

CIRCUMSTANCES IN ENGLISH LEARNING CONCERNING LEARNER-CENTERED FACTORS OF INDUSTRIAL CENTRAL-PARTED CAMPUSES OF RAJAMANGALA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

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Purposes and Samples

The purposes of this research were to 1) study the circumstances of learning English concerning student-centered factors 2) study the students' English abilities of 4 skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing and 3) provide the findings as guidance to reform English learning procedure. The sampling group was 347 industrial students taking English II course at Rajamangala Institute of Technology : Nonthaburi Campus, Bangkok Technical Campus, North Bangkok Campus, Uthen Thawai Campus and Salaya Campus which were located in the central part of Thailand. The questionnaires were used as a research instrument .

Rationale

The National Education Act 1999 aims for education reforms especially learning reform which is emphasized on student-centered learning. That is, learners should have strategies to build and search knowledge for life-long learning. They must be doers because learning is an active process. They should learn through direct experience, authentic materials and varied teaching aids. Teacher's roles are changed from traditional ones. Their roles are as the followings : manager, planner, provider, facilitator, resource person and diagnostician. However, there are many problems of teaching and learning English. Previous study revealed that many of them were due to teachers' inappropriate teaching methodology, students themselves, unsuitable materials. And as an English teacher, I have noticed that most industrial students don't like English and their English is not very good. So it is a burdensome duty of teachers to improve students' English. Learning reform emphasized on student-centered learning, as well as problems of teaching and learning English, drew me to investigate circumstances concerning learner-centered factors and students' English ability of 4 skills : listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Theoretical framework

Learning procedure focusing learner – center ranges from teachers' management, students' learning, suitable materials, suitable teaching aids, effective evaluation to self-study beyond classroom. Teaching methodology should be well-organized. Teachers must have well-planned lesson, exhilarate students with English atmosphere in class, use suitable teaching aids for the lesson give individual attention to all students and prepare varied English activities, such as quiz contest, play, exhibition. Learners or students should judge that English is essential and important for them, so they feel like learning. They should enjoy studying English and ask questions if confused, They should have chance to learn English through direct experience, such as interviewing foreigners, chatting through internet with foreigner and gain knowledge from group activity. However, the better teachers manage activities and lesson, the well students build their knowledge. Materials must be interesting, well-arranged (simple to complicated), up to date, and serve learners' need. In addition, they should be communicative and related to the real world. So English teachers should have skill in constructing effective materials. Nowadays, a lot of hi-technology teaching aids are used in a lot of institutes. They make students learn a lot of things. Students will be equal to the occasion. If these provided, students will gain advantages. So English teaching aids should motivate learners' attention and help learners build knowledge. They should be varied, i.e., authentic materials, games, flash cards, CD, video, suitable with the lesson, up to date and make students understand the lesson more. The effective formative and summative evaluation should be provided. Teachers should diagnose or judge learners abilities by various methods. The tests are appropriate for learners' level, and cover learning objectives. Students assess themselves and their friends at their English abilities and how they learn. Students are evaluated by every performance objectives. Teachers assess students by authentic evaluation. Learners' self-study beyond classroom should be facilitated by teachers. They must suggest the knowledge resource and assign work to students weekly and another as projects. Students search English knowledge from many audio-visual aids themselves They can self-study in Self-Access Center in the campus. The important thing is that teachers must follow up the task assigned closely.

Due to global literacy, learners should be able to use their English of 4 skills fluently. So self - assessment on English for daily life is included in this research.

Findings

1. Circumstances on six factors considered by students were as follows: teacher 'good', student 'moderate', material 'good', teaching aid 'good', evaluation 'moderate', and self-study beyond classroom 'moderate' .
2. The overall circumstances in English learning concerning learner- centered factors of industrial central-parted campuses of Rajamangala Institute of Technology was considered moderate .
3. The students' English abilities in listening, speaking, reading and writing were at a moderate level . And the level of abilities was not significantly different at .05 level as perceived by students from different campuses.

Conclusion

The one directly influencing learning reform are teachers. The qualified teachers will be able to make learners reach the education goals , Every factor depends on teachers. From the findings, teacher should more friendly in class, manage more various and well-organized group activities, take learners to real world of language, and use varied teaching aids. Assessment should be more varied. The authentic evaluation is needed. And teachers should improve learners' skill of searching knowledge for life-long learning. Sufficient knowledge resource should be provided.

Questionnaire:

Circumstances	5	4	3	2	1
Teachers :					
1. have well-planned lesson					
2. exhilarate students with English atmosphere in class					
3. use suitable teaching aids for the lesson					
4. give individual attention to all students					
5. prepare varied English activities, such as quiz contest, play, exhibition.					
Students					
1. are well aware how important English is					
2. enjoy studying English					
3. are not coward to ask questions if confused					

Circumstances	5	4	3	2	1
4. learn through direct experience, such as interviewing foreigners, chatting through internet with foreigner.					
5. gain knowledge from group activity					
Materials					
1. are interesting.					
2. are well - arranged (simple to complicated).					
3. focus on communicative English					
4. serve students' need					
5. relate to the real world .					
Teaching Aids					
1. are varied , i.e, authentic materials, games, flash cards, CD, video					
2. are suitable with the lesson .					
3. are up to date .					
4. make students understand the lesson more.					
Evaluation :					
1. The tests cover learning objectives.					
2. The tests are appropriate for learners ' level					
3. Students assess themselves					
4 Students assess their friends					
5 Students are evaluated by every performance objectives					
6. Teachers diagnose and judge students by authentic evaluation					
Self- studies beyond classroom :					
1. Teachers assign work to students weekly					
2. Teachers assign work as projects to students .					
3. students self-study in self-access centered in the campus					
4. Teachers suggest the knowledge resource.					
5. English knowledge resource is provided.					
6. Students search English knowledge from many audio-visual aids, such as internet, television, newspaper etc.					
English Ability					
Skills	5	4	3	2	1
Listening: Students can understand.....					

Skills	5	4	3	2	1
1. the vocabulary and expression.					
2. the question and simple sentence.					
3. conversation in daily life					
4. news					
5. discussion on subject of the field you are studying					
Speaking : Students can.....					
1. pronounce the correct intonation and stress					
2. talk to foreigners in English.					
3. tell what you want in English.					
4. Tell about yourself in English					
5. Tell events in English					
6. answer the phone in English					
7. report on subject of the field you are studying					
Reading : Students can read.....					
1. English letter and telegram					
2. English newspaper					
3. English advertisement , label, and notice					
4. English instruction or direction					
5. English report on subject of the field you are studying					
6. English diagram, table and graph					
Writing : Students can write					
1. autobiography					
2. notes and memos					
3. English report on subject of the field you are studying					
4. personal letters					
5. business letters					
6. fill in the application forms					

