FACILITATING HEUTAGOGY - SELF DIRECTED LEARNING, AS A TOOL FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Jasti Hima Bindu, PhD Scholar, VFSTR(Deemed to be University), Vadlamudi
Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India : himabindujasti@gmail.com
Dr. Sharada Allamneni, Professor & Head, Division of Humanities, S & H, VFSTR(Deemed to be University), Vadlamudi,Guntur, Andhra Pradesh : allamnenisharada@gmail.com

Abstract
Continuing education for teachers can find leverage and be guided by a heutagogical approach. Heutagogy is self-directed learning, when we apply this principle to meet the present day demands of language teachers, it would prove to be an effective method for professional development, especially now when learning online, new technologies and distance learning are the methods of education. Most professional development programmes have tasks and topics that are generic, thus risk being ineffective and irrelevant. The facilitator or trainer simply provides a context to enhance and enable the targeted module or topic. Through a heutagogical approach, teachers can best identify teaching-learning challenges, formulate effective solutions based on their convenience and available resources. An approach like heutagogy can transform the learning ecosystem. In the current era, more so in the post pandemic times, the scope for learning and methods of education have taken a reformative leap, challenging most existing beliefs. Knowledge is no longer limited to few resources and tools. Effective learning skills like critical and creative thinking, communicating, and collaborating, no longer demark and define the knowledge acquisition and learning. The heutagogical approach shifts the focus of learning from receiving learning inputs to analysing those inputs. Based on extensive review of existing literature available on heutagogical practice and approaches, researcher discusses and attempts to propose professional development elements that improve teaching-learning process.

Keywords*:* Continuous Professional Development; Heutagogy; Self-directed learning

Introduction
To learn a skill, adapt and survive in our fast-paced existence, is quite a bit of a task. Teaching fraternity across the globe is at a war with themselves. Knowledge acquisition to meet the requirements of the learner first, school next, then the whole of education-work environment, is widely witnessed during the global pandemic times. While raising a balanced child, has been the taxing on parents, turning themselves into a holistic educator is the goal teachers have to meet. It is not a surprise when you come across a parent who now believes in the philosophy of unschooling and teachers who unlearnt and embraced new methods and forms of learning practices. Thereby confirming their identity as a well-informed teacher and becoming capable of applying skills and competence effectively. These scenarios meet the thought that - *Learning is creation, not consumption. Knowledge is not something a learner absorbs, but something a learner creates*. – George Couros

Researcher attempts to share learning and key findings from the course of research. The focus of research is on identifying how professional development for language teachers may be more effective, which would further result in an efficient classroom, holistic learner and an effective language user. The interactions with teachers at state run government schools and classroom observations lead to review concepts like professionalism and professional development, teaching – learning processes and how a learner learns. Pandemic has been a boon in many ways than one to the entire system of education. Core beliefs and principles are tested and made one *reflect, rethink* and *revise* practices and beliefs that were the modus operandi to educators.

Professional development programmes have to revisit the idea of teacher support, they must discard learning topics that only serve as key factors to decide the hours or days of training offered.

The learning spaces should be interactive and can no longer serve the purpose in a conventional arrangement. The pedagogies need to give birth to new arenas of learning namely

heutagogy, synergogy, peeragogy, cybergogy. While pedagogy and andragogy are existing and established concepts, synergogy, heutagogy, peeragogy, cybergogy are relatively adapted to current generation needs and pandemic time requirements (Figure 1) [4,8] (Wang & Kang), (Ratnani, Fatima, Mithwani, Mahanger, & Surani, 2020)

Pedagogy *is an approach for dependent learners or children*
Andragogy *focuses on adult learners who are independen*t
Synergogy *is cooperative learning*
Heutagogy *encourages learners to become more self-directed*
Peeragogy *focuses on co-learning or co-creating*
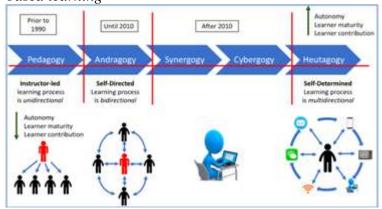**Cybergogy** *is virtual-based learning*

Figure 1

Through these alternative approaches and teaching strategies, learning on part of the teacher may result in positive outcomes. Heutagogy is an instructional strategy that ensures lifelong learning, resulting in an learning ecosystem, confirming learner readiness for the of present day work place. A key concept in heutagogy is that of double-loop learning and self-reflection (Argyris & Schön, 1996). According to this concept teachers can identify learning areas by reflecting on action and outcomes of their practices. They bring their awareness to skills that are in need of improvement or new skills to be learnt. Awareness about skills that are achievable, as required for their classroom engagement and those that enhance student abilities.

> *Teachers need an awareness of the internal context, an awareness of the self, in order to understand how they are interpreting a teaching situation through their own individual lens'' (Schussler & Knarr, 2013, p. 74). It means that teachers have to have inclinations towards acting and thinking in particular ways and one's awareness of why those behaviors and ways of thinking make sense in specific situations to achieve intended purposes. (Žydžiūnaitė & Daugėla, 2020)*

Such awareness is observed in teachers during the course of researcher's interactions. Teachers are found to be keen in identifying appropriate means and feasible methods of learning and in particular adapting to technology – new apps/strategies to support learners learning processes. Teachers can adapt very well to learning through self directed transformative learning. This can take on different aspects meant to foster awareness as per the forms of learning strategy used. While adjusting to existing learning, teachers can add on to different or extended knowledge areas, and thus raise language standards or improve skills.

> *The positive effect for teachers whose professional development is coherent is true even compared to teachers who have gained the same underlying knowledge and skills as a result of their professional development experiences. (Garet et al.)*

Problem statement

The Govt of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development approved Model Schools in 2015. English is to be the mode of instruction middle school onwards. Schools in India primary task is having *language-ready* teachers – both in numbers and standard. The ambitious programs like English Language Enrichment Course by SCERT and NCERT, despite active participation, had a

shortlived enthuse. The programmes lacked in continuity and consistent support beyond the course duration. Rather than sessions '*in-one-go*' programmes that are planned periodically – at the beginning, middle and at the end of an academic year would guarantee further effectiveness. While observing various in-service and pre-service teacher training programmes it was noted that teacher's professionalism – in terms of purpose and passion towards a promised outcome is diluted soon after the course. Teachers hardly get to implement learning principles and demonstrate knowledge in the classroom. They find it difficult to carry the inspiration while addressing the administrative responsibilities. The passion fades into routine practises, focusing on covering the syllabus rather than uncovering the curriculum. Reflective practices showcased teachers discontent and helplessness towards their roles and lack of professional goals. With a brief understanding of teacher challenges and deep inquiry into existing professional development methods, it is observed that – knowledge acquisition when self-directed and guided by introspection, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, an adult learner can easily develop and improve on skills, be it personal or professional, technical or language based.

　　　　　English medium education: Shortage of teachers may test Telangana govt's intent: The 26,072 govt schools in TS have about 22 lakh students in different mediums who are taught by 1 lakh teachers

Source: The New Indian Express 20 January 2022

　　　　The researcher hopes to contribute to language teacher learning, growth and its impact on english langue teaching in a rural setup classroom. The suggested ideas and learning modules are based on the assumption that all ages are familiar with technology and internet and have a basic know how on web based tools like web browser, Youtube.

　　　　Practicing teachers continue to learn about teaching in many ways. First, they learn from their own practice. Whether this learning is described as the monitoring and adjustment of good practice or analyzed more completely according to a model of pedagogical reasoning (Wilson et al., 1987)

Research methodology

Researcher sought to identify methods that apply the concept of heutagogy for professional development of a teacher. It is assumed that based on work place requirements and demands, the teacher reflects and brings self-awareness to skills that are in need of improvement. It is also presumed that most teachers have a basic know-how of technology. The review of literature present an understanding of current education scenarios specific to India, in general the state run government school - English language teachers. Methods and reasons as to why and how the concept of heutagogy as a learning strategy, may be an efficient way of professional development for teachers are discussed by way of incorporating literature review. The paper serves as a basis for developing and enriching, existing training or professional development programmes - specifically for the government school teachers, whose skill enhancement translates into the desired outcome of *language ready students - the need of 21st century.*

Professional development module

Researcher through her ongoing engagement with teachers as a language teacher and also as a trainer, facilitaror at various educational institutes, mentor - language development for corporates, develops programmes for language enrichment and professional devlopment. Each one of them tailored to meet specific needs of the learner, indvidually and as per the need of the profession they are engaged in. With this experince and exposure the brief layout of a programme based on heutagogical approach was developed, to meet the rural language teacher needs and enhance their skills for an enriching language learning environment.

　　　　This programme is intended for secondary level teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL), at the state run schools. The programme aims at providing teachers, who wish to learn and improve their skills, with a range of resources that they can choose from and adapt to their *learning pace* and *style*. Later, the same can be mirrored and used in classrooms to engage young learners. This programme or course is meant to be used multiple times by choosing from a set of key skills

areas, also apply varied learning styles, each time. The modules do not require learner to follow a sequential order, one may choose to learn from an entire module or just a topic. Learner gets to drive learning at a pace of convenient to their work routine. More resourceful *teacher-learners* or even *traners, facilitators, programme managers, school administrators* may modify the programme making it furthermore learner specific.

Programme Outline

1. Introduction
2. Module objectives and outcomes
3. Learning pace and style
4. Reflective supervision (Resources)
5. Skill in focus (Modules)
   M.01   Better Listening
   M.02   Speaking for Better Communication
   M.03   Effective Reading & Writing
   M.04   Use of literature
	M.05 Grammar in context
	   M.06 Classroom management & administration
	   M.07 Lesson planning
	   M.08 Active learning
	   M.09 Technology as a tool for learning
	6. Technical Assistance (Resources)
	7. Help and Support
	8. Assessment
	9. Programme Guide (Instructions)

Discussion and prospects
Features of the programme
Below mentioned are various features that define the progamme based on heautogical approach for teacher's professional development.

The progamme is an **agreement** that's primarily defined by the *teacher-learner*, who reflects and has awareness of skills that are to be enhanced or newly learnt. The trainer or facilitator works along with teacher, only on need basis to direct learner towards projected skills or identify learning needs and also layout the intended outcomes.

The topics, areas or skills identified are **flexible**. They are designed upon understanding and identifying learners' requiremnents, goals and predicting possible outcomes and improvements on part of the learner. More importantly the teacher-learner upon successful completion of learning may adapt and modify the topics to the needs of learners in the classroom. They can also create more topics on the same guidelines meeting specific needs. Flexibility in terms of time spent on learning adds to the effectiveness and success of this programme.

Assesments are designed based on the learning areas and the comfort of learners understanding of topics. A single standard test does not define progress of the learner. This ensures that learner does not feel inhibited or demotivated by the concept of test. The comfort of learning at ones own pace, style and need, enables in-depth learning. Assessments determine if the outcomes have been achieved.

The success of programme depends on directing learners who are used to being directed, provided for and monitored through their entire learning process, to now being on their own and be responsible for learning. Hence the transition may be intially through a collaborative approach between the peer groups or with the facilitators themselves - peerology. This facilitates knowledge sharing and reflection on individual progress. Once learners feel comfortable they may gradually move onto self-directed heautogogical approach.

Teachers today are accepting transformative thinking, adapting innovative practices and turning themselves in to investigative research methods as part of their teaching-learning interactions.

Action research empowers teachers to planning for and reflecting on their teaching practices that in turn would help them identify their strengths and weaknesses. Heutagogical approach and action research may pair well in achieving teachers educational goals. Characteristics like

empowering knowledge, reflective practice are common to both methods. Therefore with an action reaserach mindset and heautagogical approach teachers can enhance their skills further.

In education, action research generates actionable hypotheses about teaching, learning, and curriculum from reflection on and study of teaching, learning, and curriculum to improve teaching, learning, and curriculum.

→ *Action research assumes that teachers are the agents and source of educational reform and not the objects of reform.*

→ *Action research empowers teachers to own professional knowledge because teachers—through the process of action inquiry—conceptualize and create knowledge, interact around knowledge, transform knowledge, and apply knowledge.*

→ *Action research enables teachers to reflect on their practice to improve it, become more autonomous in professional judgment, develop a more energetic and dynamic environment for teaching and learning, articulate and build their craft knowledge, and recognize and appreciate their own expertise.* (Pine, 2009)

Teachers inspire students to be lifelong learners by being one. An effective classroom, motivated learning and healthy learning groups happen only if and when the participants are constantly learning. *There is no end to education. It is not that you read a book, pass an examination, and finish with education. The whole of life, from the moment you are born to the moment you die, is a process of learning.* – Jiddu Krishnamurti

Through this heautagogical approach of self-directed, continuous process of learning, teachers ennoble themselves to become *professionally - self-aware* and *personally - responsible* beings. Finally, learning is life long and never ending. Old methods make way to newer ways of learning and teaching, redefining the education system. Through skill enhancement, teachers with fewer facilities and opportunities, and from less advanced societies, can be empowered to meet the needs and be ready for the global world. Truly being Glocal.

References
1. Bransford, J. D. (2004). How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school. Washington, DC: National Acad. Press.
2. Calderhead, J. (1987). Exploring teacher's thinking. Inglaterra: Cassell.
3. English medium education: Shortage of teachers may test Telangana govt's intent. (2022, January 22). The New Indian Express. Retrieved from https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/telangana/2022
4. Garet, M. S., Porter, A. C., Desimone, L., Birman, B. F., & Yoon, K. S. (2001). What makes professional development effective? results from a national sample of teachers. American Educational Research Journal, 38(4), 915-945. doi:10.3102/00028312038004915
5. Pine, G. (2009). Teacher action research: Building knowledge democracies. Thousand oaks: Sage Publications.
6. Ratnani, I., Fatima, S., Mithwani, A., Mahanger, J., & Surani, Z. (2020). Changing paradigms of bedside clinical teaching. Cureus. doi:10.7759/cureus.8099
7. Richards, J. C., & C., F. T. (2012). Professional development for language teachers: Strategies for teacher learning. New-York: Cambridge University press.
8. Teacher action research: Collaborative, participatory, and Democratic Inquiry. (n.d.). Teacher Action Research: Building Knowledge Democracies, 29-61. doi:10.4135/9781452275079.n2
9. Thornton, K. (2010). Supporting self-directed learning: A framework for teachers. Language Education in Asia, 1(1), 54. doi:10.5746/leia/10/v1/a14/thornton
10. Zydziunaite, Vilma & Daugėla, Marius. (2020). Teacher's Professional Self-Awareness Within The Interactions With Students In Higher Education: Temporality and Relationality. Acta Paedagogica Vilnensia. 45. 160-174. 10.15388/ActPaed.45.10.
11. Wang, M., & Kang, M. (n.d.). Cybergogy for Engaged Learning: A framework for creating learner engagement through information and Communication Technology. Engaged Learning with Emerging Technologies, 225-253. doi:10.1007/1-4020-3669-8_1.