

Strategic Learning: A Review on Coaching and Training in the Classroom Environment

LAMYAE LAZAAR
HIND BRIGUI

Literature, Arts, and Pedagogical Engineering Laboratory,
Faculty of Languages, Letters and Arts, Kenitra, Ibn Tofail University, Morocco.

Abstract:- The current paper is a review of a research which is triggered by a university student's query, who related her prior experience to her expectations about the way teaching-learning take place at the university. Thus, the learning environment along with the content of the course creates confusion among freshmen. The objective of this research is to examine the degree to which incorporating learning strategies and self-monitoring aspects into the classroom would lead pupils to harness a self-reflective skill to wise up expectations as university students. The results of the project disclosed the importance of strategy training besides providing systematic contingencies for learners to reproach their learning process. Participants who contributed to this action research, as such, were more likely to make use of existing opportunities for language learning. Moreover, they attempted to establish an association between English and content courses. This study unveiled the shortcomings of language curricula that stress the content more than the learning strategies and proved the deeds of strategy training among university students.

Keywords: *Strategy Training, Action Research, Teaching, Learning, Coaching, Curricula.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The study reviewed in this paper is conducted by David Nunan in order to explore the effectiveness of strategy training among learners in the classroom context. Both the nature and content of the study are captivating since action research is known to deal with everyday scenarios and focuses on finding solutions to actual experiences, while strategy training is commonly looked out in language curricula that emphasize language content. Hence, this study must be appealing to practitioners who tend to improve their teaching-learning context. To this end, this article will highlight the procedures used by the researcher, the different tasks involved in the research project, which reinforce strategy training, and the result discussion of the study, along with evaluation of major aspects of the study and their importance in the field of teaching and research.

II. SUMMARY OF THE ARTICLE

The project is described as an action research within small-case that includes groups of first year undergraduate students at Hong Kong University. The strategy training aimed at urging students to be more active participants in their language learning by being supplied with systematic opportunities to spotlight the process of their language learning as well as language use patterns. In this respect, students were introduced to the objective of the project and appealed to participate in it at the beginning of the semester. They were thereby informed that their participation in the action research is voluntary, even though the strategy course was integral to their regular program. The research project, then, requires students' skills in monitoring and reporting the used strategy, along with personal goals for strategy development. Given the aforementioned considerations, the overwhelming majority of students volunteered to take part in the current action research. The project initiated with students filling out "guided journals" at the end of the first week of the semester. The guided journal includes sentence starters which aimed at reporting what students had studied that week, what they had learned, where they had used English, to whom they had spoken the English language, challenges they had faced, what they would have liked to know, the type of help they would have loved to receive, and their learning and practicing plans for the following week. During the 12-week period, students reflected on their own learning thanks to the program, which incorporated the project, which involved tasks underlying four major categories.

To begin with, the first category aimed at triggering a focal point on the learning process. More specifically, this part emphasizes regular facets of the learning process, helping students identify ways to make them learn best along with reflecting on what is feasible and what is not. Eventually, they have to analyze and contrast their learning approaches to those of other students.

The following category involved engaging the context along with the learning process environment, which included tasks that urged learners to focus on various learning modes. By this means, learners are trained to develop skills in working with diversified modes similar to individualized learning, cooperative learning, pair and group work, and autonomous learning among many other methods.

The third category of tasks is dealing with macro skills. Pupils are trained on strategies for harnessing the macro skills including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. It is worth mentioning that selective listening was less familiar to students in this study until they had opportunity to explore and reflect on a peculiar strategy, which highlights the utility of embodying a learning strategy dimension into the curriculum.

Strategies that are concerned with pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and discourse fall into the fourth category of tasks. These strategies involve students in employing language systems that are related to the ones mentioned. Hence, learners are trained to recognize the meaning of unknown words through context. They were shown the manner with which they can examine their pronunciation and evolve their grammatical knowledge via deductive and inductive learning experiences. In this regards, the researcher claims that inductive reasoning is of a paramount importance since they were provided few opportunities in secondary school to use this type of learning experience.

The results of the data collected in this study were analyzed qualitatively in the sense that the researcher discussed what had been noticed in student-guided journals. In this respect, the researcher notices clear differences between students' first and last guided journals and derives some conclusions based on a scrutiny of the data provided by pupils. First, students shifted their focus from reporting linguistic items to reporting learned communicative strategies. Second, students engaged more in the process of learning than the product alone. Moreover, students pursued opportunities to practice language in a context with the aim of reporting the findings in the project sessions. They were also encouraged to speak English to strangers in order to expand the type of population with which they use the language. Lastly, students from assessing their product errors to highlighting process errors along with detailing the nature of the difficulties they faced. Thus, students started to shape a greater understanding of their own learning process, and they develop a sense of inquiry towards strategies for additional practice of the language.

To this end, this article unveiled the real dilemma of teaching English to foreign students using traditional curricula that focus on the content only with no reference to strategy training. As a matter of fact, the discrepancy between the teaching modes of high school and university might be regarded as a prevalent issue confronted by most students in several countries. In this context, the teacher is forced to teach the content of the course within a limited time. Consequently, time constraints create a burden on the teacher and hinder them from enclosing strategy training in the course. Action research opens gates to the researcher and the teacher who is part of the research to adopt a variety of roles comprising being a planner, facilitator, leader, teacher, catalyst, designer, listener, observer, synthesizer, and reporter at many instances of the process (Rory O'Brien, 1998). Overcoming the gap between theory and practice must be achieved through this type of research. More

importantly, the results should be taken seriously into consideration while designing language curricula mainly for foreign students. Raising students' awareness through strategy training would certainly make a difference in their way of learning and, hence, their achievement and self satisfaction.

III. COMPARISON TO RELATED WORKS

In a similar vein, another study conducted by LAZAAR & BRIGUI (2024) which promotes the relevance of action research to identify and solve educational issues that might be primarily related to psychological barriers or strategic incompetence. The action plan relies on a coaching map that initiates with clarifying goals, identifying success indicators, anticipating approaches, prioritizing and organizing thoughts, and finally reflecting on coaching in order to overcome the psychological barriers that hinder students from putting their thoughts into paper coherently and cohesively (LAZAAR & BRIGUI, 2024, p.17). Applying both writing strategies and cognitive coaching approach sustained students' awareness about the stages of writing as a skill and other related skills' such as active listening, reading, and paraphrasing. Moreover, the cognitive coaching skills' intersection with writing and speaking skills create a friendly atmosphere which stimulate students' active discussion and strengthens both their self confidence and opinion acceptance.

IV. CONCLUSION

The present action research is an example of solving real-world problems with real scenarios. It disclosed the significance of strategy training when supplying participants with various opportunities to reflect on their process of learning. Learners' diaries of students who contributed to this study revealed that they attempted to generate associations between English and content courses. This study, as such, unveiled the shortcomings of language curricula that stress the content more than the way to learn the content per se.

REFERENCES

- [1]. LAZAAR, L., & BRIGUI, H. (2024). Overcoming psychological barriers to write: A cognitive coaching approach to planning writing. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Management Review*, 07(01), 14-20. <https://doi.org/10.37602/ijssmr.2024.7102>
- [2]. Richards, J. C., Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- [3]. Rory O'Brien. (1998). *An Overview of the Methodological Approach of Action Research* [PDF]. Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto. obrienr@fis.utoronto.ca