

Effective English Teaching Strategies for EFL Students in Jordan

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Abstract

The study offers a **perception** regarding the way the educational process took place in a period of sudden and multiple changes in the Jordanian education system. It clarifies useful recommendations for educators to succeed in increasing the quality of the educational process in an online environment. It is possible that after a longer period of adaptation and familiarization with the online environment for students and educators, the quality of the educational process will improve. A quantitative study is conducted including 30 EFL students at a public school in Jordan. The results show that students prefer if English language learners have a suitable environment in the classroom, that enables them to learn easily and conveniently. competitions and challenges are recommended to motivate them to use English language in the classroom.

Keywords: Jordan; Education; Strategies; EFL; Learners; Online.

1. Introduction

Successful language learning in the field of second/foreign language teaching and learning done by interests of practitioners and researchers have been geared to the language learning strategies and adoption of successful language learners. The suggestion is that a good language learner may have some special strategies that others could learn from was initially introduced. What can educators do to assist EFL learners during the teaching process will be related to different variables such as target language, proficiency, age, situation, cultural differences and learning styles (Rubin,1975). The strategies considered to be essential were broadly associated with learning skills, such as reading, speaking, listening, and writing. These strategies served as an important guidance for teachers in shaping their approaches in everyday English teaching, and using related words or pictures in order to get the idea quickly such as

skimming or scanning, guessing intelligibly, analyzing , summarizing, semantic , mapping, writing through recording English phrases, using English-English dictionaries, and speaking skills strategies such as imitating particular speaker in terms of pronunciation, intonation, stress, gesture, eye contact, etc. However, insufficient knowledge of grammatical structure, lexical features and argumentative features, difficulties in putting together organized ideas and producing solid evidence to write a well-organized essay affect and weaken EFL students' abilities.

According to socio-cultural theory, social interaction, and cultural institutions play an important role in an individual's cognitive growth and development (Donato & MacCormick, 1994). Social interaction had a crucial role to play in EFL classes. From this socio-cultural perspective, the learning environment and contexts are influential upon individuals' strategic orientations to language learning (Scarcella & Oxford ,1992) and technology, especially the emergence of the internet, are affecting every aspect of education and changing the way we teach and learn (Paulsen, 2001). However, there are still many problems with the application of the internet in the classroom including the reliability of the information on the web, the cost of the equipment needed to connect to the internet, inequality of access between the haves and have-nots. (Lyman, 1998; Sussex & White, 1996; Warschauer, 2000).

1.1 The Significance

The significance of the present study is understanding EFL students' learning styles and providing their needs to develop their skills.

1.2 The Purpose

The study answers the following questions:

1. What strategies are used by the teachers to facilitate learning?
2. What problems and difficulties do students encounter during learning?

2. Literature Review

Learning how to speak English fluently and accurately has been a grand task for EFL students. Strategies in learning to speak as one of important factors of speaking skill should be considered not only by foreign students but also the teachers. Students' strategies in learning to speak English should be in balance with teachers' techniques in teaching students to speak English. Both affect the improvement of students' ability in speaking English (Novienty, 2018:1). As this study showed by (Kadiu & Treska ,2016) different techniques and strategies should be included such as: cooperation, control of the class, and motivation. They also stressed the fact that four skills should be co-related for an effective class. The most important finding was related to the students. According to them, the best way to learn the English language was by writing. ESL program has grown 180% in the last eighteen years according to ELL (Lichet,2017). Many of these students have had limited or interrupted education and need academic support as well as English instruction.

2.1.Strategies

2.1.1. Helping English Language Learner (ELL) Adjust to Classroom

Moreno (2002) argues that when you have ELLs in your classroom, it is really important that ELL's adjust to the classroom before learning takes place. He argues that the classroom should be set up in such a way that provides good learning environment. He states that the language content and the metacognitive objects should be displayed around the classroom. He states that the information should be presented in variety of ways which should include written demonstrations with tangible objects. The classroom should include world walls with vocabulary for a specific unit or chapter. In the classroom, the instructions or steps should be listed in steps for students to visualize so they have something to refer to. Moreno also states that ELL's should maintain a notebook where they can write down the words that they learn with their transitions. During e-learning for English, the relationships between students must be friendly, because stressful school environments reduce students' ability to learn (Bista, 2011).

2.1. 2. Adjusting Teaching Style

Mereno (2002) also suggests that when the ELL's are adjusted to the classroom, the teachers also need to adjust their teaching style to provide effective instruction. Research suggests that teachers need to adapt student centered approach rather than teacher centered, the main idea behind the practice is that learning is most meaningful when topics are relevant to the students' lives, needs, and interests and when the students themselves are actively engaged in creating, understanding, and connecting to knowledge. Students will have a higher motivation to learn when they feel they have a real stake in their own learning. When teachers are teaching English to the ELL's, the students will have a higher motivation to learn when they feel they have a real stake in their own learning (Tylor, 2012).

2.1.3. Dual-Language Approach

Educators and policy makers emphasize the importance of inviting students to use their first language as well as English enables them to draw on their strengths, including their existing academic, linguistic, and cultural knowledge. This approach also enriches the class environment by exposing English-speaking students to the advantages of knowing more than one language and of cultural diversity in general (Many Roots Many Voices, 2005). Vacca-Rizopoulos and Nicoletti (2009) also discuss the importance of encouraging the use of student's native language to teach English, they also touch on the importance of providing options for them, for example, using nonlinguistic organizers to promote an appreciation for other languages and cultures. ELLs are usually embarrassed to speak English out loud in classrooms can learn English by adding vocabularies on the wall, in ways that help them feel connected to the classroom. (Vacca-Rizopoulos & Nicoletti, 2009).

2.1. 4. Technology

EFL classroom without technology is incomplete. Internet and computers should be the cornerstones in ESL learning programs. Technology based activities helps motivates learners

and increases critical thinking. In ESL courses, learners actively participate in classroom learning when they are asked to use software applications for listening, reading, writing and speaking activities (Svinivki & McKeachie, 2011). In addition, Moreno (2002) suggests teachers and ELL students use computers in the classroom to access educational websites and games that can teach the ELL's the language. Teachers can also use CD's and videotapes that come with textbooks, and they can help students practice reading fluency through echo reading. ELLs will have the opportunity to listen to the narrated story, and become familiar with different words, and they will know how to pronounce English words. Moreno adds on that the overhead projector is a common technology tool that is found in most of the classrooms, and ELL instructors should use it every day to model and highlight texts, and to identify main ideas or new vocabulary or to show pictures.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

It was a cross-sectional study, a random sample conducted at a private high school in Zarqa Jordan, to determine the effectiveness of English teaching strategies for EFL student. Total sample included 30 female EFL students aged between 16 - 18 years old. The access to this study was obtained following ethical approval after consultation and permission of local research ethics committee, senior management, and site managers at the school.

3.2 Data Collection

This study produced qualitative and quantitative data through a questionnaire. The survey questionnaire included two parts. The First part is a Yes or No questions consisted of five questions, and the second part included 5 open questions .The first five questions were set to measure EFL students' attitudes towards learning the English language. see Appendixes A1 and A2.

3.3 Data Processing and Analysis

After data collection, the raw data was recorded and a coding instruction manual prepared. The analysis was performed manually. Statistics gave a general picture of the learners' attitude towards learning English in all its aspects. The following table in first part of questionnaire presents the percentage of participants' answers.

	Questions	Yes	No
1	Do you like learning grammar in a direct way?	88%	12%
2	Can you use English in your daily life?	36%	64%
3	Do you think the communication between teachers and students and also amongst the students is useful?	88%	12%
4	Do you feel worried when you speak or read English in the classroom?	76%	24%

5	If learners of English have a suitable environment inside the classroom would that make them learn easier and better?	100%	%0
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Table (3.1) The percentage of the participants' answers in Yes or No questions

It is clear from the above table that the proportion of the first question directly learning the rules was 88% agree and 12% disagree. Question 2 use English in your daily life, had the percentage of agreed answers being 36% responding. And 64% of respondents disagreed. For question number 3, 88% agree that communication between teachers and students and amongst the students is useful and about 12% disagree. 76% Respondents in question 4 feel worried when speak or read English in the classroom whereas 24% don't. In question No. 5, all the participants agreed that If learners of English have a suitable environment inside the classroom, would that make them learn easier and better.

The following points explain the answers to the questions: Q1 learning the English language will help in the future /All students agreed that the English language will help them in the future in many things and in any ways, each according to their interests. Learning the language is very important to study at university and to study abroad, according to one group. Another group said that it is important to communicate with other people and learn about other cultures. In short, the English language is the key to science and the language of the age.

Q2-the most important skill is it reading, writing, listening or speaking/ The most important skill for most was speaking fluently, because who can speak can also listen and understand well.

Q3- the type of activities improves the learning process/ Most of the students agreed that there should be competitions and challenges that motivate them to use the language in the classroom.

Q4- the challenges in learning the English language/ For students, there are many difficulties and challenges in learning the language, including the inability to pronounce words correctly, the inability to write, as well as fear and tension when speaking or reading, and most importantly the fear of bullying.

Q5- Mistakes that most teachers do inside the classroom /Write your points. Most of the students agreed by 96%, on this error, which is the speed of the teacher in speaking and explaining in English, they agreed that the teacher should speak in the classroom in English and that the Arabic language should only be used for necessity and importantly not to consider the feelings of the student and not to make fun of him when he makes a mistake.

4. Discussion

This study evaluates various issues in teaching English online. Regarding the first research question, what strategies do teachers use to facilitate learning, few respondents (4%) believed that the strategies teachers use to facilitate learning are good and the students agreed that there should be competitions and challenges that motivate them to use the language in the classroom to facilitate learning, while 96% of respondents believed that teachers made mistakes such as: the speed of the teacher in speaking and explaining in English, they agreed that the teacher should speak in the classroom in English and that the Arabic language should only be used for necessity and the teacher should take into account the feelings of the student and never makes fun of the student when he/she makes mistakes. The second question in this study sought to determine if there are any challenges in teaching English online. The study showed some of the challenges that the participants face, including the inability to pronounce words correctly, the inability to write, fear and tension when speaking or reading, and most importantly, the fear of bullying. According to (Intarapanicha, 2013) an ideal EFL teacher for young learners is a professional who has knowledge of language skills, the ability to apply many different activities in the classroom, and most importantly, he should be a good role model for them, EFL strategies have been foreign to secondary levels found in the classroom conversation, role-playing, discussions, and group work. These activities provided students with more opportunities to network and exchange ideas. It was shown in (Sarifa, 2020) study, after applying the selective method in language separation, it helps to integrate multiple language learning activities and allows students to receive individual attention amidst a populated category. It also makes students feel more motivated and confident that they have significantly improved in all four skills (LSRW). Awla (2014) claims that the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and some elements of English (vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar) must be taught in the form of integrated skills because the skills and items link together.

5. Conclusions

The study offers a perspective regarding the way the educational process took place in a period of sudden and multiple changes in the Jordanian education system. It clarifies useful recommendations for educators to succeed in increasing the quality of the educational process in an online environment. It is possible that after a longer period of adaptation and familiarization with the online environment for students and educators, the quality of the educational process will improve, and the students' perception of online learning will be more positive and in agreement with the other studies we mentioned earlier in this paper. However, there are still many difficulties and challenges in learning a language, including the inability to pronounce words correctly, inability to write, fear and tension when speaking or reading, and most importantly, fear of bullying. The technical problems that students face are poor internet connection, signal loss, and lack of suitable digital devices, especially for students who live in rural areas or students from low-income families. The results of this study show that students prefer if English language learners have a suitable environment in the classroom, that makes them learn easily and conveniently. And where all the students agreed that the English language

will help them in the future in many things and in any way, each according to their interests agreed that there should be competitions and challenges to motivate them to use the language in the classroom.

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Appendix

A1

Yes or No questions:

- Do you like learning grammar in a direct way?
- Can you use English in your daily life?
- Do you think the communication between teachers and students and also amongst the students is useful?
- Do you feel worried when you speak or read English in the classroom?
- If learners of English have a suitable environment inside the classroom would that make them learn easier and better?

Appendix

A2

Open questions:

Q1- Do you think that learning the English language will

help you in the future? How?

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.....

Q2-In your opinion, what is the most important skill: is it reading, writing , listening or speaking?

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Q3-What type of activities do you think would improve the learning process?

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Q4- Writ about your own challenges in learning the English language?

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Q5- What mistakes do you think that most teachers do inside the classroom? Write your points.

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