfer of Teacher Training: A Case of Teaching Speaking

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Abstract

The present study entitled 'Transfer of Teacher Training: A Case of Teaching Speaking' aims at identifying and describing the teaching activities of trained teachers in terms of motivation, presentation, practice, methods and techniques and evaluation system of teaching and to analyze the transfer of training of trained teachers in teaching speaking skills. This research study shows that training is essential in teaching language especially speaking skills. Trained teachers in most of the cases were found successful in transferring a number of training skills to the classroom delivery.

Keywords: Teaching, speaking, training, transfer of teacher training and speaking skill.

Introduction

The act of language teaching is a complex phenomenon though it is an established profession. "Language teaching came into its own as a profession in the twentieth century. The whole foundation of contemporary language teaching was developed during the early part of twentieth century" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Similarly, Stern (1983) defines language teaching as "the activities which are intended to bring about language learning.". Teaching is often regarded as an art rather than a science. A teacher needs special kind of knowledge, skill and expertise for which he needs both training and practice. Training is regarded as prerequisite phenomenon for handling any responsibility for anybody. Regarding this term 'training' Wallace (1991), writes "Training prepares anybody for a particular function or profession" (as cited in Khanal, 2006). Defining 'training' Bhatia (2005) states: Training is an act of increasing knowledge, skill and attitude of an employee for improving his performance on the job. Training is concerned with imparting specific skill for doing particular job for example, a clerk on typing. It is task oriented activity. It is for job related and short-term. In regard to the context of teachers too, training imparts them required knowledge, skills, methods and techniques which are essential before they start real teaching. Teacher training is really a process of teacher development. The theoretical knowledge what the teacher gained can be effectively practiced in the classroom if s/he is trained professionally. In this respect, Farrell and Richards (2005) state, "training involves understanding basic concepts and principles as a pre-requisite for applying them to teaching and the ability to demonstrate principles and practices in the classroom.". Regarding the teacher training, Lazar (2009) states that "Teachers learn best by actively involved in the training session. This active

involvement might entail participating in a discussion, brainstorming ideas in a group or simply sitting aside time to read and reflect on a new idea." In the field of teacher education there are two separate worlds-one is the world of native speaker teachers and teacher trainers who work in small classes with adequate resources and who are responsible for developing new ideas in methodology. The other world is of most of language teachers who teach in large classes to a set syllabus and who attempt to apply the new methodology to their own teaching. In this regard, giving views on teacher training, Doff (1995) states: There is great difference between these two worlds that accounts for resources and physical conditions but also in underlying assumptions (e.g. about language, about learning, about the teacher's role) and in degree of freedom (e.g. freedom to experiment, to create materials, to approach class relationships in a new way. Teacher training implies transfer of skills, methods, techniques and different tricks which help the teacher to run class effectively, efficiently, conveniently and systematically. Thus, teacher training program is considered as one of the most important components in ensuring effective teaching learning in the language classroom. Teachers are to be trained in order to update the ever changing knowledge in the field of education. They are to be given training time and again to adopt the changing knowledge. According to Wallace (1991), it is a process of learning that develops moral, cultural, social, intellectual aspects of the whole person as an individual and a member of society. Training helps to encourage an active style of teaching with teachers participating as fully as possible when a new technique is introduced or it is usually demonstrated, so the teacher can see how it works. Training helps to strengthen the professionalism of a person. For teacher, training is a must because they have crucial role in the field of education and the classroom is considered as a laboratory where teachers can test their theoretical knowledge i.e. principles and techniques to find out how effective they are. Trained teachers are basic requirement in the English language teaching programs to teach it as a foreign language (EFL) or second language with the view to imparting quality English education. So they should always try to understand the learners' psychology and impart knowledge in healthy manner. Hence they need training which is essential and indispensable for all teachers to provide effective education.

The Contexts

The history of teacher training in Nepal starts with the establishment of Basic Education Teacher Training Program (BETTP) in the country. Luitel (2004), states that 'the first effort of formal teacher training program in Nepal started in 1947 AD'. It was initiated by the Basic Teacher Training Program which was based on the Gandhian Philosophy of self support. The same program continued till it was replaced by National Teacher Training Centre. It was established on the recommendation of the National Education Planning Commission. After the establishment of the College of Education in 1956 AD., the trend of teacher training was started. English language teaching has occupied a prominent place in Nepalese syllabus. Training in the English language teaching only started in 1971 with the implementation of NESP and the same year Tribhuvan University started B.Ed. Program in English language teaching. Unless and until teachers are trained, no quality education can be imparted. So, the teacher training programs have been launched world wide. In the context of Nepal, realizing the need and importance of teacher training, Education Act 2028, made training compulsory for each and every teacher. There are mainly three existing training institutions in Nepal. They are;

- National Center for Educational Development (NCED)
- Different universities
- Higher Secondary Education Board (HSEB)

NCED came into existence in 1953. as a part of the Primary Education Development Project (PEDP, 1992-98). In the same way different universities run degree program as pre-service teacher training and HSEB runs training to both in-service and pre-service teachers in Nepal.

NCED and Ten Month In-service Teacher Training Program

Among several training programs conducted by NCED, ten-month in-service teacher training program is one of them. This ten-month training is also known as competency based training. The ten month certification (Competency based) training program according to the Lower Secondary/Secondary Teacher Training Evaluation Manual (2006) is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Teacher Training Evaluation Manual*

Module	Training	Duration (in Months)	Full Marks	
			External	**Internal**
1	Training Center Based	1	50	50
	School Based	1.5	-	100
2	Distance Learning	5	50	50
3	Training Center Based	1	50	50
	School Based	1.5	-	100
		10	150	350
Total			**500**	

(NCED, 2006).

The examinees should score at least 60 percent marks in each test in order to pass.

Speaking Skills

Since language is a means of communication and for communication speaking is must. "Of all the four language skills, speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as "speaker of that language" (Ur, 2002, p.120). Teaching speaking has not been given due importance and English teachers has continued to teach speaking just as repetition or memorization of dialogues. But the teaching speaking should aim to improve students' communicative skills. The present English curriculum has emphasized the spoken skill so that students will be able to speak fluently and accurately in a variety of situations. In SLC (School Leaving Certificate) examination also, a speaking test is given to the students that covers 15 marks.

Activities for Teaching Speaking

According to the training manual of secondary level namely 'English language Teaching: Competency Based Lower Secondary/Secondary Teacher Training' the activities of teaching speaking are as follows:

- Group work
- Pair work
- Communication games

- Role play
- Simulation
- Drills (e.g. imitation, cue, substitution)
- Information gap activities (e.g. describing pictures, talking through maps)

Transfer of Teacher Training in Speaking Skills

Transfer of training is an effective and continuous process of implementing the knowledge, skills, methods and techniques that are learned in the training programs. Transfer of training is the magical link between training expectations and classroom performance. Defining transfer of training, Bhatia (2005) states, "Transfer of Knowledge and skills depends on how the training is designed, delivered and moreover, how the manager measures its effectiveness in real work situation". The present study aims at finding out how far the knowledge, skills and techniques learned in the training programs have been transferred in the real language classroom in teaching speaking skills. In this study, the following activities of the trained teachers have been observed.

- Students' motivation
- Presentation of the teacher
- Students' practice
- Methods and techniques
- Evaluation system

It also examined the situation of transfer of training in the teaching speaking skills.

I hope the research will be useful for all the people who are interested in teaching and learning the English language. Particularly, this research will be significant and helpful for the English teachers, educational administrators, policy makers, educational institutions and the students of the English language.

Method: Case Study

For this study ten secondary level trained English teachers teaching at government-aided secondary schools of Ilam district were purposively selected as the sample. The main tool for data collection was the classroom observation checklists. In order to collect data, the researcher visited the selected secondary schools. He selected ten secondary level trained English teachers from these schools. Then, after getting the permission of school authority, he observed one speaking classes of each of the ten English teachers and filled up the checklist. The collected data has been tabulated and analyzed under the following five main headings (i.e. students' motivation, presentation, practice, methods and techniques and evaluation).

Results: Transfer of Training in Terms of Students' Motivation

Here, the researcher has analyzed the transfer of training in terms of students' motivation being based on the following five skills. Among the ten classes under study, most of them were found highly motivated. They were found curious to learn. During my observation, 80 percent were found good and 20 percent were tolerable but none of them was found poor on it. Among the ten classes 50 percent were found well, 40 percent were found tolerable and 10 were found poor on the motivation of the students to the teacher. The motivation of the students to the teacher was found satisfactory. Among the classes understudy, 20 percent were found good, 70 percent were found tolerable and 10 percent

were found poor on it. Among the classes understudy, 20 percent were found good, 70 percent were found tolerable and the rest 10 percent concluded that majority of the secondary level trained English teachers were tolerable in their confidence in teaching.

Transfer of Training on Presentation

This skill is further divided into five sub-skills. The data reveals that majority 50 percent of the trained teachers are not aware of relating the present lesson with the previous lesson. Regarding application of the three stages of teaching speaking, data found that secondary level trained teachers was found 60 percent tolerable in the application of three stages of teaching speaking and 20 percent poor. Regarding, relationship between presentation and teaching items, which indicate that, the relationship between teacher's presentation and teachings items was satisfactory 70 percent (tolerable). Similarly, regarding relevance to the student's level need and interest, the data found that majority of the teachers (more than 56 percent) were found good. Thus, presentation on the basis of students' level, need and interest was satisfactory. And regarding use of teaching materials in teaching speaking, data found that majority of the trained teachers used the materials of daily use. They were found using the text book as the main teaching material for teaching speaking.

Transfer of Training on Practice

It is believed that only the trained teachers can apply different techniques of practice in the language classroom. This skill is further divided into five-sub types. The techniques of practice: The most commonly used techniques of practice in teaching speaking skills at secondary level are group work, pair work, picture description, role play, interview and drill. But none of the trained teachers was found using simulation technique in the classroom. Students' Participation in Presentation/Practice/ Production Stage: The student's participation in presentation/ practice/production stage were found satisfactory. Relationship between presentation and practice: The data found that the relationship between presentation and practice was satisfactory. Transfer of Training on Methods and Techniques: This skill is further divided into three sub types. Use of Only one Method by Teachers: Among the teachers understudy only 10 percent (one class) was found using only one method (teacher centered method) and the rest 90 percent (9 classes) were found using more than one method. From Table 1, it was found that the majority of the teachers (90%) used more than one method in the classroom. It was found praise worthy. However, only one method was also applied by single teacher.

Use of Different Techniques by the Teachers

Among the ten classes of the teachers, it was found that more than one technique such as drill, pair work, group work, role play and picture description was used while teaching speaking. That is why the trained teachers classes were found motivated to a great extent. Thus it was highly satisfactory. Among the ten classes understudy, it was found that 90 percent teachers were able to transfer their knowledge, skills, and attitudes into classroom and the rest of 10 percent were not able to do this. The data found that the majority of the teachers (90%) were able to apply their training into the classroom. It is highly satisfactory.

Transfer of Training on Evaluation System

Under this skill, the researcher observed the classes of trained teachers to analyze how far the objectives of teaching were achieved. The achievement of objective was found satisfactory in 90

percent. Student's participation in evaluation speaking skills found 50 percent, 40 percent and 10 percent good, tolerable and poor respectively. It is concluded that the students' participations in evaluation was average. Use of evaluation tools by teachers were found satisfactory. It was found that the majority of the teachers used oral tests, picture description exercises, reading, and exercises as the common evaluation tools. More specifically, data indicate that 80 percent found tolerable and 10 percent poor.

Discussion

This study showed that majority of the students were found highly motivated to the subject matter and to the teacher where as they were found tolerable and poor in participating speaking activities and answering teachers' questions in teaching speaking at the secondary level. It was found that the transfer of training on presentation was average. As found from the research, 50 percent teachers were relating their presentation with the previous lesson, 60 percent of them were found tolerable in applying three stages of speaking. It was found that the teachers' presentation was satisfactory as it was relevant to the students' need, interest and level. All the teachers were B. Ed. degree holders. So, they know the students' psychology and tried to treat them accordingly. More than 90 percent teachers were found using different speaking activities. Among them, group work, pair work and picture description were more common but none of the teachers were found simulation technique in the classroom. It was found that the trained teachers did not use the techniques communicatively. In majority of the classes, students were asked to repeat the teachers' model as accurately as possible.

It was found that none of the teachers used supplementary materials in the classroom. A few teachers used some materials in the classes but they were not appropriate to deal with the subject matter. Majority of the teachers tried to divide the class in to group and pair but there was the difficulty of face to face interaction because of classroom setting. Teaching speaking was found more problematic in spite of being trained because of teachers' negative attitude, not well equipped with the skills, less time allotment to its teaching, a large number of students and lack of physical facilities.

Students' participation in presentation, practice and production stage was found satisfactory. Some of the students were found hesitating in participating speaking activities. Majority of the teachers (80%) were found encouraging the students to involve in speaking to their friends as well as teachers. Majority of the teachers (90%) were transferring their skills in terms of students' evaluation. They were using picture description, reading aloud, and oral tests as evaluation tools which are included in the training manual.

Conclusion

To conclude, the transfer of training of the trained teachers in teaching speaking skills has been analyzed and interpreted on the basis of motivation, presentation, practice, methods and techniques, and evaluation system. For this, simple statistical tools such as percentage, pie charts, and Tables and bar diagrams have been used. It was found student's motivation towards the subject matters and teachers was better than participating in speaking stages by the teachers.

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