Innovative teaching and learning strategies for slow learners

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Abstract: Language teaching has become a challenging task with the advent of corporate society. Understanding the growing need, language teacher has to employ different strategies in the classroom. The teacher is expected to observe the learning capacity of the student. Among all languages English is excessively being used in the major communication systems like Social, Cultural, academic etc. One of the major problems that a language teacher faces is identification of slow learners in the class room to bring uniformity in the learning and teaching process. The present study focuses on how the slow learner can be identified and also how necessary support can be provided in improving his learning capacity. It also further discusses the various types of evaluation patterns that can help the slow learner to become active in language acquisition. It also throws light on how best the problem can be solved by activity based language learning, which ensures multiple skills along with language.

Keywords: Language, teaching, corporate society, class room

1. Introduction:

The context of globalization had opened doors for corporate society which brought tremendous change in all most all sectors, including education. The Corporate employment is expecting different skills from the employee, which can size him for international needs. Hence language teacher's responsibility had been increased from teacher to mentor. The different job descriptions in the corporate offices emphasize on advanced communication system, this indeed expanded the need to learn language as an important aspect. When compared with other means of communication English Language is found to be at Global status. It is used in major communicative systems and its existence has hastened socio-cultural development. Teaching English has become a challenging task since it is not elective but it is the need of the hour.

2. Language class room scenario:

Since language learning has become backbone for career advancement, language teacher has to take challenging tasks to improve language skills. It became the responsibility of the teacher to provide right platform for the learner. Now-a-days every class room is a mixed ability classroom where different kinds of learners sit together with a common aim, to be proficient in the language they need.

But there exist large variation between their learning capacities and application ability though they are learners to the same teacher

3. Slow learner: a bird's eye view

Among the various problems that a language teacher faces, dealing with slow learner is one. Since the students they come from vernacular backgrounds they are prone to be carried away by its influences. This may make them different from the other learners. Slow learners are hesitant, feel inferior, non-participative, rigid, and diffident and found to be very slow to his peers. Sometimes they may exempt themselves from free and participative learning and prepares same peer group for the convenience to exist. They never take any co-operation from either teacher or active participant. If the class is becoming more active their confidence levels will decrease more. It is said to be a problem to be rectified with necessary care.

4. Reasons for slow learning

Being a slow learner is not a physical disability or biological lacuna but many factors influence this inability.

External Reasons

- Lack of environment that instil security and confidence
- Limited opportunities for learning
- Irregularity in attending school
- Untrained teachers

- Large size class rooms.

Internal Reasons Sometimes the learner may face internal problems like stammer, odd teeth order, conscious of poor self-image, neglected by parents and other outsiders, students with conventional and orthodox family systems etc.

5. Strategies to Encourage (Change) Slow Learner

Strategic Language teaching can build confidence and support in the slow learner. *"Be less complex and less interpretative in applications"* (MacIntyre,P &R.C.Gardner 1994)To create interest in learning, teacher has to use different strategies that encourage the slow learner for language acquisition.

Some supporting strategies:

- Strong student teacher relationship provides opportunities for the student to be interactive.

- Continuous evaluation drives away fear complexion

- Usage of simple vocabulary in giving instructions would give freeness in the follow up work.

- Classroom should be peaceful and with personal space for better understanding

- Giving more time to work on the assignment

- Providing meaningful and concrete activities.

- To encourage active participation small and familiar tasks can be given.

- Student should be given inspiration to explore creative ideas

- Repeating the tasks will give lasting impact

- Teaching life skills along with language learning perfects the means of communication

6. Need for evaluation & different patterns

Commitment and sincerity can be brought out with proper assessment. If evaluation is not done the learner does not find the chance to test his practical ability.

Here are some evaluation patterns:

- Written assignment like writing comprehension

- Dictation to check the spellings and vocabulary

- Strip stories i.e., beginning and ending will be given to frame the story

- Fill-ups with grammatical structures to test their grammatical skills

- Elocution with small gathering enhances their public speaking ability

- Group discussion can be conducted which will become a fetching experience to forthcoming interview sessions.

7. Activity Based Class: A Right Environment

Learner centered classroom can facilitate right learning atmosphere to the hesitant learner. "*The interactions among the learners in the classroom provide adequate activities for each participant to air their voices* (Bairagi Patra 2012)" Activities given in the fun-filled environment would drive away inhibitions from the learner. But his participation should be encouraged in the form of a facilitator.

Some Class room activities like:

- Group presentations on the given topics like popular festivals, college functions, new inventions etc.

- Activities like mind mapping i.e. on the simple topics like youth addictions, problems with university education, students and politics etc. they will be given time to bring about a picture on the charts and explore their ides.

- Book reviews and movie reviews can be conducted in English

8. Conclusion:

The exciting opportunities are fascinating dragging the present day professional youth. The present day learner is ready to take up any challenge if it is instilled properly. The strategies discussed can facilitate learner's participation. Since slow learning is not a disability it can be rectified by consistent practice and efficient orientation. The different

evaluation methods would strengthen the learner in building his confidence. Thus it is felt the problem can be identified and solved with less effort.

References

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