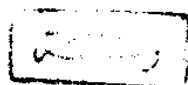


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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CONTRIBUTION
OF THE CDELT METHODOLOGY MODULES
TO NON-SPECIALIST TEACHER GROWTH



A THESIS

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Teaching English As A Foreign Language

By

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ABSTRACT

An Investigation Into The Contribution of the CDELT Methodology Modules To Non-Specialist Teacher Growth

This study is basically an evaluative one. It attempts an evaluation of the contribution of the CDELT methodology modules to the repertoire of skills of prep EFL non-specialist teachers. It seeks to answer three questions relating to the ten CDELT methodology modules training course under investigation in this research, and its impact on trainee teachers' behaviours:

- 1) How far does the content of the modules meet a well-defined set of criteria showing the real needs of trainees?
- 2) How far are the methodology modules effective in changing teacher classroom behaviour (2 months) after the course?
- 3) What factors can be identified in the modules and in the Egyptian teacher training context as obstacles in the adoption and/or application of some modules teaching behaviours in trainee teachers' classrooms?

The model of evaluation adopted for the study is adapted from five current INSET evaluation models (see Chapter II). It basically seeks the product of using the ten CDELT methodology modules training in terms of trainee teachers' classroom behaviours (2 months) after the end of the course. In other words, it measures the trainees' modifications in trainee teachers' behaviours as a result of the modules training undertaken by the thirty-researched subjects.

With regard to the procedure followed to answer the research questions, it can be summarized in these steps:

- 1) EFL non-specialists urgent methodological needs were analysed according to a set of criteria established by the researcher. A trainee pre-course questionnaire was, therefore, addressed to 90 non-specialist EFL teachers.

Also EFL supervisors participated in assessing non-specialists needs by responding to a questionnaire with the same twenty-item list of methodological topics addressed to non-specialist teachers.

- 2) To motivate SS to participate willingly/actively in the modules training, half of them (only 15) were interviewed before the training course. Thus, some of their methodological misconceptions were cleared up.
- 3) According to the findings of the content analysis of the research modules, a frequency count of the salient TEFL modules behaviours was calculated. This frequency count served as an input for the study's pre and post-course observation system.
- 4) The research modules course was delivered following the modules' prescribed step-by-step procedure.
- 5) A follow-up questionnaire was addressed to the thirty research subjects/trainees seeking their views of the modules training undertaken. Post-training observations were conducted using the same checklist for pre-course observations. Thus, behavioural differences of the research subjects could be computed according to the mean of each behaviour. Level of significance of each behavioural difference could be calculated by applying the t-test.

The basic findings of this study are:

- 1) The content of the modules investigated in this study meets the needs of EFL non-specialists (see Chapter IV).
- 2) As for effectiveness of the CDLEI modules training course, the results of pre-post course means showed significant differences in all the behaviours sought except two (see Table 29, Chapter IV).
- 3) The following are some factors related to the modules, the Egyptian TEFL training context and to the research subjects themselves which hindered the transfer of some modules techniques (for some trainees):

- 3.a Insufficiency of time devoted to learning practice sessions in the modules (see table 59).
- 3.b The modules do not provide for a systematic follow-up.
- 3.c The majority of prep senior teachers, being non-specialists, cannot help trainee teachers integrate the ideas/techniques provided on a short modules training course to their classroom teaching styles. Inevitably, because of the limited contact-time supervisors can spare for their teachers, the provision of modules training cannot be supported adequately. (cf. Younis, 87)
- 3.d Insufficiency of trainees command of the target language hampered the transfer of some modules techniques. (see C.1, C.2 & C.3, Chapter IV)

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CHAPTER I

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

A fundamental aim of in-service teacher training is to orient English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in methodologies and/or innovations which are assumed valuable in fostering effective EFL classes. Such orientations are, in effect, the essence of what Strevens terms "Special training" which has as its major aim upgrading the skills of EFL teachers (Strevens, 1977: 71).

Acquiring effective teaching skills is by no means an easy task to achieve. It is a "lifelong process" (Cropley & Dave, 1978: 55). Indeed, it is a "developmental process" which apart from teacher training, includes getting feedback, becoming introspective, accepting responsibility and above all "choosing what to change" (Stenson et al., 1993: 43 & 44).

Nonetheless, there is evidence in the literature on teacher education that training in itself "can help prepare a teacher create an attitude of being organised.....". The course will thus be providing the basis for the development of skills, but these skills, can only be developed by teachers while they are

actually teaching" (Heldentag), 1979: 3). (cf. Richards, 87: 209)

Basically, teacher training programmes, in general, incorporate some form of innovation aiming primarily at some modification/change in teacher trainees behaviours and attitudes towards what is likely to foster effective teaching practices. As such, innovation is always "planned" and purposeful. White's statement that innovation is "planned and deliberate, it is intended to bring about improvement and it is fundamental in nature" is a call for careful design and delivery of TEFL training programmes so that "improvement" is achieved. (White, 87: 11)

1.a Context of the problem

Having too many EFL non-specialist teachers in the second cycle of the basic education stage threatens English Language Teaching development in Egypt. Such teachers "have received no instruction in methodology" and therefore have no expertise of what should go on in an EFL classroom. Far more crucial is that their linguistic competence in the target language is not "sufficient or appropriate" as stated in the 1983 CDELT (Centre For Developing English Language Teaching) national symposium proceedings (p 43).

Unstructured observation of a considerable number of EFL classes taught by non-specialist teachers

has provided the researcher with the following set of common EFL teaching behaviours, all of which indicate the passive role of EFL learners in many of our prep schools - a sheer evidence of ineffective EFL teaching going on in Egypt by the teachers in question. The following are the most salient EFL teaching behaviours that could be observed:

1. Strict adherence to the content of the prescribed texts and the language activities set.
2. Overuse/misuse of repetition drilling which indicates emphasis on form rather than meaning.
3. Vocabulary in isolation rather than contextualized language structures is emphasized.
4. Oral text-based questions are often neither varied nor structurally accurate. Besides, many of these questions function as testing devices rather than teaching ones.
5. Poor use of the blackboard and visuals - an observation which has been supported by a recent Egyptian research finding where the researcher states:
 "The use of the visual element for making language practice in the classroom a bit meaningful is completely disregarded" (El-Okda, 1986: 187).
6. Reading tasks are, more often than not, done by the teachers themselves. Students are occasionally asked to do some loud and not silent reading.