

The Master Teacher Training National Workshop
on **The Use of Digital Tools for Learner Autonomy in Communication Skills**
(A HornbyTrust (UK)-funded project)
at **The Annammal College of Education for Women, Thoothukudi, India**

15 -16 February 2019

A REPORT

Project Head: Dr. S. Rajagopalan

Resource Persons:

1. Dr. P.N.Ramani
2. Dr. Revathi Viswanathan
3. Dr. Pradeep Singh
4. Dr. Joycelin Shermila

The workshop, exclusively meant for our Chapter Heads or their nominees, was attended by 17 of them. Dr.A.Joycilin Shermila, Principal, Annammal College of Education for Women, Thoothukudi welcomed the gathering and inaugurated the workshop.

Day 1:

Session 1: The workshop began with session - 1 by Dr. P. N. Ramani on *Learner Autonomy– What, Why and How*. He dealt with the concept of Learner Autonomy and the need for making students autonomous learners. He reiterated the importance of encouraging students to take up responsibility for their learning in order to develop autonomy. He introduced a few classroom practices and highlighted the learners' and teachers' role in introducing autonomy in institutions.

Session 2: In the next session on Listening and Speaking Skills, Dr Revathi Viswanathan introduced various strategies presented by O'Malley and Chamot and

discussed the importance of training students in various strategies for developing listening skills among students. In this session, her focus was on designing self-*instructional materials relating to speaking and listening skills*. She insisted that teachers need to prepare worksheets through self-instructional modules in order to encourage students to take up responsibility for their learning. Dr.Revathi elaborately discussed the various components of the self-instructional tasks and also provided a sample material for the benefit of the participants. She also introduced the *software*, 'Audacity', which could be used for developing speaking skills. The speaker stressed the need for setting up a *Self Access Centre* in every institution to help students learn and practice each communication skills themselves.

Session 3: Dr Xavier Pradheep Singh handled the use of digital tools for developing Writing skills among students. He introduced tools used by NextGen Z Learners and provided hands on experience to participants in using tools like *Nearpod, Tricider, Padlet, Trello, Google Docs, and Grammarly*. He reiterated that teachers need to use various digital tools in order to encourage students to use the language skills even beyond the language classroom.

Day 2:

Session 4: This session focused on

'Developing Autonomy in Reading Skills' and was handled by Dr P. N. Ramani and Dr.Revathi Viswanathan. Dr.Ramani spoke on the basics of reading skill, the relationship between reading ability and learner autonomy and its concepts. Aspect of reading and its process were introduced with examples. A sample for measuring text difficulty and level of readability through *Lexile* software was given. Dr. Revathi Viswanathan encouraged the participants to prepare a self-instructional module for reading. She divided the participants into groups and provided a self-instructional material template for each group to prepare a task assigned to it. In the end of the session, the tasks were collated and made into a single file.

Session 5: Dr. Revathi Viswanathan discussed the strategies for developing lifelong learning skills and *listed a few the self-evaluation rubrics for students to use while self-directing their learning.* Dr. M.S Xavier Pradheep Singh introduced a few learning platforms for encouraging students to do online courses.

Session 6: Dr.M.S Xavier Pradheep Singh introduced resourceful websites on vocabulary like *visuwords, lexipedia, vocagrabber, lexical lab, your dictionary, lingro, word hippo,* free collocation and vocabulary (as a tool) and demonstrated the way of using them in detail. Dr. Ramani introduced a few online resources on grammar.

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During the feedback session, a few participants shared their views about the sessions handled for two days. Then, with the aim of disseminating the knowledge gained from the workshop, the participants were instructed to conduct a similar type of workshop for teachers in their respective regions.

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In conclusion, it should be said that no words are adequate for thanking Dr. A. Joycelin Shermila, Principal, Annammal College of Education for Women, Thoothukudi for having made excellent arrangements for the conduct of the workshop.

Revathi Viswanathan