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EFFECTIVENESS OF ACTIVATING STRATEGIES ON ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL.

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to test the effectiveness of activating strategies on achievement in English among secondary school students. Activating strategies are those teaching-learning strategies that help students to get a thorough learning experience by enhancing their prior knowledge of the concept, and by understanding the necessary vocabulary. The investigator adopted quasi experimental method with non- equivalent group pretest- posttest design. The sample consisted of 160 students in 8th standard from two schools in Kollam district. An achievement test was administered as pretest and posttest. The scores were analysed by using test of significance. The study revealed that activating strategies are very effective in achieving desired learning outcomes and easy formation of concepts in English. It was also found that there is no significant difference in the post test scores of boys and girls. But the post test scores of government school students were found to be higher than that of the aided school students. Lessons transacted with activating strategies were found to be superior to lessons transacted with lecture cum discussion method.



KEY WORDS: *Activating strategies, Achievement in English, Secondary school students.*

INTRODUCTION

Teaching learning strategies play a major role in teaching English as foreign language and second language. These strategies help learners to remember, understand, analyse and evaluate the learning process which ultimately lead to the development of creativity among the learners. Faerch and Kasper (1983) defined learning strategy as “an attempt to develop linguistic and socio linguistic competence in the target language”.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In every learning scenario, teacher mediation pays keen attention to the enhancement of students' knowledge. Like any other classroom learning situation, language classrooms also aim at the formation of successful problem solving skills and creative skills among the learners. Here the investigators assigns tasks to the learners and they advance to the successful completion of the task by utilizing the strategies assigned to them knowingly or unknowingly in the classroom environment and master the concept. These strategies help learners in self monitoring and self regulation of their learning.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Integration of teaching learning strategies to ordinary classroom learning situations helps to develop the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of the learners. It helps in the social construction of knowledge by the learners. It develops the critical consciousness of the learners. The learners are expected to modify their learning outcomes in accordance with the need of the curriculum and these strategies help learners to produce better terminal outcomes. The investigator studied the effect of activating strategies with respect to type of school and gender only. The study was confined only to two schools in Kollam district in Kerala.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study is entitled as “**Effectiveness of Activating Strategies on Achievement in English at Secondary School Level**”.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Effectiveness: Effectiveness is the degree to which an instructional activity, innovation or program yields the desired outcome (Dictionary of Education, 2006).

Activating Strategies: Activating strategies are those teaching-learning strategies that help students to get a thorough learning experience by activating their prior knowledge of the concept, and by understanding the necessary vocabulary.

Achievement in English: Achievement in English refers to the terminal scores obtained in English from the secondary school students after the experimental treatment.

Secondary School Level: Secondary school level covers academic process starts from class 8th to 10th. It consists of students who belong to the age group of 14-16 years. The secondary schools are also known as high schools and senior schools.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To test the effectiveness of activating strategies in the achievement in English at secondary school level in total sample.
2. To test the effectiveness of activating strategies in the achievement in English at secondary school level with respect to type of schools.
3. To test the effectiveness of activating strategies in the achievement in English at secondary school level with respect to gender.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference in the pre test achievement scores of secondary school students in the experimental and control group
2. There is no significant difference in the posttest achievement scores of secondary school students in the experimental and control group.
3. There is no significant difference in the posttest achievement scores of secondary school students with respect to type of schools.
4. There is no significant difference in the posttest achievement scores of secondary school students with respect to gender.

METHODOLOGY

Method adopted: Quasi experimental method with non –equivalent group pretest-posttest design is adopted for the study. The experimental group was taught with lesson transcripts based on Activating strategies and control group with lecture cum discussion method.

Sample selected: A sample of 160 students belong to 8th standard from a government school and an aided school in Kollam district were selected for the study.

Experimental Group	Boys	Girls
Government(40)	24	16
Aided(40)	22	18

Tools used for the study: Lessons transcripts based on activating strategies and teacher made achievement test validated by experts were used as the tools for the study.

Activating Strategies used: Three- Two- One (3-2-1), Word Sun, Frayer Model of Concept Formation, Paraphrasing, Imitation Writing, Walk Around Survey

Statistical technique adopted: The investigator adopted t test for the analysis of the data.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE STUDY

In order to test the effectiveness of Activating Strategies in the achievement in English at secondary school level, the pre test scores of the Experimental and Control groups as well as the post test scores of the Experimental and Control groups were compared using t-test. The difference between the mean scores of pre test and post test of the two groups were tested for significance by finding the critical ratio. The data and results of the test of significance are given in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1

Test of Significance of Pre Test Achievement Scores of Experimental and Control Groups (Total Sample).

Test	Groups	No. of Students	Mean	Standard deviation	't' value	Level of significance
Pre-test	Experimental group	80	11.16	3.18	0.63	Not Significant
	Control group	80	10.93	2.63		

Table 1 shows that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of Experimental and Control groups in pre test, since the 't' value obtained is 0.63 which is less than the table value at 0.05 level. So it can be interpreted that the Experimental and Control groups were almost identical in their achievement in English before the Experimental treatment.

Table 2

Test of Significance of Post Test Achievement Scores of Experimental and Control Groups (Total Sample).

Test	Groups	No. of students	Mean	Standard deviation	't' value	Level of significance
Posttest	Experimental group	80	20.14	4.25	3.62	Significant at 0.01 level
	Control group	80	16.31	3.42		

Table 2 shows that the calculated value of 't' is 3.62 which is greater than the table value at 0.01 level. This suggests that there is significant difference between the means of the post test scores of the Experimental and Control groups after the experimental treatment. The mean score of the Experimental group is higher than that of the mean score of the Control group; the difference may be due to the method of instruction by utilizing Activating Strategies.

Table 3
Test of Significance of Post Test Achievement Scores of Government and Aided School Students in the Experimental Group (Sub sample).

Test	Type of School	No. of pupils	Mean	Standard deviation	't' value	Level of significance
Post-test	Government	40	22.15	3.88	8.21	Significant at 0.01 level
	Aided	40	18.13	4.10		

The data from table 3 indicates that there is significant difference in the post test achievement scores of the students who belong to Government and Aided School with 't value' 8.21 which is significant at 0.01 level. The data reveals that government school students performed comparatively better than the aided school students.

Table 4
Test of Significance of Post Test Achievement Scores of Boys and Girls in the Experimental Group (Sub Sample).

Test	Gender	No. of Students	Mean	Standard deviation	't' value	Level of significance
Post-test	Boys	46	20.31	4.55	0.675	Not Significant
	Girls	34	19.91	3.88		

Table 4 shows that the 't value' is 0.675 which is not significant and hence it indicates that there is no significant difference in the post test scores of students with respect to gender. The boys and girls do not differ significantly in their achievement in English after the experimental treatment.

TENABILITY OF HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference in the pre test achievement scores of secondary school students in the experimental and control group - Accepted.
2. There is no significant difference in the posttest achievement scores of secondary school students in the experimental and control group - Rejected.
3. There is no significant difference in the posttest achievement scores of secondary school students with respect to type of schools- Rejected.
4. There is no significant difference in the posttest achievement scores of secondary school students with respect to gender- Accepted.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

1. The study reveals that the experimental and control groups do not differ significantly in their pre test achievement scores in English. So it can be inferred that both the groups were almost identical in their entry behaviour.
2. The study reveals that the experimental and control groups differ significantly in their post test achievement scores in English. It indicates that Activating strategies are very effective in transacting lessons in English. It helps the students to form concepts easily.
3. The results reveal that the government and aided school students differ considerably in their post test achievement score in English. The reasons for this achievement difference may be due to the higher

achievement motivation of the students in the government school as compared to the students in the aided school.

4. It is found that the boys and girls do not show any significant difference in their post test achievement scores in English. Hence it can be interpreted that the effectiveness of activating strategies on both groups is found to be identical.

Based on the above findings, it can be concluded that activating strategies are very effective for the realization of desired learning outcomes. It helps to modify the terminal behaviour of learners with special reference to their achievement in English. It helps in concept formation in English in an effective manner. It can also be inferred that integration of activating strategies for the transaction of curriculum in English is found to be superior to lecture cum discussion method of teaching English.

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