

TECHNIQUES OF TEACHING FOR LIS EDUCATION

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Introduction

There is a tremendous semantic confusion in the use of such words as methods, strategies and techniques because they are used interchangeably in the educational literature. According to Dhand Marry basically, there are three methods of teaching: Transmission, inquiry and a combination of two (or electric method). A method is an overall procedure or process to achieve certain goals. A teacher follows certain approaches approximating one of three methods given above. Techniques of teaching are the day-to-day activities which the teacher may design for a particular lesson. They may include group discussions, projects, and the use of books or field tripping. A strategy is the organization and co-

ordination of the above techniques to practice the method, which would achieve the desired goals.

A teaching technique can be thought of as an activity which affects the learners encoding process that is, how the learner will learn the desired information, concept, generalization and/or skills. The technique can be either student centered such as student made reports or teacher center such as lecture. They can be active or passive depending on how they are used. There can be many factors which can be determine the success or failure of any technique. The teacher must be alert to the appropriateness of the technique to the topic. For instance, the technique should be such that it makes best use of the students time. To a large extent, everything that happens in the learning situation (sometime that is

not controllable) should relate to the objectives of the topic. But at the same time, the technique should be flexible enough to accommodate unrelated high interest topics at the time of the lesson.

The rationale for closing one methodology over another depends upon objectives, content, learner needs, learning/ principles, instructional resources, teacher competencies, climate in the institution and expectations of the community in which the institution is located. It is, to a large extent, a personal and individual decision made by the teacher.

It may be possible for a teacher to be successful in using the techniques of role-playing and simulation exclusively. However, most teachers may find, with experience, that there is no single technique that always seems to 'work'. It is necessary to use a variety of techniques to avoid boredom in the classroom. Some techniques (and strategies) however, seem to be more suitable to achieve particular objectives in a particular class at a particular time. Moreover, learning to think is the major process goal (among many other goals) of teaching of school subjects but it can be hardly satisfied by resorting to a single mode of teaching learning process. Undoubtedly, its realization requires a commitment to eclectism and variety, to the selection of the method, the strategies and the techniques best ruled to the objectives and other variables of the teaching-learning situation.

In the view of Dhand Marry successful teaching depends, for a considerable part, on successful planning. With good planning there exists the potential to improve instruction and make teaching more effective. There is, however, no one way to plan and no one plan that will guarantee success in all situations. A successful plan for effective teaching is a flexible plan. One that is well thought out and is adaptable to a variety of situations. Organizing and coordinating four or five techniques to achieve certain objectives is a strategy. Deciding on strategies, consisting of a few techniques, is the heart of the planning process for realizing certain objectives.

The course content will not prove fruitful, unless supported by a uniform teaching and training technology at the national level.

Due to increasing impart of information technology on libraries and information centers, our traditional method of teaching has been outdated. In most library and information science departments the method of teaching remains unchanged. In this scenario right teaching technique is the need of the hour. For this reason it is very important for library and information science department to adopt right method of teaching and in this context we should change the concepts of library and information science teaching methodologies.

Method of teaching and use of teaching aids has its own significant importance for effective teaching. The use of OHP's and slide projectors, TV and VCR have entered the

classrooms to aid the teaching and also to make it effective. It is well known fact that information technology has created greater impact on Library & information science curriculum and in recent years the teaching of fundamentals to advanced courses in Library and information science departments have become *sur-requid*. As quoted by S.R. Ranganathan, the teaching technique for library science cannot, therefore, consist largely of telling facts. It must, on the other hand consist largely of “reasoning out” every detail and every step in procedure. Even facts are best communicated by introducing them as inevitable consequences of some basic principles and generally known information.”

The technique means the method of performance, manipulation, especially everything concerned with the mechanical part of an artistic performance. The techniques are connected with oral teaching “A time honoured method of imparting knowledge to pupils.” These are explanation, narration and description.

Narration:

Narration means telling stories, giving accounts of events to other. Pantan writes, as cited by Kochhar, S.K. “Narration is an art is itself which aims at presenting to the pupils, through the medium of speech clear vivid, interesting ordered sequence of events, in such a way that their minds reconstruct these happenings and they live in imagination through the experiences recounted either as spectators or possibly as participators.” The purpose of narration is to present a clear,

vivid, interesting and ordered sequence of events to the pupils.

Narration is an art which every teacher should learn as he has often to narrate or tell a story, give accounts of facts or to sketch and recount some happenings. To be a good narrator, he should know the skillful use of language and speech, he should know the use of metaphors and similes relating to experiences with which pupils are familiar. As the pupils advance image, the style should become more matter of fact, metaphors and similes need not be so rich and pictorial. But the use of suitable “verbal illustrations” involving familiar experiences is recommended when meanings have to be made clear. Catching words and phrases should be used to create proper images. The chief form of narration is story telling.

In Library & information science teaching this method can be used for theoretical concepts of teaching.

Description:

A description is similar to narration. According to the dictionary meaning, “description is the act of representing a thing by words; account of the properties or appearance of something.” In other words, description is the portrayal in words of a person object, things or events. The purpose is to give a mental picture of the same to the pupil.

As in good narration and in description also, the language used should be sufficiently

vivid and interesting to hold pupils attention. But the words chosen should also be exact and correct so that only the correct things or processes are visualized” or mentally perceived. The use of homely illustrations such as metaphors and simile help to vivify descriptions as much as narrations.

Explanation:-

This is another technique of oral teaching. The object of this technique is to enable the pupil to take an intelligent interest in the proceedings, to grasp the purpose of what is being done and to develop their understanding of how to do it.” In the words of Panton, “Explanation forms a kind of bridge between telling revealing knowledge to the learners, and it involves a number of other techniques as well as narration and description.” Throughout the process, the teacher must keep in close touch with the minds of pupil, suggesting lines of thought, questioning them, assuming their questions, setting them on practical work, examining the results obtained, discussing significant problems etc.

Explanation given by the teacher may be full and detached or partial, of the important issues or of minor points as needed. A full detailed explanation is not always necessary as much can be and should be left to pupils to discover for themselves. In order to have explanation properly, teacher of Library & Information Science has sometimes to point out things, to describe or to narrate or make use of illustrations both verbal and non-verbal audio-

relationships between the facts, situations and activities, which are involved in any experiences perceived and appreciated by pupils.

In teaching Library & Information Science topics, facts have to be brought home to the pupils through explanation so as to increase the learner’s insight or understudy.

Panton has sounded a useful note when he says, “Throughout the process of explanation, the teacher must keep in close touch with the minds of his pupils, suggesting lines of thought, questioning them, answering their questions, setting them on practical work, examining the results obtained, discussing significant problems etc.”

Questioning:-

Questioning plays a very important part in teaching, learning and testing. It is accepted that the success and efficiency of teaching depends more on the skill and judgment with which the teacher puts questions than on any other single circumstances. The teacher, who never questions, never teaches. Infact, the power to question is one of the fine art of teaching.

Website <http://ali.apple.com> gives benefits of effective questioning technique as questioning is a natural and enjoyable means of intellectual and social growth. Characters have called this age old medium of learning a “racial tool!” The minds of the learner and the teacher can be brought into close touch, and learners can be led to creative effort through this device.

- a. Questions generally are asked to find out what the pupil knows and what he does not know.
- b. To keep him alert and attentive
- c. To know whether he is following the topic or not.
- d. To direct and encourage thought and thus to stimulate curiosity.

Whatever questions the teacher asks should be relevant to the theme and should be continuous. Questions should be neither too easy nor too difficult. Questions should not be suggestive of the answer because such question encourage in attention on the part of the pupils.

Questions should be definite rather than vague. Questions should be asked in a sympathetic manner and should be well-distributed. Effective questioning techniques are a part of the art of teaching. Appropriately formed questions can help students dig within themselves for more thought and reflection. Students can make discoveries and be challenged to think more critically.

Accomplished teachers use many different forms of questions and provide structure that brings out the best in students. They give students time to formulate answers and strive for active learning.

This technique can be used frequently in the classrooms. Because by asking questions, the relevant experiences in the memory of the students come to the surface and the families and know associations help in learning and granting

the unfamiliar and the unknown. For acquiring new knowledge, the students read just the previous known aspects. Thus the old and new gets integrated and the process of learning library and information science becomes simpler and easier.

Answering:-

Questions are asked to know what the pupils know. How much the pupils know will be reflected in their answers. Lot of task, insight and effort is required for dealing with the pupils answers. Good answers depend a great deal upon the kind of questions that are put to the pupils. Generally, intelligent questions result is correct answers.

Good answers are exact and accurate in substance as well as in language. They are complete. Good answers are clear, concise and simple in language. They are thoughtful and are the result of mental activity on the pupil's part. Good answers ought to be audible to the whole class and should be given a natural and confident manner.

Here are some guidelines for LIS teacher for dealing with answers of the pupils properly.

- i. Demand full, concise, clear and accurate answers from the pupils.
- ii. Make the best of the answers given by the pupils. Appreciate good answers.
- iii. Do not encourage the pupils to answer in unison.
- iv. Reject a slip-shod answer.

- v. Do not rephrase or change the question without sufficient reason.

Illustrations:-

The term “illustration” means the employment of those aids, which will make ideas clear to the pupils and help them to acquire correct knowledge. Illustrations are very important device of teaching. They help in simplifying matter and giving vividness to explanations. They stimulate interest and excite curiosity in learning they introduce variety in the lesson and source better attention. They lessen the intellectual tension, lighten the knowledge load and effect economy by proper associations.

The illustrations need to be used with care. Here are some suggestions for their proper use.

- i. Use simple illustrations; they should be easily understood without any need of comments and explanations.
- ii. Use illustrations, which are relevant to the topic.
- iii. Do not use too many illustrations in a single topic.
- iv. Use illustrations at the proper time during the course of the topic.

Illustrations are a good antidote to the disease of verbalism. If wisely selected, exhibited with timing and intelligently and fact fully used, illustrations including flow charts prove a great asset to LIS studies.

Assignment:-

Assignment is a very useful device of teaching LIS.

Some significant topic or sub-topic is assigned to the pupil for preparation, for study, for revision or the some remedial work. The pupils are usually required to prepare the assignment in writing. It is believed that written assignments help in organization of knowledge, assignment of facts and better preparation for examinations.

Kochhar, S.K. has stated that:

- i. Assignment should motivate pupil effort: Students need good reasons for doing things. They want to see the pertinence of the assigned work to their concerns, problems and needs. It is very necessary that the teacher relates the assigned work to the pupil's present need when possible or seeks to stimulate related interests.
- ii. Assignment should be related to purpose: - Assignments must not be simply busy work, calculated only to keep pupils occupied. Instead, they must be pertinent of the goals of instruction. The teacher should help students understand the learning objectives and recognize the relationship of assignments to these objectives.
- iii. Assignment should challenge, not threaten:- Assignment should never be given by the teacher and received by the students as punishment. Assignments can be challenging if they are meaningful and promote student involvement.

- iv. Assignment should provide for individual differences: - As students vary so greatly in interests, aptitudes and abilities. A single assignment for all pupils to complete often is too difficult for some and too easy for others. The teacher should divide the class into subgroups and provide appropriate assignments for ht different groups. Differentiated assignments should be made, the quantity and quality of work expected for various grades may be indicated and the student may be allowed to choose and work towards the grade he wishes.
- v. Assignments should be co-operatively made:- Both teacher and students ought to be actively involved. The student ultimately is doing the work, not for the teachers, benefit but for his own. Thus he should have an opportunity to contribute to the sort of assignment he is supposed to work on.
- vi. Assignments should not be lightly tossed of as the final bell sounds: - They are a vital part of teaching and require serious consideration and thoughtful planning. If well planned, the assignments can promote serious learning.

Supervised Study:-

Supervised study is another useful device of teaching LIS. The pupils work at their desk on the assignment given to them by the teacher. The teacher supervises them. When the pupils meet a difficulty that they cannot overcome, they ask the teacher for direction and assistance. The teacher

when not called upon walks quickly up and down the classroom but always available at the pupil desks, watching the pupils do their work, continuously on the alert for any wrong procedures that they may follow. He is always ready to direct and aid them. Maxwell and Kilzer as cited by Tejomurthy & Chopra, have apathy defines supervised study as the effective direction and oversight of the silent study and laboratory activities of pupils.

Supervised study is a sort of directed study procedure. The pupils learn certain skills essential to successful use and understanding of LIS content under the supervision of the teacher. Teacher gets the opportunity of observing the pupils from a close quarter and thus he can be of considerable help in more ways than one. Pupils benefit from individual attention by the teacher who brings to the situation his knowledge of each pupil accumulated from observation. The teacher can detect pupil's habits of study, efficiency of study, skills and degree for progress. At the spot guidance can be given. This can prove very useful. Pupil's time is saved as the errors are corrected at once. This enables the teacher to redirect his efforts.

Supervised study encourages democratic human relations. Pupils learn to share materials, to wait their turn and to understand their own difficulties. This develops a sympathetic attitude towards the difficulties of others. Teacher becomes aware of individual differences. These become guides for the teacher.

As the teacher supervises each pupil, the pupil who proceeds slowly can be guided into effective learning experience meaningful for him. The discontented pupil can be given a more satisfying interpretation as he is guided by teacher's questions or suggestions to overcome difficulties. The pupil who work more rapidly and requires a greater challenge to use his ability can be further motivated to put in his best.

This device helps in developing better pupil-teacher relations. The teacher, instead of being a hard taskmaster is a helper and a guide. He gets an opportunity for displaying sympathy and understanding. The teacher is able to understand the pupil and his difficulties are in a position to spur him on to greater effort.

Drill technique:-

It is the most widely used technique of teaching. It was originally introduced by Thorndike. This technique is based on the assumption that if a particular learning is revised several times. It becomes stable and permanent. Drill is not a mere repetition of an act for the purpose of attaining perfection, but it is a serious work activity for obtaining perfection, formation of habit or fixing of specific facts for easy and effortless recall, "Drill" is sometimes used as a synonym for "Practice"

To get best results the teacher should put in a lot of thinking while preparing the task. He should select and phrase questions which are brief

and concise, on the unit or topic that has been studied. The teacher may try competitive exercise instead of asking questions in a straight forward manner. The contest is very appealing to the students but the real contest will depend upon teachers planning.

Yadav, Nirmal stated the values of effective Drill work

- i. It aids in achieving complete mastery of the subject matter.
- ii. It helps in isolating the most important points from those of lesser importance.
- iii. It helps in ascertaining the effectiveness of classroom work.
- iv. It helps pupils to prepare themselves for testing and evaluation.
- v. It increases employment by classroom work.

Visit to Libraries/ Documentation Centres:-

In order to have firsthand information about the organization, management, building, collections, and library/ documentation/ information services being provided by different types of libraries in the country, guided educational trips should be organized by the departments, at least once during every academic year. This would help the students to have a broader spectrum of librarianship and information science in their minds. They can make a comparative study, observe the working of various types of libraries and the local variations being followed in these libraries / documentation /

information centers at various levels. This also gives them a chance to interact with the students and faculty of other organizations, study the difference between theoretical teaching and its practical application in the actual working in the libraries. Such visits should be for a minimum period of ten days and should cover a variety of libraries / documentation / information centers, research institutions, located in different places within the country.

Internship:-

Since Library and Information Science is a professional course / there is a need for practical training of actual working in a library / information center for certain duration, after completing the theoretical training – as is done in the case of other recognized professions like medicine, engineering, etc. It has been observed that even after passing the M.L.I.Sc examination with high percentage of marks, when students are absorbed/ employed in a library, they find it difficult to handle the work of different departments / sections of that library or information centers. Sometimes they are not familiar with the usual routine work or most common reference tools – not to talk of providing reference or information service to the clientele.

According to Tejmurthy A. and Chopra, H.R in order to safeguard them from the awkward position or cutting a sorry figure in the very beginning of their professional career, it should be made compulsory for all student of M.L.I.Sc

students to undergo practical training or internship for a period of atleast two months after finishing the university examination. They should be attached by the head / chairperson of the teaching department concerned to some recognized library / documentation / information center within the same locality or in a nearby city – depending upon the feasibility background, aptitude, specialization of the student concerned and various other factors concerning the university or the geographical aspect thereof.

After the completion of the said period of internship, duly testified by the head of the institution on concerned to which the candidate was attached – the result of the candidate's performance in the university examination should be declared. In addition to all other factors this system of internship would impose confidence in the trainee and would augment the working capability of the budding librarian. Then he/ she would not be considered "half baked material."

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