

Application of Gagne's Nine Approaches to Teach Arabic Language for Non-Native Speakers: Experimental study at Sultan Idris Education University Malaysia (UPSI)

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Abstract

The Arabic language is not an easy language to learn for non-native speakers if the teachers are not proficient in the teaching methods and strategies. Here, it is essential that teachers can benefit from Gagne's nine approaches in the teaching for any subjects, especial, in teaching languages. Therefore, the learning outcome will be more effective if the teachers apply Gagne's nine events in the Arabic language classroom. This study focuses on the experiences of the application of Robert Gagne's nine approaches in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers at the Sultan Idris University of Education Malaysia. The study aims to find the effective results of their experiences in the application of the nine approaches for Gagne in teaching Arabic language to non-native speakers at the university. This paper is based on a descriptive analysis method to indicate the nine-approach theory and its importance in education and teaching, as well as the experience of the researcher in their teaching Arabic language. Among the most important results in the application of the nine events in teaching Arabic were to make teaching activities' more effective and attractive, to help teachers how to facilitate the process of teaching Arabic in the classroom and to centralize the students focus during the lessons. The study concludes with some recommendations and suggestions.

Keywords: Gagne's nine approaches, Teaching Arabic, Non-native speakers

Introduction

Teaching a second language or a foreign language for non-native speaker is challenging for the teachers as they try to find the best strategies to enhance the teaching method and to make the leaning more effective and successful. In addition, teaching Arabic for non-native speakers is more challenging than teaching another language in a non-native environment, like in Malaysia. According to researcher's experiences and experimental study, we found that the application of Gagne's nine approaches to teaching Arabic language for non-native speakers is more effective and successful. This is because Gagne's nine approaches in the classroom is not based on teachers' teaching only, but it relates to interaction between teachers and learners, and teachers guide the learners to follow up very fast and effectively. This paper focuses on experimental study to apply Gagne's nine approaches to teaching Arabic language for non- native speakers at sultan Idris education university Malaysia. The aim of this research is to find out how those approaches effect the teaching Arabic for non- native speakers successfully at sultan Idris education university Malaysia.

Review of related Literature

Since our focus is on application of Gagne's nine events to teach Arabic language for non-native speakers, we have reviewed some relevant literature. There is an article titled: "Gagne's nine events of instruction in Teaching _learning Transaction: Evaluation of teaches by high school students in Musoma- Tanzania" (Ngussa, 2014, p189-206). In this article, the researcher evaluated Secondary school teacher's application of the Gagne's nine events in a classroom session. The author emphasized that Gagne's nine events of instruction needed to be incorporated in the process of instructional design and actual teaching. However, according to the research the author found that high school students in Musoma principality perceived their teachers to be using Gagne's events of instruction in teaching – learning transaction in a moderate way in that the application of events is limited to the mean score of 2,50-3.49 only. From the finding of this study, we believe that the reason why majority of the teachers did not apply Gagne's event in the classroom is probably that the teachers really did not know what is Gagne's nine event. Thus, it is important to promote the events in the school and train the teachers to apply those events in the classroom.

Another review is "study of application of Gagne's nine event of instruction in the teaching Public English at the vocational college" (Ting, 2014, p207-208). The author applied Gagne's nine events to teach a unit of "Practical English". She divided those events into 3 parts: before starting the class, during class, and after finishing the class. According to her experiences in applying Gagne's nine events in teaching English, she found that the result of this application was very effective. These approaches can excite the students' interest in learning English, and improve the quality of the teaching. This research will be a sample for our research and will guide us to move smoothly.

The most useful and helpful literature for this study is "Conditions of Learning and theory of instruction" (Gagne, 1985, p244-258). In this book, he emphasized "conditions of learning": the internal conditions which deal with what the learner knows prior to the instruction, and external conditions which deal with the stimuli that are presented to the learners. In chapter 12 of his book, he mentioned that a theory of instruction should relate to the external event of instruction in the outcome of learning by showing how these events lead to appropriate support or enhancement of internal learning processes. The external event of instruction for Gagne is named nine events of instruction. Moreover, we will elaborate these events in the topic of understanding of Gagne's nine events as a theoretical framework for this study.

Research Methods

The study employed descriptive analysis methods to indicate the definition Gagne's nine event of instruction and its importance in education and teaching, as well as, the experience of the researchers in their teaching Arabic language by the application of those nine events of instruction in the classroom.

Background of Students

In this research, we focused on the students who are studying at Sultan Idris Education University Malaysia (UPS) who specialized in Arabic language and education as a Major Course at the degree level . All of them are non-native speakers of the Arabic Language. Prior to entering this university, the students have already completed at least 7 years of Arabic language at Arabic schools or Islamic schools. The majority of the students have mastered the 4 language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Scope of the Research

In this research , we will focus on the first year students at the degree level. All students are Non-native speakers of the Arabic Language. We applied Gagne's nine Approaches of instruction to teach the subject "Advance Arabic skills". This subject emphasized on 4 skills of language . We chose a lesson titled " The water is resource of life and it's mystery " from the text book titled "Arabic at your hand", level 3.

Understanding of Gagne's nine approaches:

Robert Gagne had contributed the systematic approaches to instructional design for teaching and learning, and his theory has covered great ideas to be applied by trainers and teachers in any classroom. These are nine events of instruction (Gagne, 1985, p251):

1. Gaining Attention:

Gagne mentioned that the attention of students, in the sense of alertness for reception of stimuli is gained by introducing rapid stimuli change. He encourages instructors to gain the students' attention by gesturing or by suddenly changing the loudness of their speech. As well as attract by visual or auditory stimuli related to the content of a lesson to be taught.

2. Informing Learners of the Objective

Gagne explains to inform the students what they will be able to do after learning. He emphasized that when students comprehend the objective of instruction, they will acquire an expectancy that normally persists throughout the time learning is taking place and that will be confirmed by the feedback given when the learning is complete.

3. Stimulating Recall of Prior Learning

The learner is stimulated by asking them to recall the information that was previously learned, therefore, learning new information based on the prior learning. As Slavin explained that the old information and the new information when combined enables an attentive, expectant student to achieve mastery of a task. (Slavin, 2009, p 481).

4. Present the Stimulus

From this point, the focus is on content, which the students are going to learn. This is main point of the class. This means to present the essential stimulus to the learners. The stimulus is presented as an instructional event, which depends specifically on what is to be learned. The content is specific to the category of capability that is the objective, whether verbal information, intellectual skill, or any of the other varieties.

5. Providing "learning Guidance"

This event of instructions supports the internal process called "semantic encoding for storage long-term memory. "The essence of learning guidance is to support for learners in making connection between what they know and what is being learned (Gagne, Wager, Golas, & Keller, 2005, p 198).

6. Eliciting Performance

In this event, students are encouraged to practice whatever they have learned from the teacher during the class. At this stage, *the learner will be the actual internal integrating event of learning takes hold based on sufficient learning guidance.* The new capability reflected in the objective, whether verbal information, Intellectual skill, cognitive strategy, attitude or motor skill, has been encoded into a form for storage in long term memory. It is then time for them to demonstrate the newly learned capability. (Gagne, 1985, p254)

7. Providing Feedback

At this point, the teacher communicates with the students about the correctness and the degree of correctness of their performance. As Gagne (2005) with his friends mentioned that there are no standard ways of phrasing or delivering feedback (Gagne, Wager, Golas, & Keller, 2005, p 200).

8. Assessing Performance

According to Gagne (1985, p255), assessment of the performance is what is meant usually by "giving a test". The functions for the assessment are to establish that the newly learned capability has reasonable stability and to provide additional practice that serves to consolidate what students have been learned.

9. Enhancing Retention and Transfer

Retention means preventing from forgetting and enhancing the student's ability to recall the what they have learned during the class. This includes knowledge and skills, and transfer of knowledge, skills and strategies to new problems and new situations are matters in which evidence continues to be sought. (Gagne, 1985, p255)

Application of Gagne's nine approaches to teach Arabic language for non- native speakers

As we have mentioned in the scope of the research, we chose a lesson from the textbook, titled "*The water is resource of life and it's mystery*" as a sample for this research. We divided Gagne's nine event into 3 parts, before covering the main content, within the content and after delivering content.

1. Before covering the content

1.1 Gaining Attention

The Lecturer brings a bottle of water when she enters the classroom, puts it on the table, and at the same time opens an Arabic video about "water" on youtube to attract the attention of the students. Then the lecturer asks students what they understood from the bottle of water and what they found from video.

1.2 Stimulating recall of prior knowledge

After gaining attention by the video shown and the bottle of water, the lecturer then asks the students that what they know about water? What is the benefit of water for human being, animals and plants. The lecturer asks the students if they are familiar with any Arabic vocabulary related to the water, for example like hormone or pollution.

1.3 Informing the students of objective

Based on the prior knowledge of the learners, the lecturer explains that the purpose of this lesson is to know the benefits and importance of water for human being, animals and plants, and to learn some new vocabulary related to the water, as well as to study the terms in the Arabic grammar.

2. Within the Content

2.1 Present the content

The lecturer begins the lesson 14 “the water is resource of life and it’s mastery” from electronic book online “Arabic at your hand”, by using a projector. He then asks the students one by one to read aloud each paragraph. Then the lecturer explains the new vocabulary which are not familiar to students by using the video and showing photos, and explaining some difficult sentences as well. Briefing on the benefit and importance of water for human being, animals and plants is also done by the lecturer. He later divides the students into 6 groups according to 6 paragraphs of the lesson. Leaves 5 questions for each group to let the students discuss based on their understanding of the lesson. Games and competitions are also used to encourage the students to join in and answer the questions. The lecturer tries to encourage each students to participate and answer the questions.

2.2 Provide “ Learning Guidance”

During the discussion period by the students, the lecturer guides the students, not telling them everything. For example: students did not understand the meaning of a word, the lecturer will not tell the meaning of the word, but will give some example of sentences by using this word.

2.3. Elicit Performance (Practice)

After reading and understanding the lesson, it is time for them to practice. Lecturer asks students to make choral speaking according to this topic to enhance their understanding for the topic.

3 After covering the content

3.1.provide Feedback

The lecturer lists down all incorrect words and sentences on the whiteboard during their practicing period, then explains them one by one while encouraging them to go ahead when they are correct.

3.2 Assessment Performance

The lecturer gives an assessment based on the exercise which are provided in this lesson. The purpose of the assessment is to know that how many percentage from the lesson is understood by the students, and what are the weaknesses for future improvements.

3.3 Enhancing Retention and Transfer

Before the end of the lesson, the lecturer asks the students what they had learned from lesson 14, remember whatever they learned. Students are asked to summarize the main idea of this lesson and asked another student to list down the new vocabularies which they have learned from the lesson. At the end, some exercise are provided for the students do after the lesson and submit in the next class.

Analysis and Discussion of findings

From the experience of applying Gagne’s nine approaches to teaching Arabic language for non- native speakers, we found that these approaches unlike traditional approaches made the class more effectively and successfully, and helps a lot for both the lecturer and students in the classroom. It was much easier for the lecturer to deliver the lesson and help students to follow up faster. We analysed and discussed from 3 points:

(1) Before providing the content, the students received a briefing about the content through the recalling of prior learning and guidance from lecturer. This made it easier for both lecturer and students to move on with the class smoothly.

(2) During the delivering of the content, the class the students benefitted input from the lecturer in an interactive mode. The classroom was more active and not bored. Students followed up with the lesson attentively and enhanced very faster especially in remembering the new vocabulary and the application in the sentences.

(3) After understanding the content, the students will enhance more and more by the feedback from lecturer, assessments, retention and transfer, and storage the knowledge and skills for long term memory.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This research concludes that application of Gagne's nine events in teaching Arabic language for non- native speakers was very effective and successful in the classroom. It benefitted for both the lecturer and students in the classroom.

Based on the conclusion of this research, therefore, the researchers suggest following recommendations:

- (1) Every educational organizations to teach Gagne's nine events of instruction to the teachers and lecturers since not every educational are proficient about these approaches and it's benefit in the teaching and learning.
- (2) The Ministry of Education or educational organizations should promote Gagne's nine events of instruction in the schools and universities.

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