

Tutoring two esl students research paper example

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Tutoring Two ESL Students

Statement of Research Focus

In this research paper, I will investigate the process involved in tutoring two ESL students who want to learn English as their second language. I will tutor them using four effective literacy approaches that are to be discussed later in this paper. I originally came up with the idea of tutoring these students because most of the ESL students use the internet to learn the English language, which is a tool not recommended in the learning process (Chomsky, 2003). In addition, most of the tutors that teach the English language do not understand the literacy approaches that are to be used and how to implement them in the learning process. This research had a positive impact on the development of my starting point, in that, I could fully understand how to implement literacy approaches in the learning process to help in achieving the intended goal. On the other hand, the research was able to help me gain the courage that I need when tutoring students in different environments. This was a key achievement to my starting point, as it helped me develop a positive attitude towards teaching.

Literacy Approaches

In the course of my research, I used the four essential literacy approaches to help me in tutoring the ESL student that intend to learning English. This literacy approaches that I used were behaviorist, innatist, cognitive/attention-processing, and social constructivist/interactionist.

Behaviorist. This is a learning approach that focuses on using drills and repetition, and audio-lingual techniques, stimulated by external motivational factors (Moore, 2007). In this approach, I employed the use of charts and pictures to show the students how to formulate and use sentences in English. One vital thing that I noted is that, these students were able to respond positively to the charts and pictures as they could repeatedly point out the names of the visuals. Out of the two students, Student B had a little bit of difficulty in naming some of the pictures that I showed him, but as for Student A, he was able to remember the names of at least 80% of the pictures that I showed him.

Innatist. This is a learning approach that focuses on the natural abilities of the students, which may help them to acquire and understand a second language (Moore, 2007). According to my own assessment of both of the students, they both had natural abilities to acquire the new language; therefore, implementation was made easier. I provided the students with an English dictionary and asked them to identify certain words from it. Although Student B had a hard time in identifying the words, he was able to identify them and understand their meaning. The use of this method helped me to understand the abilities that each of the students had towards acquiring English as their second language.

Cognitive/Attention-Processing. This learning approach focuses on the processing of information by the students (Brown, 2007). To implement on this literacy approach, I gave the students five distinct sentences that they were to read, and I would later explain their meaning. After explanation of

the meaning, I gave the students a fifteen minute break where I gave them enough time to process the information provided. After the break, I asked each of the students to read out each of the sentences while explaining their meanings. Out of the five sentences provided, Student A was able to identify and explain three sentences correctly, while Student B was able to identify and explain two sentences correctly. This showed that the students processed information in different ways.

Social Constructivist/Interactionist. This is a learning approach that focuses on the interaction that exists between the students and the teacher (Brown, 2007). In this case, the interaction was between me and the two students, that is Student A and Student B. I fully interacted with these students where they were free to ask any questions, which I was ready to answer at any time. Through this interaction, I understood that both of the students had tried using online courses to learn English, but later decided otherwise because the online courses do not offer a chance for the student to interact with the teacher freely, creating a conducive learning environment for the student.

Methods Employed

I created reading and writing activities that motivated the students to developed a habit of reading in public places, and while travelling by bus or train. I took the students out on a field trip to a park and offered them with a newspaper each. The aim of doing this was to boost their morale in terms of the reading habits so that they could be confident enough to read in public places. In addition, I developed a habit in the students where they had to

take notes of the key points so as to be able to understand what they are reading more efficiently (Ochs, 2008). In the course of my research, Student A proved to be sharp in terms of developing the needed confidence, while Student B was a bit shy at first, but later became aggressive and developed him inner confidence. This was a significant motivational factor for students in the process to learning English as a second language.

On the other hand, I could teach students always to have an English reading material, which may include a novel or a magazine. They would use these resources to familiarize themselves with the language as they are doing the day-to-day activities. This would help them to pinpoint the weak points that they have; so as, to work on them. On the same note, I taught the students some valuable writing activities such as always carrying a notebook where they are to record daily events. A students' need that was clear from the beginning was the fact that they needed English as their second language. This was determined through the zeal that the students had towards learning English. The students, on the other hand, had strengths that were apparent like a history of English learnt from the internet, which made it easier for me, as the tutor, to show the students how to develop English sentences and how to use them in the right order.

I conducted my research on the students for a period of 11 lessons of which each of the lessons was 2 hours long. A method that I used on the students for the purposes of data collection was retelling; whereby, the students listened to what I said and then retold the information in their own words. On the other hand, I was able to ask the students to read sentences out aloud

whereby I gauged the pronunciations of some of the words as they said them. In the course of my research, I understood that some of the pronunciations were difficult, and the students needed to practice more and more so as to get the pronunciations right. I also asked the students to write a journal in every lesson we met so as to practice on the use of English words in sentences.

I mainly collected the data through observation where I observed how the students fared in the course of my research and recorded the data. Some of the successes that I encountered in the course of my research included; the availability of enough research material to provide to the students, the positive response from the students, and the punctuality of the students where no students came late to class and every student conduct the activities as I required of them. On the other hand, I encountered some difficulty such as lack of study room in that I lacked a facility where I would tutor the students. This meant that we had to use my house as a classroom, which was not comfortable for both me and the students.

Some of the difficulties that I observed with regard to the students comprehension of the English language included spelling of words, and pronunciations of some words. I could formulate some vital questions that I asked the students in the course of my research, which included; what do you expect to gain by the end of the lesson? What do you think of the English language? And what do you find most difficult in learning English as a second language? I compared the students in terms of the comprehension levels and could come up with a language & literacy profile for each of the students (Chomsky, 2003).

Language & Literacy Profiles

The Findings

I accomplished my expected goal by using the literacy approaches discussed above. A fundamental goal during the course of my research was helping the students read and write basic English within the 8th lesson, which was fully achieved. This goal was achieved, but I had to put in extra work for Student B who had a little bit of difficulty in understanding the use of nouns and pronouns in sentences. In addition, I had a hard time with the students because, in every lesson, I had to refresh them of the lessons learnt in previous classes. After I asked questions, they kept on complaining that they had forgotten, which meant that they did conduct research after the lessons were over. Out of all the literacy approaches that I used in this research, Cognitive/Attention-Processing was the most interesting because; through this process, I could understand the capacities of the students thereby gauging what the students could accomplish within the period of the lessons.

Implications

Through the research that I conducted on the two students, I gained the needed teaching experience to help in my career. The research also affected the way I saw my students and their literacy developments, in that, I began understanding that students need the guidance from tutors so as to understand some of the most crucial aspects in education. I began to see the educational world differently, and I intend to take up more students in future, who I will guide in the whole teaching process.

The next research is not yet complete but, judging by the results that I got from this research; it will be complete in the next few weeks. I would also like to research on a scenario where students are being taught English as their first language. I will continue action research through following up on the two students I tutored, and helping them in case they need help in different areas, such as pronunciation and spelling mistakes that they may make. I will also make sure I do more research on literacy approaches so that; I can implement them fully in my next research.

References

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