

Constructivist Strategies Enhancing Higher Order Language Skills Of Student Teachers At Secondary Level

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ABSTRACT

Constructivist strategies refer to teaching and learning approaches that are based on the principles of constructivism, which is a learning theory that emphasizes the active role of learners in constructing their own understanding and knowledge. The review of the literature explores the use of constructivist strategies to enhance higher order language skills in learners. Constructivism is a learning theory that emphasizes active student engagement in the learning process, and has been shown to be effective in improving higher order thinking skills. This review focuses constructivist strategies such as problem based learning, inquiry based learning and collaborative learning and how these strategies can be used to develop higher order language skills such as critical thinking, analysis, and evaluation. Overall, the review suggests that constructivist strategies can be an effective way to enhance higher order language skills in learners, and that further research is needed to better understand how these strategies can be used most effectively in language learning contexts.

Key words: *constructivist strategies, Higher order language skills*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Constructivist teaching and learning strategies emphasize the important of active experiential learning, collaboration, and critical thinking by providing opportunities for learners to construct their own knowledge and understanding. These approaches can help learners to develop the skills and competencies they need to success in a rapidly changing world. The study on constructivist strategies which enhance higher order language skills of student teachers at the secondary level is significant for several reasons,

Firstly language skills are essential for academic success, especially at the secondary level. Students who lack higher-order language skills struggle to comprehend complex texts and express their ideas effectively, which can negatively impact their academic performance.

Secondly, the study is significant because it focuses on constructivist strategies. These strategies are student centered and encourage active participation, critical thinking and problem solving skills. These strategies when implemented in language learning can enhance the learning process and improve student's engagement and motivation

Thirdly, the study is important because it focuses on student teachers who are the beginning of their teaching careers by training them in constructivist strategies, they can develop the necessary skills to create a positive learning environment for their students. These skills can include facilitating discussion, encouraging independent learning and providing feedback that foster reflection and metacognition. The study on constructivist strategies enhancing higher order language skills of student teachers at the secondary level is important because it can improve academic performance, engagement and motivation, and prepare future teachers with the skills necessary to create effective learning

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- (1)To prepare lesson transcript based on constructivist teaching for student teachers at secondary level.
- (2)To test the effectiveness of constructivist strategies for enhancing higher order language skills of language student teachers at secondary level.

III. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- (1)There will be significant difference in the higher order language skills of Student Teachers at Secondary Level when they are exposed to constructivist strategies and Lecture Method

IV. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

CONSTRUCTIVIST STRATEGIES ENHANCING HIGHER ORDER LANGUAGE SKILLS OF STUDENT TEACHERS AT SECONDARY LEVEL

V. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Constructivist strategies

Constructivist strategies are based on the theory of constructivism, which holds that learners construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experience and reflections. Some construct strategies are inquiry- based learning, project- based learning, problem- based learning, cooperative learning, scaffolded learning and reflective learning.

Higher Order Language Skills

Higher order language skills refer to the ability to use language in more complex and sophisticated ways beyond basic vocabulary and grammar. These skills include critical thinking and analysis, Meta linguistic awareness, creativity, inferential reasoning, pragmatics, discourse and narrative, multilingualism.

VI. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Method - Investigator adopted Experimental method for the study.

Design used was Pre test – Post test - Non equivalent group design

Sample - include 90 student teachers.45 students were grouped as experimental group and other 45 students were included in control group. Pre Test on higher order language skill was given to both groups .Scores were tabulated. Experimental group was treated with constructivist strategies and control group with Lecture Method. After the treatment again the same test was administered as Post Tests and scores were tabulated.

Tools and Materials used for the Study

- (1) Lesson transcripts based on constructivist strategies for Student Teachers at Secondary Level.
- (2) Higher Order Language Skill Test for Student Teachers at Secondary Level.

Statistical techniques used for the study

Analysis of Covariance (Garrett,1981)

VII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE DATA

Since the investigator selected non – equivalent intact class group as it is inconvenient to sort out students into different equated groups, it is necessary to analyse the data using statistical technique, Analysis of Co – variance (ANCOVA) in which the difference in the initial status is removed statistically. Before proceeding to ANCOVA, ANOVA was done and the F ratio for the Pre Test and Post Test was computed. The summary of Analysis of Variance of Pre Test and Post Test scores is given in Table 1

Table 1
Comparison of Pre Test and Post Test scores in Higher Order Language Skills of Students Teachers at Secondary Level. in Experimental Group and Control Groups (ANOVA)

Source of variation	df	SSx	SSy	MSx	MSy	Fx	Fy
Among means	1	24.54	2371.60	24.54	2371.60	0.34	72.93**
Within groups	88	6426.58	2861.55	73.03	32.52		
Total	89	6451.12	5233.16				

The obtained F ratios were tested for significance. The obtained Fx value (Fx = 0.34, df (1, 88), $p > .05$) is not significant at .05 level of significance. It implies that there exists no significant difference in the Pre Test in higher order language skills scores of student Teachers in experimental and control groups. The obtained Fy value (Fy = 72.93, df (1, 88), $p < .01$) is significant at .01 level of significance as the obtained value is higher than the table value for significance at 0.01 level. (Table value for df 89 at 0.01 level = 2.369). It is revealed that there is significant difference in the Post Test scores of Higher Order Language Skills of student teachers of experimental and control groups.

The adjusted sum of squares for Post Test scores was computed and the F – ratio was calculated. The summary of ANCOVA of Post Test *Higher Order Language Skills scores* for student teachers in experimental and control groups is given in Table 2

Table 2

Summary of ANCOVA of Post Test scores in Higher Order Language Skills scores of student Teachers at Secondary Level in Experimental Group and Control Groups

Source of variation	df	SSx	SSy	SSy.x	MSy.x	Fy.x
Among Means	1	24.54	2371.60	2419.43	2419.43	75.91**
Within Groups	87	6426.58	2861.55	2772.72	31.87	

The obtained Fyx ratio was tested for significance and found that it is significant at .01 level of significance as the obtained Fyx (Fyx = 75.91, $p < .01$) is significant at .01 level of significance as the obtained value is higher than the table value for significance at 0.01 level. (Table value for df 88 at 0.01 level = 2.369). It is clear from the result that the final means differ significantly after they have been adjusted for initial difference on Pre Test. Hence it can be concluded that constructivist strategies is more effective than Lecture Method for enhancing higher order language skills student teachers at secondary level.

The adjusted means of Post Test scores of Higher Order Language Skills for students of experimental and control groups were computed. The difference between the adjusted Post Test scores was tested for significance. The data for adjusted means of Post Test *Higher Order Language Skills scores* for the students in the experimental and control groups were given in Table 3

Table 3

Data for adjusted means of Post Test scores in Higher Order Language Skills scores of student teachers at Secondary Level in experimental and control groups

Groups	N	M_x	M_y	$M_{y.x(Adjusted)}$	SE_M	t
Control	45	44.78	57.24	57.18	1.19	8.71**
Experimental	45	43.73	67.51	67.57		

** P < .01

From Table 3 It is clear that the calculated value of t (t = 8.71, $p < .01$) is significant at .01 level of significance as the obtained value is higher than the table value for significance at 0.01 level. (Table value for df 88 at 0.01 level = 2.369). It indicated that the student Teachers of experimental and control groups differ significantly in their Post Test scores in Higher Order Language Skills after they were adjusted to Pre Test scores. From Table 3 it is also clear that the mean scores of Post Test scores in Higher Order Language Skills of student teachers of experimental group (M = 67.57) is significantly higher than that of control group (M = 57.18). It leads to the inference that constructivist strategies are effective for enhancing higher order language skills of student teachers at secondary level.

VIII. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Constructivist classrooms are characterized by a teaching approach that emphasizes the active engagement of learners in the process of constructing knowledge through meaningful and authentic experiences. This approach to teaching has a number of important implications for education.

Student -centered learning: In constructivist classroom, students are viewed as active participants in their own learning, teachers act as facilitators rather than dispensers of knowledge. This means that students are encouraged to explore and discover new concepts and idea through their own experiences and interactions with the world around them,

Emphasis on collaboration and social interaction: Constructivism recognises that learning is a social process and that students learn best through collaboration and integration with their peers. This means that teachers need to create opportunities for students to work together on projects, discuss their ideas, and give feedback.

Importance of prior knowledge and experience: Teachers should be aware of their students' prior knowledge and experience and use this information to build on what students already know to help them make connections between new information and their existing knowledge.

Focus on problem solving and critical thinking: Teachers need to design activities and assignments that require students to think deeply about complex problems, analyse information, and evaluate evidence.

Flexibility in assessment: In constructivist classroom, assessment is viewed as an ongoing process that is designed to help students learn and grow .Teachers need to use a variety of assessment strategies, including self-

assessment, peer assessment, and teacher assessment, and should be flexible in their approach to assessment to accommodate the diverse needs and learning styles of their students.

Overall, the constructivist approach to teaching has important implications for education, emphasizing the importance of student-centered learning, collaboration and social interaction, prior knowledge and experience, problem solving and critical thinking, and flexibility in assessment.

IX. CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The study revealed that constructivist strategies are more effective than Lecture Method in increasing the higher order language skills of student Teachers at Secondary Level.

The study revealed that constructivist strategies are highly effective in enhancing higher order language skills of student teachers. This study can be adopted in different levels of learning for enhancing not only language skills but also other thinking skills and creativity of the learners. It may be helpful in developing listening and speaking skills of the learners

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