

Learning beyond Classroom

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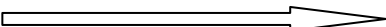
ABSTRACT: The belief that many teachers strongly possess is that learning depends primarily on the teacher. The revolutionary changes that took place in the education system emphasize the need of a learner- centered approach. The diverse and marginally prepared student population entering into higher education is one reason for shifting to this approach. The demand of rapidly changing information is another reason. In this approach the role of teacher and student just reverses. From the predominant role as an active participant the teacher's role shifts to a facilitator in making the student as active participant. The teacher frames a mind map and develops a deeper and more understanding of what goes on in the mind of the learner. Teaching process should proceed in such a manner where a learner becomes a communicator and creator himself becomes one of them. Learner should be given the freedom to create his own views and opinions in the process of language learning. The process of learning and teaching should go side by side.

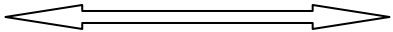
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I. INTRODUCTION

The belief that many teachers strongly possess is that learning depends primarily on the teacher. The revolutionary changes that took place in the education system emphasize the need of a learner- centered approach. The diverse and marginally prepared student population entering into higher education is one reason for shifting to this approach. The demand of rapidly changing information is another reason. In this approach the role of teacher and student just reverses. From the predominant role as an active participant the teacher's role shifts to a facilitator in making the student as active participant. The teacher frames a mind map and develops a deeper and more understanding of what goes on in the mind of the learner.

Teacher  Student

Teacher  Student

Content + Thinking Skills = Quality Education + Life Long Learner.

The great poet Rabindranath Tagore who won the Noble prize in literature for his *Geethanjali* was a great educationist and philosopher who truly believed in learner centered classroom. His 'Shantiniketan' is a testimony to this. He said "The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence."

Yet another unique and towering personality who had given a new impetus with his electrifying speech Swami Vivekananda also emphasized on learner centered classroom. He said "The secret of life is not enjoyment but education through experience."

Learner-Centered Education is defined by McCombs and Whisler (1997, p.9) as: The perspective that couples a focus on individual learners (their heredity, experiences, perspectives, backgrounds, talents, interests, capacities, and needs) with a focus on learning (the best available knowledge about learning and how it occurs and about teaching practices that are most effective in promoting the highest levels of motivation, learning, and achievement for all learners.) This dual focus, then, informs and drives educational decision-making.

Learners should be able to communicate effectively in social and academic settings and that they should also learn ways to continue their learning beyond the classroom setting. The standards and conditions can be implemented using many different techniques and tools, for example,

- letting learners play roles that encourage active learning
- providing a variety of opportunities for learners to interact
- focusing on usage rather than study

- using higher order thinking skills
- employing different media
- promoting a variety of sources of feedback and prompting, including other learners
- seizing upon opportunities to assist learners in making crucial choices in the learning process

Teaching should demonstrate a clear vision on intellectual goals and learning activities that are integrated with research and conceptual approaches so as to benefit encourage and assist the learner to accomplish his goals.

According to Christopher Brumfit:

The total process of teaching is a complex phenomenon which will depend to varying degrees not only on the specific pedagogical behaviours of teachers, but also on the administrative and social context of their activity, on their personal attitudes and habits, and on the collective expectations of their students. (58)

Sigmund Freud (1890) in his Psychoanalytical approach compares human brain with an iceberg where the conscious mind (awareness of self) is only the tip of the iceberg above water and the unconscious (being unaware) represents that portion of the iceberg which is under water. Reflecting the conscious and unconscious mind, Brumfit in his basic teaching model pointed out that during the first phase, when the learner is exposed to any new language through talk, text book, audio or any other presentation equipment; he may perceive the information upto his conscious mind only. It may not reach the unconscious. During the second phase, if the learner is exposed to 'testing' the effectiveness of teaching or the perception of knowledge by the learner lies between the conscious and the unconscious mind. According to Krashen "this phase can enable us to understand the difference between acquired language and learned language" (source). In the third phase, the learner can be exposed to certain **technical terms** which he is aware of so that the learning can take place without much effort. The fourth phase relates to accuracy/ fluency distinction where a learner is made to emphasize on fluency activities so that the translation of conscious knowledge and unconscious knowledge is facilitated.

Teaching process should proceed in such a manner where a learner becomes a communicator and creator himself becomes one of them. Learner should be given the freedom to create his own views and opinions in the process of language learning. The process of learning and teaching should go side by side. Theoretical developments in the field of Communicative language development and Natural approach advocated many radical changes towards classroom teaching. One of the issues that they strongly recommended is learner centered classroom.

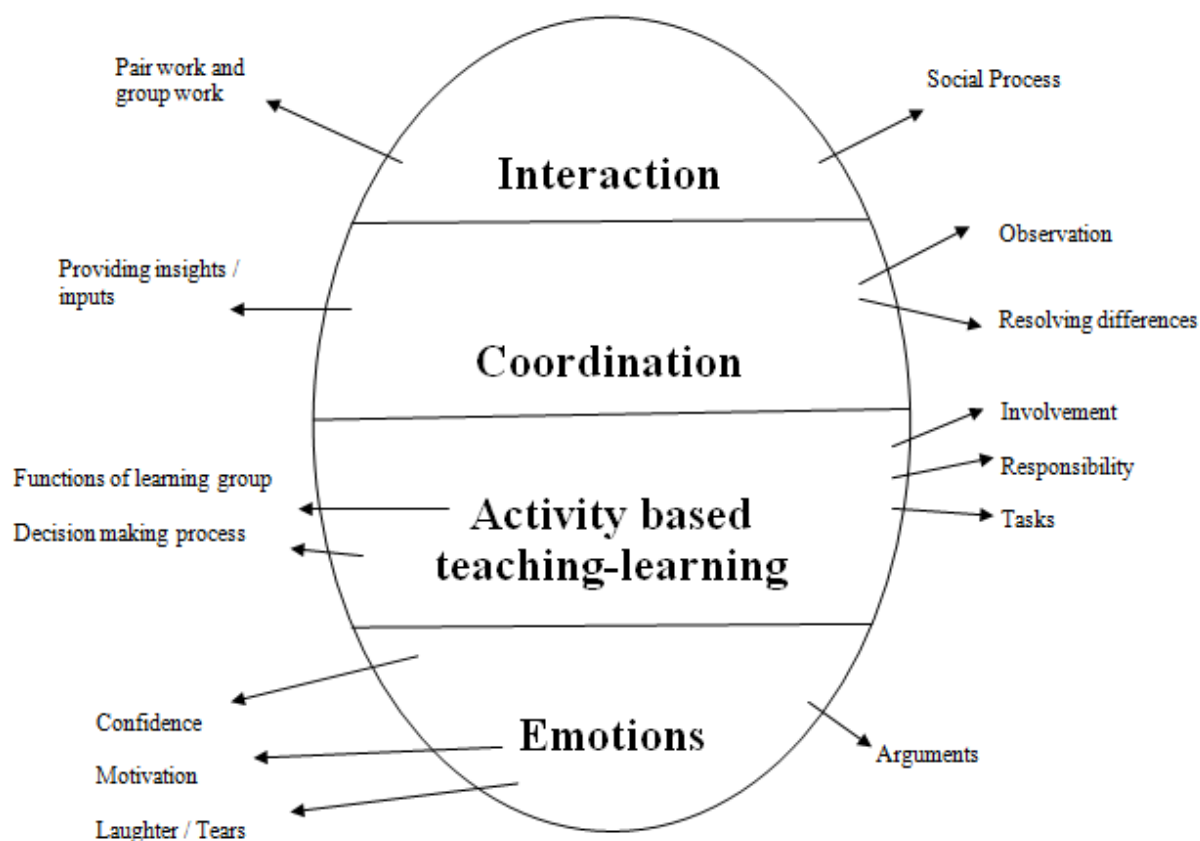
Brown aptly describes the "march" towards CLT:

Beyond grammatical discourse elements in communication, we are probing the nature of social, cultural, and pragmatic features of language. We are exploring pedagogical means for 'real-life' communication in the classroom. We are trying to get our learners to develop linguistic fluency, not just the accuracy that has so consumed our historical journey. We are equipping our students with tools for generating unrehearsed language performance 'out there' when they leave the womb of our classrooms. We are concerned with how to facilitate lifelong language learning among our students, not just with the immediate classroom task. We are looking at learners as partners in a cooperative venture. And our classroom practices seek to draw on whatever intrinsically sparks learners to reach their fullest potential. (77)

Stephen Krashen in 1983 has proposed Natural approach. The highlights of his hypothesis are:

- Acquisition preferred over learning
- Monitor hypothesis
- Natural order hypothesis
- Socio-psychological factors...

Mind Map of the Teacher



Concepts like syllabus, discipline, lecturing, exams etc are secondary.

If you teach something the learner might remember.

If you involve him/her, he/she is active.

If you empower him/her to experiment he/she will discover for himself/herself the joys and successes of learning.

Thus learning takes place as an exploration of the life long making process.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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