

Assessment in Language Learning

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The language should be simple and familiar to be understood by the average reader. Simple and direct sentences are more effective than long, involved ones. The simple style is also easy to translate if copy is used in some sister publication in a different language. Every sentence must be clear and has no abstractions. Economy of space as well as rhythm requires all kinds of sentences to be used. A subordinate clause in a complex sentence can express better precisely and economically than a series of simple sentences or compound sentences joined by ‘and’, etc. Unfamiliar words and jargon should be avoided. The choice of words should be simple and elegant. Unfamiliar words should be explained in simple language. A popular English equivalent should be preferred for Greek or Latin expressions. More fashionable foreign expressions should be avoided. Profanities or obscene or vulgar language should be totally eschewed. Slang, colloquialism should also be avoided. Preference should be given to the action voice. Adjectives and epithets retain their significance only when used in proper context and sparingly, chosen carefully and used aptly. They add colour to a story and improve its quality. “Learning and assessment solutions in today’s educational marketplace are placing increasing importance and resources on developing technologies that are dialogic (as opposed to monologic) in nature. Conversational proficiency is a crucial skill for success in today’s workplace.” (Weldy and Icenogle)

Language should be used carefully to avoid any value judgment when it is now intended. For example, while reporting police firing one can say, “The police had to open fire...” or “....was forced to open fire”. The correct way to give a factual narration is, “The police opened fire”. But when a minister or an official states that the police had to open fire, it may be reported as such with attribution. “Dialog system technologies are one solution capable of addressing and automating this need by allowing learners to practice and improve their interactional competence at scale” (Suendermann). However, such conversational technologies need to be able to provide targeted and actionable feedback to users in order for them to be useful to learners and widely adopted. Automated scoring of multiple aspects of conversational proficiency is one way to address this need. “While the automated scoring of text and speech data has been a well-explored topic for several years, particularly for essays and short constructed responses in the case of the former.” (Shermis and Burstein)

Quotations should not be over used. The excessive use of quotations can spoil a copy. In reporting statements or speeches the safest verb is “said”. Verbs that substitute “said” are observed, remarked, stated, averred, declared, affirmed, pointed out, told, informed, opined, confined, admitted, accepted, conferred, alleged, denied, rejected, repudiated, refuted, argued, contended, disclosed, revealed.

Remarkd may be used with any ordinary statement, but observed and stated may be used only where there is really an observation or a statement. Averred is legalistic in use, declared must be backed by the strength of authority. Affirmed has an element of firmness in it and is stronger than 'said'. 'Asserted' is stronger still. 'Opined' sounds pedantic and should be used as part of a quoted passage. As a general rule we should strive to express even a negative thing in a positive form. For example 'The project was not successful, should be written as 'the project failed'. Likewise 'they did not pay attention to the complaint', should be written as 'they ignored the complaint'.

No sentence should contain unnecessary words and no paragraph should have any superfluous sentence. There should be the right words in the right order. Adjectives and adverbs should be used only when they add to precision and economy of a sentence. No word should have a parasite consuming space and debasing language. In 'widow of the late Mr.....' words not write, 'at 9 a.m. in the morning. It should be either 'a.m.' or 'morning'. Repetition is always needless, at times it becomes irritating. Only if identify is in doubt should it be repeated.

PRINCIPLES OF GROUP DYNAMICS

It is important to remember that "group members are made, not born". People must learn how to work together - to see their own efforts in relation to those of the groups as a whole, and to apply certain proven principle which improve the effectiveness of cooperative activity :

Atmosphere : Every member is a teacher and every member is a learner,

Threat reduction;

Distributive Leadership : Democratic group situation, autocratic leader

Goal formulation;

Flexibility;

Consensus : Everybody is satisfied with the solution.

Process awareness;

Continual evaluation;

Problem solving involves utilization of the products of previous learning experiences. Higher mental processes may also be called into play: reasoning, forming concepts, making and testing hypotheses, and so on.

ADULT LEARNING IN EXTENSION

The fact that adults can learn is very important in India where adult learning, especially learning new practices, is so essential to increasing production of foodstuffs and improving

standards of living. Too often adults learn less than they might, partly because they underestimate their ability to learn, partly because of the narrowness of their interests and most probably, because of the attitudes and values which they hold. The traditional ways of village people are a real block to getting them to learn new ways.

Attitudes are learned responses' and they are always formed in relation to objects, ideas or persons. Attitudes may reflect one's central values; show one's consistency in ways of reacting, or ways or gratifying needs. The individual who is amenable to group work is much easier to work within group situations but this comes largely through experience in group activity. We must point out in this connection, the importance of group work in Extension.

COMMUNICATING FOR CHANGE

It seems that simply having a role in social change, it has the role. While there are a host of ways in which people react to changes, both good and bad there are some common responses and underlying reasons why initiatives for change becomes bogged down:

- A lack of understanding of the need for change
- A lack of or a different sense of the context or environment
- A belief that the proposed change violates the core values or the organization
- A misunderstanding of the change and to implications
- A belief that the change is not in the best interests of the society
- A lack of trust in those introducing change
- A lack of belief that the leadership is serious about making changes
- A lack of belief that the leadership is capable of making change happen
- A perception that the change is unfairly selective

The more information that is shared, the greater the debate is likely to be on strategy, the greater the challenging of society, and the less likely the simple acceptance of decisions. People resist change when they have a different perception for the problem that the change is designed to solve.

STRATEGY FOR ASSESSMENT OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

Change efforts that stumble often wrongly match the degree of speed and drive to change required, moving quickly and involving too few people. Assessment of language learning for change depends largely on the mix of reasons for the change itself; and the sources of possible resistance. The last strategy will depend upon some of the following:

- Type of change
- Degree of urgency to make change happen
- Speed of change required
- Reactions to change, and likely triggers of resistance.

As a rule of thumb, it is best to involve people who will be affected by the change in the change process as much as possible. Imposing change on people can create too much bad feeling, resistance and resentment to be effective in anything but the short term. Successful assessment of language learning relies upon a shared context, and assumes that people share common attitudes and values. When the expectations of those communicating are shared, meaning is also shared. The most effective communication is face to face, and the most believed communication is behaviour. One's change and behaviour also depend on the cultural bias.

Change happens person by person, and we can't change people, they change themselves. Culture is a force based on the past, fighting to maintain the status quo. Culture is a shared system of meanings. It dictates what we pay attention to, how we act, and what we value. Language learning assumes that people share common attitude and values. When the expectations of those communicating are shared, meaning is shared.

Without some understanding of the cultural backgrounds, or some way of translating between different sets of value there is little chance of real communication and change. In times of change people want predictability; they want to know what is likely to happen and what to expect.

Figure: 1 shows the escalator — developing a language learning strategy, whether for communicating change or for sustaining it.

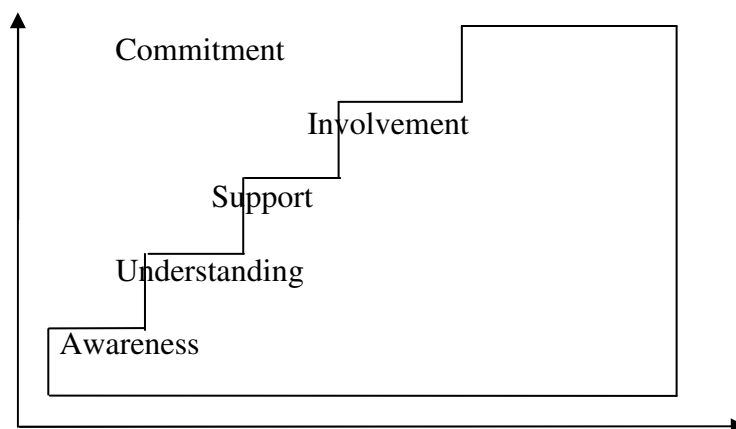


Fig. 1. Developing a Language Learning Strategy

CONCLUSION

This paper has been undertaken to preserve the present knowledge. After an extensive and intensive review work, it was found that a considerable work has been carried out with assessment and it plays an important role in the field of language learning. Assessment of language learning highlights ways to measure learners' proficiency. Assessment is perhaps one of most difficult and important parts of academicians and it should be viewed as a means to guide students on their path to learning. No single procedure or approach can cater to the needs of all learners, so we need to incorporate a variety of methods to help our students know how they are moving ahead and we should gauge their effectiveness with correct methodology and materials.

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