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to include language exercises only.

These notebooks may include, in addition to language exercises, the comments students make on their teachers, their teaching and their own learning problems , etc. The informal language used to make these comments, especially at the early stages, need not be in the language they wish to learn , they may write them in their mother tongue.

These notebooks may also include the comments students make not only on what they learn but on how they learn.

The learners should be encouraged to relate what they learn (both word and world) to their previous learning and to their own lives.

In these notebooks, the learners need to react to their learning.

5. The way these notebooks need to be exploited: their functions.

These notebooks, if they are taken seriously and kept properly, contain precious data about teachers, their teaching, about learners and their learning. They need to be analyzed carefully. They are learners' input for the classroom events. In planning a lesson, the teacher can focus on the content of these notebooks. By reacting to the learners comments, problems and questions, the teacher can achieve a healthier relationship with his/her students and conduct a more relevant and cohesive teaching.

When a learner experiences a more relevant teaching towards his needs, he becomes more inovlved in his learning.

By assigning a credit for a regular writing of these homework- notebooks and basing exam questions (at least a number of them) on the cont ent of these notebooks, the teacher can encourage his/her students to take these notebooks even more seriously.

not understand about the material. They suggest that when the teacher asks students to introspect about [their] learning, comment on their calss, and about what they are learning, students get more involved in the course and make connections between themselves and the course content and materials."

A major improtant development in ELT has been the focus on communicative and consequative reflective approach. This approach is for (1) a more learner/teacher involvement, (2) a more comprehensive concept of language and learning, and (3) a more comprehensive role the teachers as educators take. These developments can be fruitfully exploited if we (1) find more ways to use learners input as a base in our classroom activities; (2) focus our teaching to meet leaners' needs without overlooking the two other basic requirements: language learning conditions and instructional procedures (methodology). Students' homework notebooks can certainly play important roles in connection with these developments: writing as a learning means and critical reflective learning.

4. The content of the homework notebooks:

Generally speaking at present these homework notebooks are mainly used to record language exercises, primarily left-overs from textbook and calssroom exercises. After the students do and complete these exercises they hand them in to their teachers. Teachers check a few homework items and then hand them back to the students for future exercises. The content of these notebooks seldom form the input for the classroom activities and discussions. As I have previously mentioned, with increase in the number of students in each class together with increase in teaching hours, teachers find less and less time to benefit from the contents of these notebooks. To solve the problem we need to change their contents and our attitudes towards them. First their content:

We need not narrow down the scope of these notebooks and confine them

Therefore, if we cannot use it properly, let´s not use it at all.

- Any useful learning/ teaching (education) can only happen in the calss-room.

- In addition, the feeling persists that many teachers assign their students to do non-essential extra exercises to be done at home and recorded in their notebooks simply to keep them busy.

How can we explain this black-out on the role of the homework notebook in ELT research? There is a collective opininon that a teaching/ learning session no matter how long it takes, 45 minutes or two hours, is not a complete unit in itself. No matter how long a class session takes, some relevant activities should be done before and some after to make it a perfect unit. The question is how to plan and implement these pre-and post- class components of any teaching/ learning unit. An inexpensive aide, as I see it, is students homework notebook. The rest of the article is to indicate how students homework notebook can possibly increase our learner´s leaning time and their involve-ment with their learning.

3. How to exploit learner´s homework-notebooks.

Two developments in ELT research and practice have enabled us to take up new attitude and practice regarding the concept and function of homework and homework-notebooks:

a. writing as a learning tool

b. communicative and reflective learning/ teaching

Increasingly, in content courses, learning diaries or journals have been used to exploit this writing- learning connection. Mayher, et. al. (1983) discuss the role of leaning logs, or content journals in high school subjects such as biology, and chemistry. They say that, "One of the most effective ways students can use writing as an aid to learning is to keep a running account of what is going on as they work in a particular course in and out of its classes. Teachers can skim these logs to find out what students understand and what they do

By bringing the world of sight and sound into the classroms, more recently video films and computer software, we have come closer to achieving our purpose in many situations, however, any amount of success has been very costly. In addition, the shift of responsibility from the practicing teachers to film actors and actresses and computer software designers has not been a step in the right direction. The result in many cases has been similar to the dominance of linguists and applied linguists.

Extensive or private reading has been another move which in many cases has really helped us to double our students. learning time. Many succeeded in making it really a habit and developed a love of private reading among their students. This too, however, has revealed its own intrinsic problems. In many contexts, it has been really difficult to provide learners with enough copies of their favoured subjects and match their language ability. In addition, some learners are not born-readers, they need and favour more sociable uses of language.

2. Homework Notebooks

From the beginning, a text, a homework notebook, a teacher, and a learner have always been the basic components or agents of any formal learning / teaching. Unlike the other three, homework notebooks have seldom been discussed in the professonal journal articles, methodology source-books, and conference papers. Why this black-out on the role and effect of homework notebooks in language education circles? Is its role and effect so trivial? Or is its role so natural a part of any learning/ teaching context that almost every teacher and learner intiuitively know how to use it to achieve the best results?

There seems to be a long-standing suspicion regarding the role of these notebooks and homework. This may be summarized as follows:

- Homework spoils the learner's chance for any recreational activity;
- The increase in the number of students in each class and that in teaching hours have made any regular and useful exploitation of homework difficult.

HOW TO MAXIMIZE LEARNER´S LEARNING TIME[*]

J.B.Sadeghian

O. A feeling about a problem and its solution.

Many among us, practitioners as well as theoreticians, deep down share the feeling that though odds against us are many, the devil itself that causes most of our failure in teaching English to the speakers of other languages is none but the insufficient exposure of our students to real language use.

Those of us with EFL experience are deeply sympathetic with this verdict and find it quite justifiable. Therefore, many share the feeling that, other things being equal, if we expose our students to real language use and thus increase their learning time, we will have better results.

1. Commenting on the earlier solutions

Since the early innocent years of TEFLing, to increase learnrs' learning time many approaches have been taken and many ideas have been put into practice. The first in many situations has been a straight forward petition for more teaching hours in the school curriculum. In many cases this has been turned down due to a fierce competition among many school subjects for a place in the curriculum, and unsympathetic ears in decision-making hierarchy would list many educational values and utilitarian benefits for the rival subjects.