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THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERACTION IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM, KALAKLA LOCALITY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KHARTOUM

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at investigating the importance of interaction activities in classroom English language learning in some of Secondary Schools in Kalakla Locality in Khartoum State. The researcher hypothesized that; interaction activities may be important for Language learning. Identifying how oral communication strategies necessary for language learning. The English teacher must use suitable techniques and activities for enhancing Language learning. In this study, the researcher adopted a descriptive and analytical method. He used three tools for collecting data. The first tool was a questionnaire for (30) English Language teachers selected randomly from different Secondary Schools in Kalakla Locality. The second tool was a questionnaire for (40) students from 6 Secondary Schools in Kalakla Locality. The students have been learning English for (7) years, having Arabic as a means of instruction. The third tool was an observation of some English Language teachers in Kalakla Locality. The paper recommends that English language teachers should use activities and techniques related to classroom interaction. The English teachers should use proper techniques, audio visual aids and sufficient materials that assist in language learning. The English teachers should be given more training courses in English language teaching and learning. Class size should be reasonable in Basic and Secondary schools.

Keywords: Interaction in the English Language classroom learning, Sudanese secondary school student.

Introduction

The importance of keeping learners active in the class room can be done through pair work, group work, communicative approach, community language teaching, discussion, communication, classroom pedagogy, interaction in the classroom is necessary to involve the successful learning. The teacher's role in the classroom and the syllabus should be planned in advance. Interaction has long been considered important in language learning. So, much of this research has been based on interaction and language learning, whereas interaction interests

the learners, the learners use the language freely. From the researcher's experience in teaching using pair work and group work in two classes, it was clear that the learners in the first group is better than the second group. In addition the researcher tried to use the communicative approach which needs a high level learners, where as in the low level learners he used the direct method which uses the target language, reading and writing taught after speaking, the grammar taught inductively. Although the interaction in the classroom, needs the communicative approach which he followed in the

research, though this method enable the learners to use the language freely in the classroom, in the community by discussion, live person to person interaction, practice activities, social interaction activities which include conversations, discussions, dialogues and role plays. In addition to the materials which the researcher used such as textbooks, audiovisuals, computer and internet. The good choice of these materials motivate the learners to interact effectively with the teacher and their classmates, but also make language more enjoyable particularly when the materials related to the learner's real life. Also the authentic materials (realia) such as, magazines, newspapers, graphic and visual sources e.g. maps, pictures, symbols and charts. But the social interaction, and the materials are neglected in Sudanese Secondary schools nowadays. In order to achieve this goal, the following questions were addressed:

1. What is interaction in the classroom language learning?
2. What is the importance of interaction in language learning?
3. What are the techniques which are related to interaction activities in language learning?
4. What are the problems which face the teachers in using activities related to interaction in learning?

Statement of the Problem

In foreign language teaching, most teachers have neglected methods related to interaction activities in the classroom. The importance of interaction comes from the fact that it is the way through which we can get our messages and understand others' views. It activates communication which is considered to be a main function of language. Despite this fact, it is noticeable that, recently to some extent, interaction activities in learning is a neglected area. In Sudanese secondary schools Learning is an exam oriented and thus concentrates on reading and writing

Literature Review

Interaction activities in the classroom such as pair work, group work and studyteams, role playing, debating and storytelling.

Pair work : The pair work is attempted to suggest how it may, be best, be done. After all the essence of language is communication, and at its simplest meaning full verbal interact between two people. Common patterns found in seeking information by (question and answer), seeking information (affirmation and agreement), eliciting this agreement (by affirmation or negation). (Marry, 1989).

Role playing : Ask the students to precise situational dialogues by doing role plays, such as in the medical clinic, at the station, at the post office, in the restaurant and in the shop.

Debating : First try to choose some debatable topics such as who is cleverer? Boys or girls? Or are computer games useful or harmful for students? Then let them discuss in pairs for ten minutes. After ten minutes of discussion in pairs divide the class into two groups, and each representing their own real belief. Finally let each group debate the other. Act as a guide to help the debate along manage some of silent students to talk. Almost all the students to take part and the class is lively and active.

Storytelling: Ask students to tell stories with right intonation and pronunciation and gesture and expressions. Also the students to invent improvised stories situation characters. The student can get a lot of fun from it. (Elsagheer, 2001)

Group work and Study Teams : Students learn best when they are actively involved in the process. Researchers such as Beckman (1990), Chickering and Gamson (1991) reported that, regardless of the subject matter, students working in small groups tend to learn more of what is taught and retain it longer than when the same content is presented in other instructional formats, students who in collaborative groups also appear more satisfied with their classes. Sources Beckman (1990), Chickering and Gamson (1991), Collier (1980), Cooper and Associates, (1990), Goodsell, Maher, Tinto, and Associates, (1992) Johnson and Johnson (1989), Johnson and Johnson and Smith (1986), Meachie, Pintrich, Lin, and Smith, Slavin (1980), (1983), Whitman (1988). Various names have been given to this form of teaching, and there are some distinctions among these: cooperative learning,

collaborative learning, collective learning, reciprocal learning, team learning, study circles, study groups, and work groups. But all in all, there are three general types of group work: informal learning groups, formal learning groups and, study teams Johnson, Johnson and Smith, (1991).

Informal learning groups are ad hoc temporary clustering of students within a single class session. Informal learning groups can be initiated, for example, by asking students to turn to a neighbor and spend two minutes discussing a question you have posed. You can also form groups of three to five to solve a problem or pose a question. You can organize informal groups at any time in a class of any size to check on students understanding of the material, to give students an opportunity to apply what they are learning, or provide a change of pace. Formal learning groups are teams established to complete a specific task, such as to perform a lab experiment, write a report, carry out a project, or prepare a position paper. These groups may complete their work in a single class session or over several weeks. Typically, students work together until the task is finished, and their project is graded. Study teams are long-term groups (existing over the course of a semester) with stable membership whose primary responsibility is to provide members with support, encouragements, and assistance in completing course requirements and assignments. Study teams also inform their members about lectures and assignments when someone has missed a session. The larger class and the more complex the subject matter, the valuable study teams can be. The suggestions below are designed to help you set up formal learning groups and study teams. The teacher has never done group work in his classes, he might want to experiment first with informal learning groups. Two other tools "Learning a Discussion" and Supplements and Alternative to Lecturing "Encouraging student participation", describe a variety of easy ways to incorporate informal learning groups in your courses. "Helping students to write Better in all courses" discusses informal collaborative writing activities.

Materials and Methods

This study can be defined as descriptive and analytical since it mainly derives its data through processes of a questionnaire and observation and results. The participants in this study are male and female students in Secondary Schools of Kalakla Locality in the southern area of Khartoum State in Sudan. The hypotheses of this study are:

1. Investigating how interaction activities may be important for language learning.
2. Identifying how the communication strategies maybe necessary.
3. The teacher must use suitable techniques and activities for enhancing language learning.

This study was conducted in Kalakla Locality in Khartoum and the questionnaire is distributed among the participants who were students in 6 schools (thirdyear). The questionnaire is meant to investigate the elements of interaction in the classroom. The questionnaire consists of fifteen questions. For instance, Question one is about students talking to each other in the classroom. Question two and three. Investigate the use of group work. Question four and five, investigate the importance of speaking more and watching films. Question six and seven, investigate the importance of using activities books and pair work activity. Question eight and nine, investigate living with classmates in one place and the use of discussion activities, whether they are important to encourage classroom interaction. Question ten and eleven, investigate the use of problem-solving and the communication processes. Question thirteen and fourteen, investigate the teacher's role and the use of a good syllabus. Question fifteen investigates the student's motivation. (Appendix A).

Results

Here are the results obtained by the administration of the questionnaire:

Test of the teachers' questionnaire questions

Results of the responses of the participants after using the questionnaire test (Teachers).

Reliability Analysis – Scale (ALPHA):

Alpha value is = (0.76), so the reliability percent is = (76%)

We accept the hypothesis if sig – value ≤ (0.05) in more than half of question.

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.002	12.60	Using pair work in classroom is important to encourage classroom interaction.
0.007	9.80	The use of group work is essential to develop classroom interaction
0.007	9.80	Do you think the use of communicative approach is important to promote classroom
1	0.0	Do you think the use of means of communication is essential to support classroom interaction
0.008	11.86	Do you think it is important to use pedagogical language to improve classroom interaction
0.003	8.53	Do you think the teacher’s role and responsibility are essential to encourage classroom interaction
0.08	5.00	It is important to use grammar translation method and direct method to develop classroom interaction
0.007	9.80	The use of audio-lingual method is essential to enhance classroom interaction
0.028	4.80	Using of literature and activities books are important to promote classroom interaction
0.46	0.53	Do you think giving students a chance is essential to support classroom interaction
0.025	7.40	Exposure of teachers and learners to native sources are important to improve classroom interaction
0.0	18.26	The use of the target language in the class is essential to enhance classroom interaction
0.002	12.60	Activities based on conversations will develop classroom interaction
0.007	9.80	Using of activities like (story – telling and role – play) are important to encourage classroom interaction

(Appendix B).

Results

Here are results obtained by the administration of the questionnaire:

Test of the students’ questionnaire questions

Results of the responses of the participants after using the questionnaire test (Students).

Reliability Analysis – Scale (ALPHA):

Alpha value is = (0.69), so the reliability percent is = (69%)

We accept the hypothesis if sig- value ≤ (0.05) in more than half of question.

Test of the questionnaire question

Table (1):shows talking to each other

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.0	30.12	Do you think talking to each other is important to encourage classroom interaction

Table (2):shows the use of listening text

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.0	21.26	The use of listening text is essential to develop classroom interaction

Table (3):shows the use of working in groups

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.0	33.04	Do you think the use of working in group is important to enhance classroom interaction

Table (4):shows speaking more in class

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.0	28.75	It is important to speak more in class to promote classroom interaction

Table (5): Shows watching films

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.0	18.19	Do you think watching films is essential to support classroom interaction

Table (6):shows the use of the literature books

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.0	37.34	It is useful to use literature books to encourage classroom interaction

Table (7): shows the use of pair work activities

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.042	4.12	The use of pair work activities is important to improve classroom interaction

Table (8): Shows living with classmates

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.0	17.90	Do you think living with classmates in one place is essential to enhance classroom interaction

Table (9):shows the use of discussion activities

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.0	18.92	The use of discussion activities is important to develop classroom interaction

Table (10):shows the use of problem- solving

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.019	5.48	The use of problem- solving in class is important to promote classroom interaction

Table (11): Shows taking part in classroom

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.0	17.78	Taking part in classroom activities is necessary to support classroom interaction

Table (12):shows the use of communication processes

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.435	0.61	Do you think the use of communication process is important to improve classroom interaction

Table (13): Shows the teacher's role is functional

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.0	29.14	Do you think the teacher's role is functional to encourage classroom interaction

Table (14):shows the use of a good syllabus

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.022	9.63	The use of a good syllabus is important to develop classroom interaction

Table (15):shows the student’s motivation

Sig-value	Chi-value	The question
0.0	34.80	Do you think the student’s motivation is essential to enhance classroom interaction

From the above we concern that the hypothesis was true.

Discussion

In this chapter the researcher summarizes the results and findings he has accomplished after analyzing his data. In the outcomes of this study. The researcher hypothesized a number of hypotheses, to prove these hypotheses he adopted analytical method. He analyzed both the questionnaire which is distributed to some Secondary Schools at Kalakla Locality, to assess their ability in interaction activities and techniques in the classroom.

The hypotheses are:

1. Students at these schools consider using the target language is more difficult skill. The results of the questionnaire analysis show that (77%) of the teachers at these schools consider using the target language as most difficult skills for the students, while the others represent only (27%). This means that the target language is an element of interaction in classroom. This proves the hypothesis that interaction maybe important for language learning.
2. Communication maybe necessary for language learning. (100%). This results of the questionnaire analysis show that some of the teachers believe that the means of communication is the most important techniques to improve interaction in the classroom learning.
3. The techniques and strategies of interaction classroom such as pair work, discussion, classroom activities. The analysis of the questionnaire proves the contrary, the result shows that more than (96%) of the teachers believe that the use of these techniques and strategies are the

most important elements of interaction. The majority of teachers stand with this hypotheses identifying the suitable techniques and strategies that maybe used by the teachers are important to enhance language learning.

Conclusions, Findings and Implications

This study investigating the use of ways of interaction activities and techniques in the classroom language learning in some of Secondary Schools in Kalakla Locality in Khartoum. The hypotheses of the study are:

Investigating how interaction activities maybe important for language learning.

Identifying how the communication strategies maybe necessary for language learning.

The teacher must use suitable techniques for enhancing classroom language learning.

The sample of the study was chosen from six schools. They were 40 students of the third year secondary schools in Kalakla Locality in Khartoum. The tools used for collecting the data for this research were questionnaire and observations. To ensure the validity of the tools, three experts were consulted. The results of the questionnaire was statically calculated by using the computer (Spas) Package.

Implications

The most important implications of the study can be summarized in the following points:

1. Interaction techniques in the classroom are very important to develop language learning.
2. Classroom interaction strategies are necessary to encourage the students in secondary schools to learn the target language.

4. The means of communication is essential to support classroom interaction.
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
5. The use of pedagogical language is important to improve classroom interaction.
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
6. The teacher's role and responsibility are essential to encourage classroom interaction.
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
7. It is important to use grammar translation method and direct method to develop classroom interaction.
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
8. The use of audio- Lingual method is essential to enhance classroom interaction.
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
9. Using of literature and activities books are important to promote classroom interaction.
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
10. Giving a student a chance is essential to support classroom interaction
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
11. Exposure of teachers and learners to native sources are important to improve classroom interaction.
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
12. The use of the target language in the class is essential to enhance classroom interaction.
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
13. Activities based on conversation will develop classroom interaction
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
14. Activities like (story – telling and role – play) are important to encourage classroom interaction.
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Appendix(B)

B- This questionnaire is intended for Secondary School Students to test their views about classroom interaction

Name of School:

Name of the Student:

Class:

Answer the following Questionnaire:-

Please make a tick on your choice:-

- 1- Talking to each other is important to encourage classroom interaction?
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
- 2- The use of listening text is essential to develop classroom interaction?
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
- 3- Working in groups is important to enhance classroom interaction?
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
- 4- It is important to speak more in class to promote classroom interaction?
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
- 5- Watching films is essential to support classroom interaction?
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
- 6- Is it useful to use literature books to encourage classroom interaction?
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
- 7- The use of pair work activities is important to improve classroom interaction?
Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

8- Living with classmates in one place is essential to enhance classroom interaction?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

9- The use of discussion activities is important to develop classroom interaction?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

10- The use of problem - solving in class is important to promote classroom interaction?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

11- Taking part in classroom activities is necessary to support classroom interaction?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

12- The use of communication processes is important to improve classroom interaction?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

13- The teacher's role is functional to encourage classroom interaction?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

14- The use of a good syllabus is important to develop classroom interaction?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

15- The student's motivation is essential to enhance classroom interaction?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree