

Title :

Designing and Experimenting of English Instructional Material for Facilitating Constructivist learning.

Name:

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Background :

Constructivism has emerged as one of the greatest influences on the practice of education in the last twenty-five years. Teachers have embraced constructivist-based pedagogy with an enthusiasm that is rare in these days of quick fixes and a shopping mall approach to school improvement. For many teachers, the focus on constructing meaning in the teaching-learning process resonates with prior beliefs because constructivist-based instruction firmly places educational priorities on students. In the classroom, the constructivist view of learning points towards a number of different teaching practices. In the most general sense, it usually means encouraging students to use active techniques (experiments, real-world problem solving) to create more knowledge and then to reflect on and talk about what they are doing and how their understanding is changing. The teacher makes sure she understands the students' pre-existing conceptions, and guides the activity to address them and then build on them.

Purpose:

Following were the objectives of the study:

- 1) To develop criteria for a framework for developing Instructional material for facilitating constructivist learning.
- 2) To design instructional material for class VIII level within the developed framework in the light of selected objectives of teaching English as lay down by Central Board of Secondary Education.
- 3) To experiment the developed instructional material on selected sample of student.

Hypothesis:

Learning through Constructivist approach based English package will enhance attainment of defined objectives of English Teaching..

Research Design: The research was experimental. In this study the researcher had used pre test, post test control group design.

Variables: In this research the Independent variable was English Instructional material and Dependent variable was Achievement test.

Population: Population of this research was all the students of class VIII of CBSE board affiliated school

Study Sample: Sample comprised of 50 students in Experimental group and 50 in the Control group.

Sampling: Two stage sampling was adopted in this research. At the first stage selection of school was done by using random sampling technique. And at the second stage selection of students for experimental group and control group was done by paired randomization sampling method using entry level achievement test results.

Tools: In this research following tools were developed by the researcher.

- 1) Two achievement tests were developed one of Language and one of Literature.
- 2) English Instructional package that cover quarterly term.
- 3) Questionnaire for collecting the feedback from the students of experimental group. (Appendix 9)
- 4) Opinionnaire regarding the suitability of the instructional package from the teachers. (Appendix 10)

Intervention: For designing instructional material the researcher reviewed the related literature on Constructivist learning and developed a framework to identify its dimensions and characteristics of constructivist learning. On the basis of the developed framework, instruction for English subject was designed.

The validation of the developed package was done by following the standard procedures.

An achievement test to assess the entry level of the students of class VIII was developed. This test was administered on a large group and using its results the sample for experimental group and control group was drawn.

The Experimental group was taught through developed Instructional package whereas control group was taught through traditional method for one quarter. After this another achievement test was conducted on both the groups.

The result of this test was used for testing the hypothesis. Opinions of the subject teachers as well as the students were gathered to assess the suitability of the developed package.

Data Analysis:

Both Qualitative and Quantitative approaches were adopted for analyzing the data as per requirement.

Findings:

Mean achievement of the students exposed to constructive learning is differs significantly higher than the mean achievement of the students taught through traditional method ($M_1=15.38$, $M_2=13.83$). It implies that constructivist learning has a significant impact on the achievement of class VIII students in English.

Result:

It was found that students who were taught through designed Instructional material based on Constructivist Learning had performed better than those who were taught through Traditional method.

Suggestions for further Research:

Further research studies need to investigate the following:

- a) The present study was confined to 60 (sixty) students. It can be extended by increasing the size of the sample.
- b) The present study was limited to the students of class VIII. It can be extended to other classes' viz. pre primary, primary, higher, technical levels etc.
- c) This study can be extended to Compare learner grouped on the bases of the achievement
- d) This study is conducted in English; it can be conducted in other subjects too.

Recommendations:

- a) For proper implementation of constructivist learning in the real classroom situations, the teachers should take imitative and must follow and also make the students follow the steps of constructivist learning. It is therefore, the teacher who should play the pivotal role in order to make constructivist learning successful in classrooms of India.
- b) This method will be helpful to develop better social skills and critical thinking ability which are much important in every step of life. Thus, Constructivist learning, besides benefiting the learners academically, will also make them a balanced personality.
- c) Constructivist learning will bring a drastic change in academic achievement of a school if the school management provides necessary resources and appoints active and committed teachers. The existing staff should be encouraged and oriented to employ collaborative learning in the practical classroom situation
- d) Students should be given chance to focus on the ideas they are writing about and to develop more complex thinking and reasoning skills as they defend their ideas for themselves.

Conclusion:

Although constructivism is not a theory of teaching, it suggests taking a radically different approach to instruction from that used in most schools. Instructors need to realize that the best way to learn is not from lectures, but by letting the learners construct knowledge for themselves. People often say that everyone can learn. Yet the reality is that everyone does learn. Every person is born with a brain that functions as an immensely powerful processor. However, traditional schooling inhibits learning by discouraging, ignoring, or punishing the brain's natural learning processes. In order for learners to be able to actively construct their own knowledge, rather than receive preformed information transmitted by others, curriculum emphases, classroom interactions, and classroom dynamics must change in major ways. Changing the traditional ways of schooling

is not an easy task though. Just as students do not easily let go of their ideas, neither do school boards, principals, parents, or even teachers.

In the talk of education, Constructivism is a very common word. There is much debate on whether teachers should stick to the traditional way by lecturing, or should they teach in a constructivist way, where the child has to construct the knowledge for themselves. Some may feel that the constructivist theory that was developed by many psychologists is the best and most effective way for their child to learn. The students should have a constructivist teacher along with a constructivist classroom to help them discover new things for themselves. Constructivism promotes increased social interaction and discussion in the classroom, both between teachers and students and between students.

The constructivists propose several instructional strategies among them cooperative learning, collaborative learning, problem based learning etc. are prominent. Therefore to keep pace with the changing circumstances, we should not keep ourselves aloof from new experiments in the field of education to make learning more effective and enjoyable experience for pupils. Clearly, the constructivist approach opens new avenue for learning as well as challenges for the teacher trying to implement it.

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