



ANALYSING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DEVELOPING INDIVIDUAL'S LEARNING ATTITUDE FOR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ENRICHMENT: A CRITICAL APPROACH

Dr K Thiyagarajan.,M.A.,M.Phil.,B.Ed.,Ph.D.,
Associate Professor and Head, Department of English

Sir Theagaraya College

Chennai 600 021

ABSTRACT

The article on "Learning for Examination or Life- long Learning" highlights the fact that the nature of Education is a life-long process and the domain of knowledge is also enlarging proportionally. The present societal system poses someone to encounter multiple challenges not only in their career but also in their life situations. Therefore, one has to realise and learn something not only for his examinations but also to be successful in their career as well as life itself. So, in this scenario, the role of education is felt to be an essential one. Hence, education has become a life-long process for an individual. At the same time distinctions among the learners like advantaged learners and disadvantaged learners have been proved wrong by many research studies. Actually, in most educational systems students learn only for their semester or end- of- the- year examinations and consider that it is the end of learning. But, in reality, educational goals are much broader than the examinations. Because career and life throw many challenges before us and the domain of knowledge is ever expanding due to new inventions and discoveries. Therefore, this paper mainly focuses on how one has to learn the importance of learning new things every day while updating other skills simultaneously. Thus, this paper proves that the habit of life-long educational learning has shown a suitable way for individual's prosperity not only in their family but also in their profession.

Keywords: *Education, Learning, Knowledge, Challenges, Career, Life, Examinations and Life-long Process*

Great philosophers, social reformers, thinkers and educationalist strongly believe that Education is a life-long process and one has to learn till his last breath. As we all know the Latin term “education” means "to draw out" the capabilities of the learners, every individual is endowed with the capacity to learn and it is the guru or teacher's duty and responsibility to kindle the flame of learning in every learner. But unfortunately, people have wrong notion that education is not for all and only to some who are privileged or advantaged. But it has been proved wrong that it is not for only advantaged. On the contrary, what is true is that the opportunities and the right guidance could help every learner learn successfully. A pragmatic teacher tries to find out the ability level and pace of learning of every learner and designs tasks which will approximate to the ability levels of different learners. Of course, the tasks should be neither too easy requiring very little effort nor too daunting. Learning by doing should replace rote - learning and reproduction of language.

Learning for Examination

In the EFL situation as in most ESL situations, the curricula mainly focus on examinations. So, everything is geared towards meeting the examination requirements. The teachers as well as the learners do everything only for the sake of examination. Consequently, learners consider that once the exams are over, they have nothing to do with language learning or with any other subject they learned at that institution. Thus, they become slaves to the syllabus and examinations as they concentrate more on important topics and neglect the unimportant topics. The examination system is such that a majority of them get through in the examination. But such students could realize what they failed to get in schools and colleges when they go out into the job market, start their own business enterprise or go abroad for higher studies, do projects and surveys.

That’s why, in the ESL as well as EFL contexts, the system of education is overwhelmingly dominated by the all-important examination in which the main purpose of evaluation is to quantify the candidates' academic performance by awarding scores and categorizing them into two groups pass and fail. The main reason for this pathetic situation is that their career, future and family life is very much attached to the outcome of the scores in the examinations. Further, the high scores are crucial for admission to higher courses and scholarships or appointments. But very often these examination scores tend to be misleading when it comes to see their performance and check their knowledge level. It is obvious that education is completely subordinated to the examination and in such a situation all learning activities are sacrificed at the altar of examination.

Educational Goals

The goals which the society has for education are ultimately much broader than simply the achievement of certain areas of knowledge and skills. In most societies the goals of the educational process will be in part concerned with sustaining that society in current patterns, or with developing it in directions that are viewed as desirable. But one must clearly understand that these goals are not static: they keep on changing from time to time. The educational system should go beyond preparing students to face the examinations. It should help them to learn how to learn.

Knowledge World

We are living in a society wherein we have to meet something unpredicted challenges, move from one part of the world to another and have to play or assume multiple roles to face different situations. The domain of knowledge is increasing every day and unless one keeps abreast of the developments, one will be an underachiever and even misfit, because everywhere there is a keen competition. Only the fittest can survive whereas the underachievers are losers. So, we must develop ideas and concepts with which we gain an understanding of the world we live in. Every human being has "the rage to know" (Judson, 1985 quoted in Prabhu, 14) i.e., an instinctive, insistent demand of the human mind which has been at work throughout human history. Knowing something is having a satisfactory concept of the way a thing is made or how a phenomenon occurs and the way they work. Also knowledge is not static; it is changeable, and is in fact in the process of change all or much of the time. As Halliday, 1985 (quoted in Prabhu, 14) says: "every human language is a potential for meaning in two ways - it is a resource for doing with; and it is a resource for thinking with".

Life-long Learning

Every human being is capable of learning throughout one's life through trial and error method or experience, though not always in a systematic way. One learns from books, magazines, newspapers, TV programs, experience, meeting other people and visiting other places. But they will become better learners if they become self-directed learners while doing a course in an institution. They will realize the need and value of self-directed learning, if they are caught young. In such cases the teacher's role changes from a passer on of information and knowledge to that of a facilitator of language learning activities. A good teacher teaches, a better teacher demonstrates but the best teacher inspires. On the other hand, in a conventional class room where the main focus is on preparing learners for the exam, the learners tend to be uninterested and inattentive because what the teacher is passing on is there in the textbooks from which they can get information at their own leisure and pace before the examination. Selective reading, cramming and reproducing are some of the strategies they follow and also succeed. Requirement for Continuing Education.

It is a well-known fact that there are economic, social, institutional and individual pressures on an individual to keep learning throughout his life. The rate of change in modern society through technological developments, economic and commercial developments, improvement in career positions, change in career positions, require an individual to be ready to keep on learning throughout life. Unless one has learned how to learn during the course of a study, it will be difficult for him to learn new things.

Alternative Approach

Flexibility is essential in language learning classrooms, so that, teachers teach only part of the time, and the remaining time is devoted to facilitating learning in other ways. The ultimate aim of any language teaching program is learner autonomy and learning how to learn. But learners do not achieve autonomy by being told to, nor by denying conventional class teaching. In these ways, they are likely to achieve only failure as Dickinson (1993), says. Autonomy is achieved slowly through struggling towards it, through careful training

and careful preparation on the teacher's part as well as on the learners, and the first stage in this process is the liberalization of the classroom to allow the development of learner independence and learner responsibility. Learning opportunities in a curriculum should offer the adult as much responsibility for his own learning as he can cope with. This might involve the learner in the analysis of his own needs, the specification of objectives, the selection of processes by which these objectives are to be met, and the assessment of how well they have-been achieved.

Motivation

Motivation is an important factor for developing life-long learning. It provides the primary impetus to initiate learning a language and later becomes a driving force to sustain the long-and often tedious learning process."Motivation is not merely a general disposition to learn but a more dynamic one that is composed of many different and overlapping matters such as interests, curiosity or a desire to achieve" (Williams and Burden, 1997, qtd. in Rubdy, 25). Contrary to the traditional usage of the term where motivation "is understood as a fairly static, mental or emotional state or as a goal, current cognitive approaches place the focus on the individual's thoughts and beliefs, and even emotions that are transformed into action.Thus motivation is conceptualized as a process whereby goal-directed activity is instigated and sustained. High motivation comes from expectation of success, value attached to success and a belief that the outcome will match the effort.

Learning how to Learn a Foreign Language?

As Dickinson says," the only man who is educated is the man who has learned how to learn; the man who has learned how to adopt and change; the man who has realized that no knowledge is secure, that only the process of seeking knowledge: gives a basis for security "(1993, 34).

Learning how to learn involves developing knowledge about learning processes -and about oneself as a learner, secondly of planning learning, and thirdly of discovering and then using appropriate and preferred strategies to achieve the objectives specified by the plan. Flavel (qtd. in Dickinson, 1993, 34) calls it metacognition and analyses it into the following elements: metacognitive knowledge that is what you know about learning and yourself with respect to learning .(for example," I find it difficult to remember grammar rules").Similarly,-metacognitive experiences : conscious cognitive or affective experiences that accompany any intellectual exercise, for example realizing that one does or does not understand something. Goals or tasks: the objectives of a cognitive activity or enterprise, action or strategies, i.e how an individual goes about achieving. his objectives. (monitoring progress or making guesses).

Conclusion

Thus, learning how to learn a foreign language maybe largely a matter of developing metacognitive knowledge about it. So the learner should discover, what are. appropriate learning strategies for him, through, trying out the kind of activities the teacher advises, and also through trying out strategies from other learning

experiences. Hence metacognition is learning to learn or learning how to learn. For example, a teacher making the learners use language for communicative purposes' is actually involved in helping the learners to learn how to learn, for which pair work or group work are very useful. Instead of textbooks, learners deal with authentic topics, passages and situations. They learn by doing and also learn how to learn. This is indeed a right step in creating life-long learners.

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