

Action Research and Class-Room Teaching

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Abstract – Today, our world is marked by knowledge explosion, science explosion and population explosion. There has also been a constant international tension from all sides which is continuously contributing to the troubled state of our civilization. In this changing scenarios education is expected to play a major role for solving the social problems and thereby contributing to the development & reconstruction of the society. If education has to perform these duets & responsibilities successfully, educational research is a must. And especially this research should start from classroom at school including lower & upper primary level. Creation of an improved teaching-learning environment in the classroom is possible through Action research on classroom teaching where foundation of future generation is formed. The challenge confronting our educational system is how to transform our teaching-learning process to provide our students with the skills to function effectively in this dynamic, information rich & continuously changing society. Some of the major objectives of classroom teaching are how to help students understand what is learnt; relate it to the world outside the classroom and to think critically. Action research may be helpful for achieving some of these objectives and thereby improving the quality of classroom teaching.

Keywords – Action Research, Applied Research, Class-Room Teaching, Educational Research, Teaching-Learning Environment.

OBJECTIVES

1. Identification of the problems faced by the teachers in the classroom.
2. Use of Action Research for the improvement of classroom teaching.

The scope of Action Research:

Action Research is a type of applied research. It is attempted by teachers, or teacher educators, or school administrators when they are confronted with several problems for which they don't have any ready-made solution. Or simply for the professional development they can exercise this Action Research like any other professionals. The variety of the cases where Action Research may be applied for finding out the solutions is endless. Some of the probable areas of action research for classroom teaching are given below:
General Classroom Problems:

While taking classes teacher comes across various classroom problems that cause hindrance to the teaching learning process. The problems may be listed below:

- Indiscipline classroom.
- Delinquency
- Attention deficiency of the students.
- Arrogance of the students.
- Inferiority complex of the students.
- Reading un-ability
- Reluctance in home work

- Complaining attitude
- Development of bad habits
- Examination phobia
- Truancy.
- Lying
- Students' tendency to go out of the class frequently.
- Too much spelling mistakes.
- Problems on pronunciation.
- Irregular attendance of the student's in the class.
- Non-participation in classroom activities.
- Lack of development of empathy among the students.
- Unable to interpret & explain.
- Mathematics phobia.
- English phobia
- Lack of development of creativity & aesthetic sense.
- Students' shyness in the classroom.
- Mal adjusted children
- Etc.

Almost all of these problems can be taken up and handled properly, for solution, through Action research. Class-work is very essential component for effective teaching-learning process. A teacher can evaluate the progress of students and the effectiveness of his teaching strategy also.

An Example:

One such project was taken up for finding out the solutions in class VIII in a high school at Banipur, Habra, 24 parganas, West Bengal. It was observed that less number of students submit their class-work before the teacher and majority of them make many spelling mistakes in a subject like English. For finding out the solution to this problem Action Research was exercised in that classroom. First step was to find out the probable causes of the problem. This may be done on the basis of observations, guessing or intuitions.

Probable Causes:

The probable causes of the aforesaid specific problem may be:

- Students' knowledge in correct spelling is limited.
- Teachers negligence in checking class-work
- The students are not well guided by the parents.
- They feel nervous before the teacher
- Students' reluctance
- Teachers cannot always provide good method of teaching.
- Students' have poor scope to the matter of correcting spelling.
- Students do like this subject etc.

Hypotheses:

Teacher's negligence to check classwork is mainly responsible for students' spelling mistakes.

METHODOLOGY

Tools:

- Questionnaire for the students to be developed.

- Improved teaching aids to be used in the classroom teaching.

Collection of data:

This action research has been conducted at Govt. Basic-Cum Multipurpose School, Banipur, North 24 Parganas from 13-01-2014 to 30-01-2014. At first, some informations about the probable *causes* from the students of different classes at random and from teachers as well are collected. It is planned to give them few task in the classroom and to show deliberate negligence to check these works and especially spellings for the first 7 days. Data are kept on-

1. How many of them are doing these classwork & how many are not getting interest.
2. How many are making all correct spelling (only counting, no correction work made by the teacher)

After keeping record on these performance for first 7 days, plan was changed. The data collected according to the students' day to day performance (in submitting these class-work before the teacher) relative to their total presence in the classroom. The data of the first 7 days represent the pre-test data (Table I) and that of the last 7 days represent the post-test data (Table II).

Table I: The Pre Test Data

| Day | Date | No. of Students Present in the Class | No. of Students Made All Spelling Correct | Percentage of Students with Full Correct Spelling |
|----------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| PRE-TEST DATA | | | | |
| 1 | 16.01.2014 | 40 | 16 | 40.00% |
| 2 | 17.01.2014 | 38 | 9 | 23.68% |
| 3 | 18.01.2014 | 38 | 8 | 21.05% |
| 4 | 20.01.2014 | 39 | 10 | 25.61% |
| 5 | 21.01.2014 | 35 | 12 | 34.28% |
| 6 | 22.01.2014 | 25 | 08 | 32.00% |
| 7 | 23.01.2014 | 30 | 08 | 26.67% |

Table II: The Post Test Data

| | | | | |
|----|------------|----|----|--------|
| 8 | 24.01.2014 | 39 | 10 | 25.61% |
| 9 | 25.01.2014 | 40 | 18 | 45.00% |
| 10 | 27.01.2014 | 38 | 20 | 52.63% |
| 11 | 28.01.2014 | 35 | 25 | 71.42% |
| 12 | 29.01.2014 | 35 | 26 | 74.28% |
| 13 | 30.01.2014 | 36 | 29 | 80.56% |
| 14 | 31.01.2014 | 40 | 35 | 87.50% |

For the next 7 days tasks given to them on the same subject and *careful checking* was started. Sincere checking of these works including spelling check for the next 7 days changed the scenario. Record on students' performance were kept in the same manner.

Analysis of Data:

The pre-test and post-test data represented by the above table is analysed and percentages were calculated. What percentage of the students submits their class-work with correct spelling is shown in the last column of the table which shows the performance (in submitting class-work before the teacher with correct spelling) of the students in classroom.

The graph of the students' performance in the pre-test and post-test is given below fig.1:

Findings:

Collected data are analysed. It is found for first 7 days that the students are reluctant to do and submit the class work to the teacher for checking. Number of spelling mistakes made by the students was not only high but also no sign of positive attempt for improvement was noticed. The teacher did not show any interest to check these class-works for the first 7 days. Consequently students were indifferent, reluctant and non-interested in doing their

class-work. The students who attempted their class-work made many spelling mistakes. This is shown in the fig-1 where no progress is shown up to day- 8.

In the next 7 days task was given to them and the teacher started checking those class-works, corrected carefully and encouraged to do better. This attitudinal change of the teacher attracted them and made them interested to do class work and submit the same to the class teacher for checking. So, on the one hand more & more students got inspired in submitting their class work for checking and on the other hand number of spelling mistakes was remarkably less on the following days in comparison with the first 7 days performance. In fig-1, we see that progress of spelling is upward after day-8 and this progress continues till day14.

Trend analysis of spelling progress is shown in fig-2. The trend line which is nearly parallel to the horizontal axis shows no progress at all rather slightly negative progress (slope is -0.36) during the first seven days of the study. Trend line for post test data is an upward sloping curve which shows that the progress is not only positive but also very high (slope is +9.9408). That means after the action was taken their performance in the post-test phase improved day-by-day.

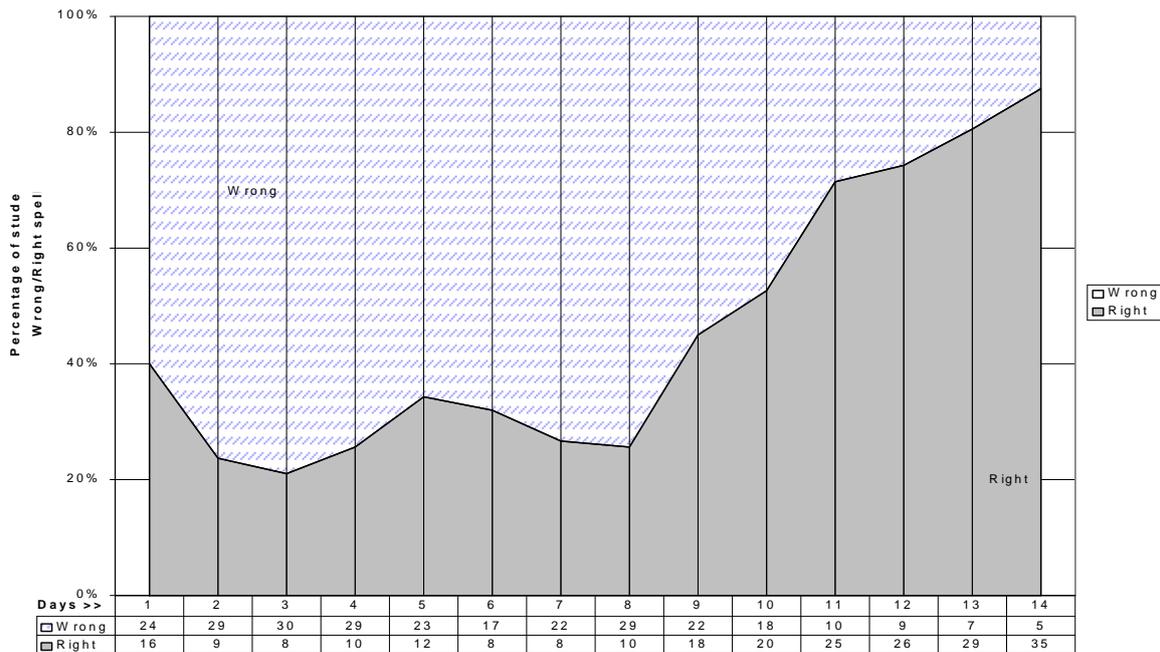


Fig 1: Progress of Spelling (from 8th day)

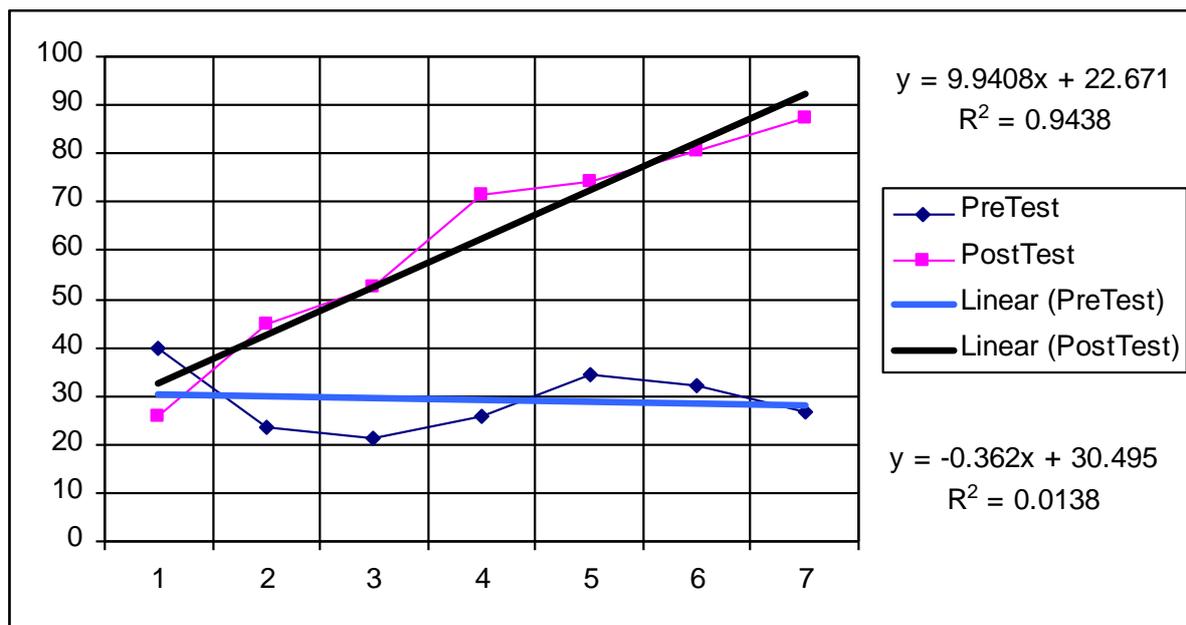


Fig.2. Trend of Correct Spelling

Interpretations:

Result shows that the period when the teacher was neglectful to check the spelling of the class-work of the students exhibited lack of interest in submitting these class-work before the teacher. Seventh day shows the poorest performance. But from day-8 when teacher showed his interest to check students' class-work and correct the spelling errors carefully the students exhibited their interest to submit these class-work before the teacher. The performance of the students was then gradually improved day by day and the best performance was in the last day. So, it can be said that the students got inspired by the teachers' activity in the post-test phase.

CONCLUSION

Depending on the analyses and the interpretation we can say that the students would show interest to submit their class-work with correct spelling before the teacher if the teacher takes appropriate measures through Action Research. The teacher should always encourage the students to submit these class-work before him. Today's teacher is not the director but a co-actor. The teacher is no more a ring master but an equal stage player. He is now the facilitator. Teacher's duty is not to supply the knowledge in the class-room. The students themselves will create their own knowledge at the class-room. Teacher's

main duties & responsibilities are to facilitate the students for knowledge creation at the classroom. Teacher always should upgrade himself. He should always be conscious about the method of teaching being applied at the classroom. Keeping in view the evolution of teaching methodology he may apply the Constructivist Approach which will keep the students active in the classroom. Once the students involve with the class-room activity many of the above mentioned problems will not be created in the class. Consequently the teaching will be more effective. Students will be benefited. So, it is the teacher who can take measures for the betterment of class teaching as well as the betterment of education also. The teacher can solve almost all the problems mentioned above if he realizes the situation and really tries to contribute to the solution to the problem aroused before him. Not only for the solution of the problems but the teacher can apply this idea of Action Research for his professional development also. Through this way of professional development the teacher can help the students and contribute a lot to class-room teaching and thereby the system of school education as a whole.

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