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EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONS BY NOVICE TEACHER TO IMPROVE TEACHING REPERTOIRE IN SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

This paper highlights a review on the importance of giving clear instructions and strategies to improve oral instruction by novice teachers as they improve their teaching repertoires in schools. Essentially, this will help teachers to develop a clear oral instruction for good class management. It is an agreeable fact that giving instruction is a skill that takes many years of experience to master and meets the ideal set of practice that teachers set for themselves. Novice teachers face a lot of challenges to master the skill of giving instruction effectively and that is a mark of great quality of a teacher. An effective instructional strategy will deliver the lesson clearly and help learners to understand the focus, engage actively and take ownership of their learning.

INTRODUCTION

Instructions are a part of classroom management and teaching method. Instructions can be considered as a guideline of strategy that facilitate learners to perform pre-plan task that affect learning. Instructions are a flow of guidelines of learning goals and redesign learning tasks according to the needs of the students in the classroom. According to Sowell (2017) a lesson failed to achieve its objectives due to teachers' poor delivery of instructions. Therefore, giving good instructions is not merely a naturally acquired skill, for this skill

requires a great deal of time, practice and experience before a teacher can deliver an effective instruction in any classrooms.

With the success of effective instructions by teachers, the students will be able to follow through the lesson with ease and they will be able to engage in the classroom activity and the process of teaching will be smoother for the teacher. According to Ur (1996) giving directions to students to perform a learning task need good application of instructions. Good and clear delivery of instructions boost the increase of student independent learning autonomously. She added that failing to do so can result in a waste of time since students might interrupt the lesson by asking teacher to repeat the instruction or unable to complete the task given. It is an important skill to enhance classroom activity, that can influence the flow of the lesson and effective teaching and learning.

TYPES OF INSTRUCTION

In the Malaysian context, two types of instructions are normally introduced to novice teachers. Firstly, using direct instruction is a traditional strategy of teaching and the approach is very teacher directed. Teacher centred approach views teacher as the main figure and the main authority in the classroom. The direct instruction model emphasises a great deal on the usage of scripted lesson plans in teaching. Applying this traditional strategy of teaching will focus on a scripted text that teacher will dictate orally to the students to perform the task. In this manner, students are passive receiver and teacher is the knowledge provider.

Next, Student-Centred Method which is also known as Differentiated Instruction and this method of teaching uses tailored instructions to cater to an intended group of students. Teachers can differentiate a lesson in numerous ways. Teachers will be the sole decision maker of the content to access and to set activities for students in order to master a concept, to work in groups, to take notes of topics, to determine materials given and to determine how the classroom is set up.

CHARACTERISTIC OF EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Students Centred Classroom

In a student-centred classroom, the priority of learning is on discovery of knowledge by students and the involvement of students is very important. This classroom will focus on collaborative and cooperative way of learning that enhanced students' engagements in an authentic and holistic manner. Learning is very student oriented and they take ownership of their learning.

Teaching for Understanding

Instructions as regard to teaching for understanding focus on student engagements in the classroom. Perkins (1993) stressed that instructions should

be built around various thought-provoking activities such as the tasks to explain, to find evidence and to apply and use analogies to show understandings. that enhanced student engagements. In addition, the teacher should make choices to implement effective classroom instructions to celebrate learner differences and teacher should also create more thought provoking tasks to engage students in an active learning.

Assessment for Learning

Instructions in assessment for learning are utilized to provide feedback to students and to redesign the classroom teaching and learning. Leinhardt (2010) stated that accurate instructions that create a task for formative assessment could provide clear learning to students. These practices could provide the opportunity to build students' ability to self-assess and take ownership of their own learning and achievements. The characteristics of instructions can aid students in the process of assessment for learning.

Rigor and Relevance

The rigor of instructions is on how teachers deliver a lesson effectively using simple and clear communication to make understandings of difficult content or concept to students. In today's 21st century classroom, lessons should be made relevant to real world situation so students should be able to apply the skills or knowledge learnt to solve life and work problems. The rigor and relevancy of instructions in classrooms is important to teachers and students for learning is moving from the conventional instructions by teacher solely to the instructions created by students in peer collaborative learning.

Teaching for Learner Differences

Teaching that empowers learner differences in the classroom focused on the instructions that portrayed the teaching goals selected, designed and delivered by teachers to suit learners' needs. Teachers or educators provide autonomous learning in a flexible manner and the instructions were delicately selected and clearly delivered the message to allow learners to construct their learning through the process of practice, reflect, redesign and re teach.

EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONS STRATEGY

Most Malaysian schools comprised of mixed ability students with different levels and varying learning abilities. For that reasons, teachers and educators need to vary their teaching strategies so that it will benefit all students in the classroom. The first clear strategy or rule of thumb is that instructions need to be kept as simple as possible to be of benefits to a class of mixed ability students. It is important to accommodate our instruction to the student's level. This occurs through the adaptation of language and materials, to present the information in a more comprehensible way and focus more on the content to increase students' interaction. Without effective instructions, student might get of the rail on what the teacher have been teaching them.

There are several strategies that can be used to improve teacher's skill and novice teachers are encouraged to implement the strategies.

Use Simplified Language

Scrivener (2011) suggested using words that are familiar to students and delete some of the words if the instruction is long. Delivering good instructions will empower students to comprehend learning easily for simplified language is selectively chosen to emphasise a clear instruction for learning. According to Clara (2017), language teachers precisely should be very selective in designing tasks and instructions in simple language for the needs of learners to ensure effective learning.

Lesson Plan

Woodberry & Aldrich (2000) emphasized that a good instruction is planned out before class with the writing of the lesson plan. Writing down a scripted instruction can help teachers to be more organized when giving instruction. The lesson plan is a necessary document and it serves as a checklist to prevent the novice teachers from missing or skipping an instruction when teaching. When preparing the lesson, the student's level must be taken into consideration.

Student's Attention

Students' attention rate is another factor for consideration. If the students fail to listen to instructions, then the instructions turn invalid. There are many ways to get the students' attention. For example, create a signal for them to focus on. For example, in class teacher can introduce signal which is 'eyes on me'. When a teacher states the phrase, the students reply aloud 'eyes on you'. This method can be used to test their attentiveness in class. The teacher can be creative in grabbing or attaining students' attention using simple instructions to deliver the message such as, when a bell is rung or a whistle is blown, these actions indicated the attainment of students' attention.

Provide worksheet after instructions

One of the general rules given is not to provide worksheet to the students before giving instruction. This is because the student's attention will be on the worksheet given instead of the teacher. On the contrary, it depends on the objective of the lesson. Some activities in the lesson required to have the materials beforehand so that students will be able to understand teacher's instructions. For example, when playing games, having a cue cards beforehand will be helpful for the students to grasp the teacher's instructions.

Observe Student Body Language

During lessons, teachers should constantly be alert of students understanding by observing their body language. If students look confused and look at their peers, such responses indicate they do not understand the instructions given. Teacher can check students' understanding by asking question. The common way to do so is by asking them, "Do you understand?"

However, it might not be effective as the student might answer “yes” because they do not want to embarrass themselves in front of their classmates. Teachers can ask student to repeat the instructions or ask them to model what they understand.

Avoid Vague Instruction

Teacher should avoid vague instruction such as “Get into your group and discuss”. The students are confused on the vague instruction and it de motivated them to complete the given activities. Students need to be given specific task and clear instructions. When the students begin their activity, teacher can walk around the class to monitor and to help the students along the way (Scrivener 2011). If there are many students still asking for clarification of the instruction, it is better to stop the activity and repeat the instruction clearly.

Reflection

Most importantly, teachers need to reflect on their teaching. The teachers especially the novices are encouraged to record and listen to themselves as part of reflective teaching. The process of reflective teaching will help teachers in developing an awareness of classroom behaviour. Another good method of self-reflection will be by asking for feedback from other teachers about their classroom instructions.

CONCLUSION

Effective instructions strategize learning and create high ownerships of students when they engage in group discussions or group project-based learning and individual design thinking activities to achieve learning goals. Students’ learning are made more interactive and proactive by teacher’s delivery of clear oral or written instructions to guide learning. For a novice teacher, learning the skill of teaching, giving clear and effective instructions are strategies that can be acquired through reflective practices and experiences in real classroom teaching. The ability to explain difficult things in a simple way is not an easy task in a class of multi-level learners. Ultimately, novice teachers should engage in the process of teaching and learning dynamically as to cater to all learners of diverse learning styles.

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