

**CHANGING ROLES OF A FACILITATOR IN AN ELT CLASSROOM: TRADITIONAL
AND THE MODERN**

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ABSTRACT

English is a global language and it is becoming more and more needed in this fast developing culture, and therefore one can find the changes it brings in an English Language Teaching Classroom. The whole process of teaching English language has been changing due to the development in the curriculum and the students. Facilitator's role and the student's role are also changing according to the needs of the society. Students start to learn English Language at a primary level and at present, role of a facilitator is still challenging. This paper discusses this paradigm shift of a facilitator in an ELT Classroom.

Each and every student has different ability when learning a second language. Some of the students learn the language very easily and they develop a sort of compassion towards it. Yet others struggle and find it difficult which could develop a sort of inferiority and lack of interest. The facilitator here finds it challenging to teach students successfully. Therefore facilitator performs as many roles as possible to fully achieve the best learning development.

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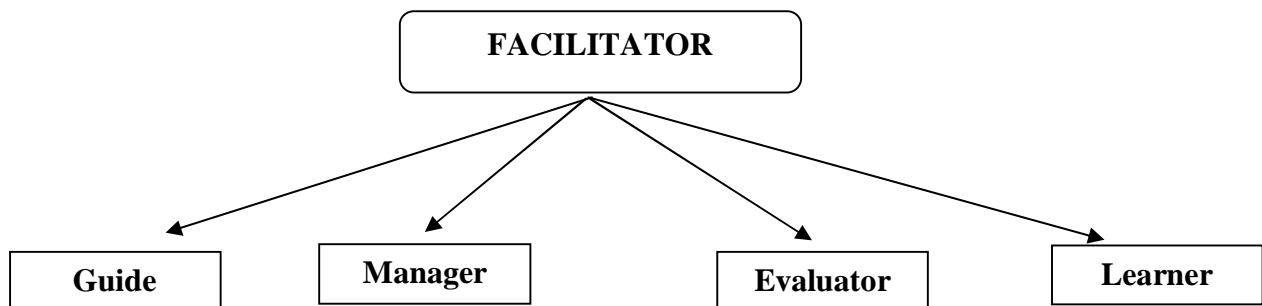
Each and every student has different ability when learning a second language. Some of the students learn the language very easily and they develop a sort of compassion towards it. Yet others struggle and find it difficult which could develop a sort of inferiority and lack of interest. The facilitator here finds it challenging to teach students successfully. Therefore facilitator performs as many roles as possible to fully achieve the best learning development.

The term "Role" as Dorney and Murphey points out, is a technical term "which originally comes from sociology and refers to the shared expectation of how an individual should behave. In other words, roles describe what people are supposed to do". Richards and Rodgers consider teacher roles as part of the design component of a method, pointing out that these are related to the following issues:

- (a) the types of function teachers are expected to fulfill,
- (b) the degree of control the teacher has over how learning takes place,
- (c) the degree to which the teacher is responsible for determining the content of what is taught,
and
- (d) the interactional patterns that develop between teachers and learners. (31)

A facilitator therefore takes roles according to the student's needs. David Nunan defines the teacher role as "... the part teachers are expected to play in carrying out learning tasks as well as the social and interpersonal relationships between the participants" (79). The Facilitator is therefore the greatest source of information to the students.

Educating is the most important thing and as a facilitator a teacher should perform all the herculean task needed for educating the student. A facilitator has the proficiency, tools and information needed to educate the students. In this rapid growing world, there are numerous changes in teaching approaches and learning strategies. Facilitator's therefore play a very crucial role and they not only educate but they also develop the interest of the students to learn a language. Thereby taking numerous roles as a parent does at home. This paper focusses on four major roles in both traditional and modern setups.



FACILITATOR AS A GUIDE

Traditionally, the facilitator is a fountain of wisdom who spouts fact that the students are expected to soak up. The most important role of a facilitator is to be a learning guide, an educational facilitator and a broker of learning opportunities. In a traditional classroom setup, the teacher would teach the students; her knowledge on the subject, and the learner would listen and understand what she is teaching. Here, the learners would be a passive listener and the teacher would be active speaker. The learners would be bored up that they would be active dreamers and not participants. The classroom thereby became the Prisoners Cell where the learners being prisoners.

The modern language classroom brought a great difference in this scenario where the facilitator becomes a guide in guiding the learners. The job of the facilitators was to observe the students, assist in the learning (two-way communication of listening and comprehending), to suggest the best learning practices and when the facilitator finds the learning going well at its best, she would fade into the corners of the classroom and make the learning a happy place. One can see the spirit of curiosity and exploration in the eyes of the learners.

FACILITATOR AS A MANAGER

A facilitator is responsible for maintaining a positive learning environment. Classroom management is a herculean task. A teacher should plan well in advance about covering the portions and developing the students. Perfect classroom management by a teacher using the major mechanisms will lead to success of teaching-learning methods. In a Traditional Classroom, the teacher not only teaches but she is more or less like a drill master. In order to manage the class, she becomes a strict teacher and does not allow the student to breathe and inhale positive learning in the classroom. A traditional teacher feels that maintaining classroom management is the essential skill needed for a good manager of the classroom.

Effective Classroom management is in the culture of caring. Teachers are the managers in guiding the student to different learning platforms. In a Modern Classroom, the Facilitator uses the nurturing approach and invests in each and every student. They are likely to develop the behavioural patterns of the student. Classroom behaviour plays an important role and the students are completely aware of it. They therefore become positive contributors in the classroom. Monitoring behavior on a regular basis aids in long-term success. Students are made aware that the evaluation process will be based upon their interactions with others in and out of the classroom. Assessments are carried out improving the classroom environment.

FACILITATOR AS AN EVALUATOR

Every teacher has numerous questions in her mind after each and every lesson she completes. The major questions are,

1. Whether the objectives are accomplished?
2. Was the motivation adequate?
3. What did the student learn?

Evaluation leads to growth. This growth improves the student knowledge and develops their future. The role of a teacher is therefore to evaluate and find the knowledge of the student.

In a traditional Classroom the teacher teaches and gives notes to what they have taught. The student writes an examination and it pressurizes the student. This assessment does not give the knowledge of the student but their capacity to learn-by-heart.

In modern ELT classroom, evaluation is done in a different method. The facilitator does a fair job of evaluation. She creates a beautiful learning platform with modern technologies. The facilitator provides a platform for developing the student's skill and evaluates all the essential skill (life skills) needed. The student learns and uses the learning for his future. The facilitator thereby achieves what their objectives.

FACILITATOR AS A LEARNER

Teaching and learning are a continuous process that are interlinked together. Teachers are learners. Good teachers provoke students with a desire to learn. Effective students stimulate learners with learning habits. Teaching is helping others to opportunities where they can explore and learn something. Designed properly, these experience would result in learning with their desired outcomes. There are a number of factors involved in designing the learning experience. Most often teachers need to rely on their own instincts to develop these learning experiences.

In a traditional ELT Classroom, a teacher is a person who only teaches and they do not learn things. The teachers teach the same syllabus, same notes and same stuffs again and again for years together. They are masters of teachers and learning doesn't happen. The learners are therefore instruments to bring out the teacher's knowledge out. Learning doesn't happen in both the teachers nor the learners.

This practice is quite reverse in a Modern ELT Classroom. The learners are equipped with different technologies that they are more knowledgeable than the facilitator. The facilitator finds it difficult to instruct the students. Therefore the facilitator finds it the most important to equip themselves with the modern technologies and information. The facilitator enters the classroom with a challenge to the learners with vast knowledge in this fast growing world. This challenge makes the facilitators to learn and they are updated. This knowledge is transmitted to the learners and they are also made to learn and develop themselves. Thereby learning is made for both the learners and the facilitators.

CONCLUSION

The Facilitator in this 21st century, creates an environment where the students experience what they need in this century. The characteristics of the 21st century is completely different from that of the traditional. The learners of this century has the following characteristics,

- Higher order thinking skills
- Effective communication skills
- Knowledge of technology that students will need for 21st-century careers and the increased globalized environment.

Though the classroom is of the traditional setup like the teacher-centered teaching, the teacher is replaced by a facilitator who is embraced with new teaching style. The curriculum is also changed with the objectives needed for this century. While there is certainly a place for teacher-centered, lecture style learning, the evolving ESL teacher must embrace new teaching strategies that are radically different from those previously employed. The curriculum must become more relevant to what students will be exposed to in the 21st-century.

Brown, H. Douglas mentions that “teachers can play many roles in the course of teaching and this might facilitate learning. Their ability to carry these out effectively will depend to a large extent on the rapport they establish with their students, and of course, on their own level of knowledge and skills.” According to Harmer, J. (2007), the term “‘facilitator’ is used by many authors to describe a particular kind of teacher, one who is democratic (where the teacher shares some of the leadership with the students) rather than autocratic (where the teacher is in control of everything that goes on in the classroom), and one who fosters learner autonomy (where students not only learn on their own but also take responsibility for that learning) through the use of group and pair work and by acting as more of a resource than a transmitter of knowledge.”

The teachers assume different roles but they shape the culture of their classrooms, they improve the student learning, and influence practice and production. The goal can be achieved only by a facilitator in this modern ELT Classroom.

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