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TESOL CONNECTS

Newsletter of TESOL Society of Bangladesh



TESOL Society of Bangladesh
An Association of Applied Linguistics

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President's Message

Dr. Sayeedur Rahman

Professor
Institute of Modern Languages (IML)
University of Dhaka
President,
TESOL Society of Bangladesh



As we navigate through the gradual reopening of educational institutions after the challenging period posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, I am delighted to extend my warmest greetings to each one of you.

Our academic community has demonstrated remarkable resilience, adaptability, and a commitment to learning during these unprecedented times. The reopening of educational institutes marks a significant milestone and a much needed return to normalcy, and it is with great anticipation that we embark on this new chapter together. It has also been a fruitful period for our TESOL community, as seen in the events covered in this issue of our newsletter. We have organized a webinar on publishing research, which is bound to resonate with novice researchers and those looking to build a strong research portfolio.

On a similar note, our Academic Adda this time around also revolved around research; particularly the role of teacher's voices and creating participatory spaces in educational research. This topic is crucial as it explores how we can engage students, educators, and stakeholders to actively contribute to the research process, enhancing its relevance and impact.

As the pandemic and a gradual reopening is fresh on our minds, it is very important that we deliberate on the various aspects of the reopening process. Our panel of experts discussed the considerations and strategies that educational institutions should take into account to ensure a safe, inclusive, and effective learning environment.

As an association we have continued to grow and thrive, and have had new members join our ranks. Our social media memberships are pushing upward and we are very excited about what the future will bring, and what we as a team of educators and researchers can accomplish when we work together.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Sayeedur Rahman'.

Dr. Sayeedur Rahman
Professor, IML, University of Dhaka
President, TESOL Society of Bangladesh

Webinar 5: Let Us Take A Step-Back: Name, Claim, & Aim the Teaching Fears

Dr. Nasreen Sultana

Conestoga College, Kitchener
Canada



TESOL Society of Bangladesh successfully organized its 5th Webinar and the event featured a captivating workshop titled "Let Us Take A Step-Back: Name, Claim, and Aim the Teaching Fears," conducted by Dr. Nasreen Sultana from Conestoga College, Kitchener, Canada.

Dr. Sayedur Rahman, Professor of English Language at IML, University of Dhaka, and the founding President of the association served as the session moderator, while Nushrat Ara Oishe, MA TESOL, IML, University of Dhaka, acted as the program anchor.

The workshop aimed to empower teachers by helping them identify their teaching fears and providing strategies to address them effectively. The workshop drew inspiration from medical education and psychological studies, with the concept of "Name, Claim, & Aim" being adapted from Palmer (1998) and applied to the teaching context.

During the workshop, Dr. Nasreen explained the significance of these three words. "Name" encouraged participants to recognize and acknowledge their unwanted feelings in challenging teaching moments. "Claim" emphasized understanding the impact of these identified discomforts, and "Aim" focused on developing strategies to mitigate teaching fears.

The audience actively engaged in the workshop, sharing their personal experiences of teaching fears and discussing methods to overcome them. Dr. Nasreen facilitated a breakout room activity where participants were presented with uncomfortable situations and encouraged to propose ideas for overcoming them.



Webinar 5: Let Us Take A Step-Back: Name, Claim, & Aim the Teaching Fears

Highlighting the universality of discomfort in human life, Dr. Nasreen emphasized the importance of learning to deal with unwanted situations and tapping into personal strengths to overcome them. The workshop concluded with a brief question and answer session, expertly moderated by Dr. Sayedur Rahman.

TESOL Bangladesh continues to support the professional development of educators, fostering a collaborative and empowering environment for English language teaching professionals across the country.



Webinar 6: Academic Adda Online Assessments during COVID-19: Challenges and Possibilities

Manzoorul Abedin, Ph.D.

CamStar, Faculty of Education,
University of Cambridge



TESOL Society of Bangladesh (TSB) organized its sixth webinar as part of its ongoing efforts to enhance and develop teachers' skills. The webinar, titled "Online Assessments during COVID-19: Challenges and Possibilities," addressed the evolving landscape of online assessments in the wake of the pandemic. The event saw participation from renowned educators and practitioners in the field of English language teaching.

Established in 2014 as a chapter of global TESOL organizations, TESOL Society of Bangladesh transitioned into a fully-fledged organization in 2018. Since then, it has been actively organizing webinars and online programs in collaboration with national and international English language teachers and practitioners and aims to build a large community of English language teachers in Bangladesh and facilitate professional training for both current and aspiring teachers.

The webinar, held on August 14, 2020, featured esteemed speakers including Manzoorul Abedin, Ph.D. (CamStar, Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge), Sayeedur Rahman, PhD (Professor, IML, University of Dhaka), Hamidul Haque (Assistant Professor and Head, Department of English, AIUB), Md. Tareekul Haq (Assistant Professor, Jhenaidah Cadet College), S M Tahmina (Assistant Head Teacher, G K Model High School), and Muhammad Emdadul Haque (Assistant Teacher, Dhaka Uttor Mohammadpur High School). The session was moderated by Rabeya Binte Habib (Assistant Professor, English, Daffodil International University).



Webinar 6: Academic Adda Online Assessments during COVID-19: Challenges and Possibilities

The webinar delved into the experiences of the speakers with online teaching and the various assessment systems implemented in both the UK and Bangladeshi contexts. It provided insights into the challenges and possibilities associated with online assessments. The speakers suggested diverse types of tests, including coursework, essay portfolios, reflective journals, case study analysis, presentations turned into posters, collaborative blogs, one-to-one evaluation meetings, discussion boards, video presentations, take-home science bags or discovery materials, online quizzes or MCQ tests, formulating alternatives to high-stakes exams, and assigning topics that are less likely to be plagiarized.

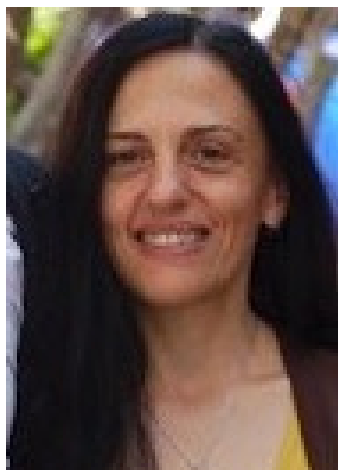
Additionally, the speakers shared effective strategies for conducting interactive online classes, such as encouraging learners in self-directed learning, implementing continuous and formative assessments, assessing cognitive and analytical skills, adding credibility to learner participation, keeping learners' portfolios, and rewarding PDF versions of novels as incentives.

However, the webinar also shed light on the challenges faced by teachers in the realm of online teaching and assessment. These challenges included confirming credibility and practicality, the dominance of knowledge-based tests, incorporating relevant studies and online research, effectively assessing learners' skills, blending alternative assessments with traditional ones, engaging students, addressing issues of students' unsuitable devices for online classes, internet connectivity problems, financial difficulties due to COVID-19, teachers' concerns about assessments while applying new ideas and techniques, and exploring uncharted territories and new tools.

Despite these challenges, the online classroom management and assessment systems have led to increased collaboration among colleagues, interdepartmental and interinstitutional partnerships, and opened up possibilities for continuing education and assessment, even in situations as dire as the COVID-19 pandemic. The webinar concluded with a lively question-and-answer session, allowing the audience to express their opinions and engage in further discussion.



Webinar 7: Written Corrective Feedback on Student Writing



Dr Aida McLeod

Education Researcher & Former Teacher
Southeast European University



Ian McLeod

Co-founder & Founding Editor
Oxford Literary Review

TESOL Society Bangladesh, a leading organization in the field of English language teaching, successfully organized its 7th Webinar session on "Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) on student writing." The webinar centered around the ongoing debate regarding the effectiveness of WCF in improving the quality of students' written language production. The event featured distinguished speakers Dr Aida McLeod, Education Researcher and Former Teacher at Southeast European University, and Ian McLeod, Co-founder, and Founding Editor of Oxford Literary Review.

Dr. Sabreena Ahmed, Assistant Professor, Department of English and Humanities, BRAC University expertly moderated the session, guiding the conversation toward exploring the declarative and procedural knowledge underlying the arguments for WCF's effectiveness in achieving the ultimate goals of automatization and learner autonomy. The speakers provided valuable insights into the subject matter, shedding light on the various aspects of WCF and its impact on student writing.

The webinar explored important considerations related to the manageability and responsibility of providing feedback to students. Participants raised pertinent questions regarding the timing, extent, and level of explicitness in delivering feedback. The discussion emphasized the need to strike a balance between offering constructive feedback and fostering student engagement and motivation.



Webinar 7: Written Corrective Feedback on Student Writing

The session also touched upon different types of CF (Corrective Feedback) strategies, including the use of error codes and the integration of peer feedback. The speakers highlighted the advantages and challenges associated with these approaches, providing attendees with practical knowledge and tools to enhance their teaching practices.

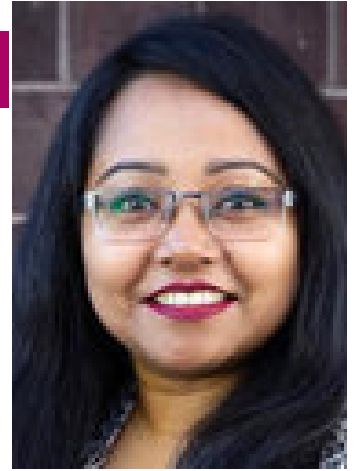
This webinar served as an opportunity for educators and practitioners to exchange ideas, share experiences, and gain valuable insights into the complexities of written corrective feedback. The engaging discussion left participants with a deeper understanding of effective feedback practices and their potential impact on students' writing skills.



Webinar 8: TESOL BD and SUB collaboration Navigating the 'New Normal': Strategies and Tools for Online Teaching

Syeda Farzana Sultana Hafsa, Ph.D.

Warner School of Education
University of Rochester, USA



A webinar titled “Navigating the New Normal: Strategies and Tools for Online Teaching” was organized by the Department of English Studies at State University of Bangladesh in collaboration with TESOL Society of Bangladesh. The webinar featured Syeda Farzana Sultana Hafsa, Ph.D. as its research person and Professor Sayeedur Rahman, Ph.D. as its chief discussant, with Taslima Akter, Senior Lecturer, Dept. of English Studies, SUB as the moderator.

The webinar focused on discussing strategies and tools for online teaching in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is the first webinar organized by the Department of English Studies at State University of Bangladesh in collaboration with TESOL Society of Bangladesh.

Some key takeaways from this webinar include the importance of online teaching in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and how it can be used to promote equity and inclusion in education. The webinar also discusses various tools and strategies for online teaching, such as using learning management systems and creating interactive and authentic assessments to engage students. The webinar also highlights the challenges of online teaching, such as internet connectivity issues, and suggests ways to address these challenges.

Some other topics discussed during this webinar include the challenges of online teaching, such as internet connectivity issues and student engagement, as well as ways to address these challenges. The webinar also discusses the importance of training for online teachers, and how online teaching can be used to promote differentiated learning. Additionally, the webinar highlights the importance of using both synchronous and asynchronous activities in online classes and suggests using a flipped classroom approach to engage students.



“The end goal of better assessment is better learning. They hold the view that assessment activities can and should contribute to growth and learning. They also contend that we should focus on assessment as learning and assessment for learning instead of assessment of learning,” Dr. Syeda Farzana Sultana stated in her talk.

Furthermore, the webinar stressed the importance of using multiple modalities in online education to make learning interesting and engaging and the importance of focusing on assessment as a tool for promoting growth and learning.



Roy Andersen

Principal of Kingston College, Lahore
 Inventor of
 The Brain Environment Complex Theory



On September 2, 2020, TESOL Society of Bangladesh arranged a thought-provoking Facebook Live session titled "The Reason Why School Needs to Change in the Face of Artificial Intelligence" bringing together esteemed guests and education experts to delve into the evolving landscape of education in the digital age. The session aimed to shed light on the transformative potential of artificial intelligence (AI) and its implications for traditional educational models.

The session featured Roy Andersen, Principal of Kingston College, Lahore, and the inventor of The Brain Environment Complex Theory. Andersen is widely recognized for his groundbreaking work in the field of education and has been actively involved in redefining educational practices to meet the challenges posed by emerging technologies. He provided valuable insights into the necessity of adapting schools to the advancements in AI during the session.

Liza Sharmin, Associate Professor at Daffodil International University, skillfully moderated the conversation, guiding the discussion toward exploring the profound impact of AI on the education system. Afroza Akhter Tina, Senior Lecturer in the Department of English at Daffodil International University, also contributed to the conversation, providing additional perspectives on the topic.

During the session, Andersen discussed the growing influence of AI on various aspects of our lives, emphasizing the need for educational institutions to adapt to these advancements. He explored how AI technologies can be harnessed to enhance learning experiences, personalize education, and equip students with the skills required in a rapidly changing world.



The conversation touched upon the challenges and opportunities presented by AI in education. Participants discussed the importance of fostering critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills to prepare students for an AI-driven future. The session also highlighted the role of educators in facilitating the integration of AI technologies in the classroom and the need for ongoing professional development to ensure effective implementation.

This session served as a useful platform for educators, researchers, and practitioners to come together and explore the transformative potential of AI in education. The session generated valuable insights and sparked conversations that will shape the future of education in Bangladesh and beyond.



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KEEPING IN TOUCH

The vision of the Society is to establish an engaging platform for professionals working in the field of TESOL/Applied Linguistics and other allied disciplines to participate in constructive dialogue with one another and with recent developments to strengthen the impact of the field in the community. The Society can help you to remain connected to fellow applied linguists through regular interaction and collaboration with the members.

BECOME A MEMBER

- Student membership: BDT 200/- (BDT 200/- yearly renewal fee)
- Life Membership: BDT 3000/- (One time) (BDT 2000/- if registered in a group of 5 members)
- General membership: Fees 1000 (BDT 500/- yearly renewal fee)
- Associate Membership: 5000 BDT (500 BDT discount if registered in a group of 10) (BDT 500/- yearly renewal fee for regional membership or collective members of a regional EL association)
- Institutional Membership: Departments of English of any school, college, etc.
- Fill out Registration Form
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ENGAGE WITH THE SOCIETY!



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