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ENHANCING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING THROUGH ACTION STUDY

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ABSTRACT:

The widespread usage of the English language in both formal education and business has led to a dramatic upsurge in the study and instruction of the English language on a global scale. Language is a complex system consisting of rules and abilities; keeping this in mind is the most critical aspect of learning English. There is mutual learning between the instructors and the students as a result of this process. Teachers' professional development has an effect on their pupils' academic achievement. Teachers need to investigate ideas, beliefs, and theories so that their students can learn in the classroom. The experiments are set up in a way that the youngsters can see and learn from. English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, in which both students and instructors participate, are the subject of several international studies. This article uses an example to highlight the purpose of the action research approach, which language instructors utilize to enhance their own research. Additionally, a more seasoned educator can legitimately be wary of implementing action research in classes where English is not the primary language. We address that problem in this essay.

Key Words: action research; methodological ;complex system ;participants; teacher turned researchers

1.INTRODUCTION

In order to help their pupils succeed academically, inspire them to learn positively, and provide them with information that is easily digestible, teachers must be proficient language teachers. The student gains insight into their own language-learning self-efficacy as a result. Teachers are motivated by the success of their classes, therefore students' confidence in their own abilities might be an indicator of their future academic performance. The focus is on the participants' perceptions of their own competence in performing a specific task. The findings from these research have inspired teachers to look outside the box when it comes to language instruction. In light of this information, language instructors do research that is mostly grounded in empirical findings and the observations they make in the course of their work.

2.CLASSROOM RESEARCH

Teachers of foreign languages may use a variety of research strategies in the classroom. The general public tends to believe that action research and traditional classroom research are conceptually and methodologically identical. One way to look at them is as the polar opposite of the negative effects of globalization. Teachers observe and guide students as they do various learning exercises. Two crucial components are their keen observational skills and their unshakeable faith that remedial measures can assist students in regaining lost ground in their academic progress (Chandrasena & Pushkala, 2015). A classroom study, from the perspective of a teacher, investigates the processes of instruction and student learning. Academics, thinkers, and educators can all benefit from the study's findings. They make individuals question the methods now utilized to train educators, develop lesson plans,

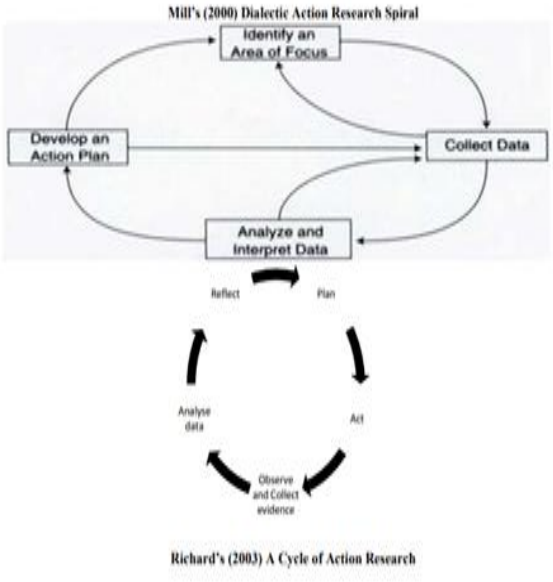
administer assessments, and evaluate pupils. When considering the students' perspective as an important stakeholder, it becomes clear that the majority of educational research focuses on instructors and attempts to understand second language acquisition. Any educator, whether just starting out or have years of experience under their belt, can benefit from taking part in classroom study projects. Students should collaborate more in class if they want their academics to be engaging. Every participant in a conversation needs to add something linguistic to the table, according to Van Lier (1996). Coproduction is an interaction in this sense. Whether or not a teacher is able to pique their students' interest in a topic by assigning them work that makes use of the language in its whole is a measurable indicator of how successfully they foster an optimal learning environment. Since these classroom studies do not employ volunteer groups as experimental subjects, Allwright and Bailey (2004) classify them as spontaneous investigations. Rather, they focus solely on the teaching environment. Although not all of their work can be characterized as experimental or exploratory, language institutions do engage in such activities. What we mean when we say "these studies" is the methodology used to conduct them. Research in a given field is advanced thanks to their efforts. The goal of an exploratory method research is to get a better understanding of the beliefs and practices of educators. Because of this, educators are even more driven to improve their craft. In contrast, real people are required to actively alter variables in an experimental study. In contrast, action research requires minimal oversight of the intervention.

3. ACTION RESEARCH

To better understand their students' individual requirements, educators conduct needs assessments at the outset of the learning process (Richterich, 1972). When conducting an action study, this is crucial. Instead of letting ourselves be led astray by a lack of clarity in our teaching practices, action research demands that we proactively identify issues and propose solutions. This refers to "a cyclical process that consists of several steps that are repeated." The phases of the cycle are as follows: goal-setting, strategy-making, plan-implementation, result-evaluation, and plan-change (Gebhard 1999).

Educators and others in the field can get valuable insight into classroom dynamics, pedagogy, and student achievement through action research, a systematic approach to questioning. Adding to and improving upon these domains of knowledge is the primary objective of action research (Mills, 2000). Although there are many possible forms, action research often involves monitoring the progress of an endeavor.

Step one in doing action research is identifying classroom concerns and problems; step two is developing and implementing a strategy to address those issues and problems; and step three is evaluating the strategy's efficacy. In this context, "as used here" means that studying the outcomes of one intervention might spark ideas for similar ones. Research is conducted using Mills's four-step "Dialectic Action Research Spiral" methodology. The procedure consists of four distinct phases.



Richard's (2003) A Cycle of Action Research

The degree to which a test examines the specific construct it is designed to measure is referred to as measurement. The tests are mathematically quantified and evaluated, typically in the form of coefficients. The finding of a high coefficient Crookes (1993) states that action research is frequently a collaborative undertaking including a community of educators who contribute their support and knowledge. As Gebhard and Operandy (1999) pointed out, action research can be employed in situations other than the classroom. Because action research comprises both problem identification and active problem resolution, it cannot be classified as solely exploratory. After recognizing the issue—likely as a result of an initial inquiry that included asking a series of questions (questionnaire) to reveal information about her students' previous experiences, which have a negative impact on their attitude and learning—as well as the current circumstances, the teacher devises a strategy that may result in her students changing for the better.

The instructor evaluates the effectiveness of the plan at each stage of the procedure based on her personal observations and input from the students. Depending on the topic of the action study, the instructor can utilize inquiry-based questions to elicit responses from her pupils while closely monitoring their actions and facial expressions. Gebhard suggests researching strategies for describing and analyzing student activities in order to have a better understanding of the dynamics in the classroom and the various factors impacting them. This information will be gathered through action research.

A pilot study and a diagnostic test may be used to collect preliminary data as part of the research approach for an action study. A pilot study would shed light on historical events and situations that are not immediately apparent but have a significant impact on the present and require further inquiry. According to Chandrasena and Pushkala (2015), a customized diagnostic test is a critical link between an action research and a pilot study. Its purpose is to assess students' current language proficiency level by considering both their potential for future learning and their previous learning (Ur, 1991).

The study design should incorporate journal letters, questionnaires, and interviews to learn about the students' ideas and perspectives. Furthermore, it is critical to have a logical approach, methodology, and technique that are all consistent with one another. To achieve the desired study outcomes, the three people must operate seamlessly together. Because action research might produce unexpected outcomes, the researcher must plan ahead of time and be ready for anything that may arise. By carefully picking topics that are relevant to their interests, teachers and students can use action research to supplement their regular professional activities.

To summarize, action research assists instructors in navigating a wide range of approaches, theories, and texts, as well as tackling contemporary problems in and out of the classroom. As such, it is an essential component of professional development since it helps teachers to reflect on themselves and improve

their teaching methods. For example, if a teacher notices that a particular group of students is having difficulty talking orally, she may strengthen this group's speaking skills by producing educational resources and assigning various activities of varying complexity. She can then assess the children' answers and growth. This example demonstrates how problem-solving and identification form the cornerstone of action research, with the objective of promoting instructional practices that are appropriate and beneficial to student development.

Classroom research or action research refers to linguistic studies on a range of topics. Nonetheless, their research methodologies may be hybrid, quantitative, or qualitative. The descriptive nature of quantitative research distinguishes it. To collect numerical data, a variety of approaches such as tests, surveys, observations, and interviews are utilized. The frequency of qualitative comments is used to rate them, and the results are expressed as a percentage. The multiple variables are measured in real time rather than altered. Learning can be separated into smaller groups that can then be compared using a specific metric. Correlation analyses are performed on the values to determine the likelihood of correlation between two or more variables in a group. Even if there are differences or links, the purpose of quantitative research is not to determine what caused them.

In contrast, qualitative research focuses on historical occurrences. Historical fiction is defined as the depiction of historical events, difficulties, concerns, and facts. It comprises gathering data from oral or written records of previous activities and occurrences. The purpose is to explain and reconstruct the past in order to understand how it influenced the current situation. Based on their understanding, the researcher is able to give a thorough and comprehensive examination of educational systems, processes, and phenomena within a specific environment through in-depth observations and interviews. The study project may include an experimental investigation of a situation involving a cohort of students—that is, a group or sector within a college, institution, or school. In the future, this investigation could be used as a case study.Furthermore, because action research is a continual process that strives to enhance both the instructor and the students, the teacher's focus is constantly redirected.

4.DATA COLLECTION IN AN ACTION RESEARCH

The type of data chosen for an action research project has a lot to do with the problem that the researcher has decided to investigate. These approaches can be used to collect data in either qualitative or quantitative formats, or a combination of the two. To make action research triangulation work, many types of data must be collected from various sources and at various times. The following example demonstrates the many methods used to collect data in order to achieve the study's objectives and answer its research questions. When conducting a study utilizing role plays that are considered interventions, the following methods of data collection might be used: Both the pre-test, given before the intervention, and the post-test, provided after the intervention, used quantitative data. Qualitative data can be obtained by observing, interviewing, conversing, and administering Questionnaires I and II. Questionnaire I was completed prior to the activity, while Questionnaire II was completed following it.

QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

Questionnaire

The first step in determining what those needs are is to collect information on pupils while they are

being taught. This is very crucial to remember when conducting action research. A customized questionnaire can be used to conduct a pilot study to learn more about the problem raised by the researcher and to learn about the participants' personal characteristics, intellectual expertise, and points of view. According to Grenfell and Harris (1999), a smart technique to learn how students' minds work is to create a survey that takes data immediately after a task is completed while the participants are closely monitored. According to Chamot (2004), it is also critical that the poll employ the appropriate wording to effectively demonstrate the participant's point of view. Questionnaire II can be used to acquire a true picture of how each person feels about the intervention, whereas Questionnaire I is simply a check-in.

Depending on the researcher's perspective and the specifics of the study, the data could provide insight into how socio-environmental and socio-political elements influenced the respondents. It may be necessary to employ descriptive survey methodologies in order to examine and comprehend the responses. The questions should be designed in such a way that they elicit thorough responses that can be measured on a five-point Likert scale.

Likert scales are frequently used in polls to grade persons. The five-point bipolar response scale was invented in 1932. Participants in this test were asked to rate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a statement, how strongly they approved or disapproved of it, and how strongly they believed or did not believe it. The responses were organized into groups, with the smallest at the top and the largest at the bottom. That is the only way to make this scale using the described method. As a result, descriptive choices on a Likert scale, such as A, B, C, D, and E, can be employed in an action research study. As a result, the answer can be classified as A (strongly agree), B (agree), C (neither agree nor disagree), D (disagree), or E (strongly disagree). Summary statistics, as well as qualitative and quantitative inferential analysis, should be used on the data from Questionnaires I and II both before and after the intervention. They provide short summaries of the sample in addition to the recorded findings. They provide a clear and succinct analysis of frequency. They are utilized as the foundation for the first data summary in a thorough statistical study since they are quantitative.

Mills' book "Action Research: A Handbook for Action Researchers" was published in 2014 by Pearson Education.

Observation

Academics should use what they see in the classroom to deduce what it means for their research. The primary objectives are to review the directions and gather information. Using observational data to understand more about the elements that lead to expected or unexpected results can aid in the implementation of initiatives. Observational data can be used to determine what types of programs are being executed and how large they are. Scholars examine execution as part of their research to determine which components of the program performed best for specific groups of students and whether the program might be used effectively in different settings. Furthermore, data from observations can be used to demonstrate the improvement in task success. Observations

frequently cause people to reflect on themselves, which might result in subtle or large modifications in a research endeavor.

Classroom observation is used in research to see how well a method works and whether it needs to be modified. It is critical to document observations as soon as possible, either during or shortly after carefully observed events. Using this strategy, the researcher can learn a lot about specific discoveries as well as information that is unique to each student. These findings are quite useful in determining how children behave in a variety of settings. The samples can use these insights to evaluate their own work by comparing their results to those of their peers who achieved similar results. The observations are an excellent witness that supplements the appropriate qualitative or quantitative data acquired during the action research.

Interview

There are either structured or unstructured oral talks or interrogations at the end of each planned phase in the learning process. Take notes on the children's points of view. Structured interviews cannot be used since the interviews or interactional conversations are based on context. They are frequently referred to as semi-structured or even unstructured. As a result, it remains a location where students can discuss how things function. The fact that these discussions took place in person indicates if the attempt was successful or not.

Using and Making Records

To evaluate the input provided during the process, look at standardized exam scores, attendance and retention rates, journals, maps, audio and video recordings, photos, film, and other artifacts stored in archives. Because these recording devices operate for a firm, researchers and teachers must obtain permission from both students and management before using them.

Quantitative Data Collection Techniques

Questionnaires, college and university report cards, teacher-created quizzes, and graded exams are just a few of the methods used to collect the necessary information. This is an example of a "multi-instrument" strategy, which employs the "triangulation" method with more than one data source. The quantitative rating approach includes both pre- and post-tests. To perform an inferential analysis, the pre- and post-test results are matched, and a "t" test is used to determine whether there has been a significant change in the learners' behavior or skills as a result of the study's intervention.

Validity and Reliability

The degree to which the procedures used to collect data accurately measure what they are designed to measure is referred to as validity. A number near 1.00 usually indicates that the data is very dependable. Nonetheless, none of the tests can be totally relied on. The validity and dependability of both qualitative and quantitative data collection approaches are demonstrated by repeatedly employing them before and after any action.

Statistical Techniques

When evaluating data, it is critical to utilize the appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical approaches so that you may better comprehend it and draw more meaningful conclusions. The following statistical measures are always important for all forms of research:Using a description to examine features: Proportion and consistency Presumptive research: The statistical tests utilized are the Pearson paired t-test and the chi-squared test.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Once the data has been collected, it must be examined in order to achieve the following objectives:

Consider the important tables that the data allows them to create.You must thoroughly review the problem statement, previous research, and data

you've obtained.in order to address difficulties in the actual world by looking at facts in a broader context.to execute several kinds of statistical calculations in order to look at data.

It is critical to do an intermediate evaluation of the acquired data to determine its usefulness and significance. If data is not discarded soon, the action research will be unable to proceed. The methods of data analysis and evaluation utilized are determined by the type of data obtained. at quantitative data analysis, descriptive statistics are applied, which leads to descriptive analysis at the end. In descriptive statistics, the mean, median, and mode are measures of central tendency and variability. The mean (or average) represents the central tendency, whereas the median (or center) and mode (or most common) represent the variable.

5.QUALITATIVE DATA INTERPRETATION

The answers to Questionnaires I and II are examined using descriptive methods. To examine qualitative data, quantitative tools such as frequency and percentage might be used. We may use Pearson's chi-square test to determine the relationship between two or more components in order to dig further into the data from Questionnaire II. To examine interview data, employ descriptive analysis, which encompasses both information acquired through questions and information gathered through discussions. The researcher should allot a lot of time to make connections, put discoveries in the context of what has already been written, talk to scholars, make connections to larger issues, ask questions, consider what the results might mean, relate the results to personal experiences, seek advice from smart peers, and be cautious when interpreting the data. To colleagues who are suspicious of action research, the researcher should display audiovisual materials, research results, matrices, charts, idea maps, graphs, and statistics so that they can discuss it further. This is significant since action research is a group project. There are issues with the program that the researcher must thoroughly investigate. Despite this, because potential program difficulties are difficult to forecast, it is best to be cautious before making broad statements.

6.WRITING UP ACTION RESEARCH

After collecting the data, the researcher must organize it in a consistent format and compile the entire program as a thesis. References are frequently mentioned in the American Psychological Association's Publication Manual. They are accepted by academic institutions, publishing firms, and academic institutions and are used to back up papers. In the first section, you must display the action research outline, which consists of a report and a statement stating the major topic. The relevant literature should be examined in the second chapter. The third chapter examines the action research technique in depth, discussing the study questions, variables, intervention or innovation, data collection methods, and data concerns. The fourth chapter delves deeply into data comprehension and analysis. The fifth chapter provides a comprehensive assessment of the findings before moving on to the conclusions and emphasizing how this study differs from previous hypotheses. The sixth chapter should incorporate ideas and plans for further research as a way to wrap up the debate.

7.CONCLUSION

When the program concludes, the researcher may feel relieved since she worked hard to obtain a result that may or may not support her beliefs and points of view. Nonetheless, it is critical for the researcher to understand that taking action is a typical component of teaching and is dependent

on student input. The researcher frequently makes rash and unreasonable conclusions. However, the researcher may encounter difficulties from unexpected sources, such as a lack of funding, opposition to change (from colleagues and students alike), a desire not to get involved in other people's work, and a reluctance to confront uncomfortable realities that may occasionally occur within the organization. The researcher, on the other hand, will be overjoyed when the study is eventually accepted.

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