A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO TEACHING THROUGH NEEDS ANALYSIS

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Abstract. *It is vital to mention that in the course of Curriculum Development in Second Language Classrooms, which is instructed to identify learners needs, wants, and lacks in order to analyze the needs of students in acquiring a second language. The reason is that holding needs analysis is a helpful tool for instructors to determine learners' levels, which eases choosing appropriate teaching materials. To hold needs analysis, it is chosen three types of research procedures: observation, interview, and questionnaires. Each procedure is aimed at finding out the language level, language requirements, their preferred ways of learning a second language (English), and difficulties they face during the process.*

Keywords*: needs analysis, survey, questionnaire, observation, interview, second language, research, assessment, L1, language competence, grammar, vocabulary*

INTRODUCTION

Herb Walberg (1991, 1995) noted that numerous reviews on classroom observation research have significantly impact on students' academic achievement. So it can be seen that collecting reports, introducing content, practicing, applying feedback, and eliminating shortcomings in a daily or monthly observation will help to clarify students' weaknesses and strengths. As a result, it can be a potential benefit to developing learners' substantial knowledge. In other words, teacher's observation is a powerful tool for the classroom that aids how to choose the content and the topic, classroom environment, identify learners' needs, and support learners' interaction with the teacher within the classroom. Consequently, the aim of observation is not about rating teachers but strengthening teaching and learning.

Literature Review. According to Richards, J. C. (2001), a more close and extensive analysis can be provided with the help of interviews than questionnaires; however, the process may require more time and smaller numbers of participants. As the results of an interview can help to direct certain features or ways to focus on, it is advised to hold it before designing a questionnaire. Richards, J. C (2001) states that there are two ways of conducting interviews: face-to-face or over the telephone. Additionally, Graves, K. (2000) suggests two other forms: a) a teacher to a student; b) a student to a student/a student to a teacher. For this needs analysis, we used the way of over the telephone in the teacher interviewing the students form.

One of the most common procedures of a needs analysis is a questionnaire. Administering a questionnaire is one of the aspects of an educational process, which is an element of control, and an assessment of consolidated knowledge. Unlike a test, a questionnaire is a purely voluntary and non-judgmental form, which disposes students to free and honest answers, for example, about the level of discipline assimilation. Questionnaires are easy to design, and they are aimed to gather information about various types of issues, e.g. learners' goals, language competence, their views toward different aspects of a language, learning styles, preferred activities, and methods.

According to Richards (2001), questionnaires can either be structured (students are given different options to choose) or unstructured (open-ended questions where students need to write as they want) (p.60). Yet, one of the main disadvantages of a questionnaire is that the collected data may not be fully true since respondents might bend the truth, lie or exaggerate the answers to give a good impression. Thus, it must be followed up by an additional interview or observation to ascertain the validity of the gathered information (Richards, 2001, p.60).

Materials and Methods. It can be seen that three types of methods are chosen together with proper materials to bring this research into action: observation, questionnaire and interview.

Observation. For the observation part, four students are studying in school. All students are 11th grade, and their level is per-intermediate. Importantly, the participants are considered multilingual that can speak Tajik, Uzbek, and English. The observation was conducted in three lessons, which lasted 45 minutes in each session with different questions. Initially, I tried to analyze their learning situation giving several structures that help to clarify more clearly. It has been determined that they were in a small group that worked cooperatively. Sometimes they need individual instruction, and meanwhile, it requires independent work more often. I have chosen four types of rating systems that including consistent, inconsistent, non-existent, and not-observed scales.

It is important to mention that it has four sub-topics that facilitate the observation more easily and accurately. For instance, in using body language part, I paid more attention to eye contact, appropriate posture, and non-verbal response like nodding, moving during the lessons. However, the students had a strong level of confidence and appropriate attendance in the activities which were given during the lesson. Furthermore, the students followed promptly for tasks, willing to share their opinion during group works, and they had little anxiety for follow-up activities.

Questionnaire. The questionnaire was tailored to identify students' learner preferences during the classroom and their attitude toward the way the lessons are conducted. All four students were administered the questionnaire consisting of fourteen points aimed at exploring their classroom preferences.

All responses for these points ranged between "sometimes" and "often." Unlike all these points, there was a substantial discrepancy between the attitudes of four students

towards the significance of working in pairs. All of them responded differently for "working in pairs." Student A chose "often," student B "sometimes," student C "just a little" and student D "never." Their responses for watching short videos during the classroom varied too. Three students wanted them often and sometimes, whereas one of the preferred short videos less, choosing the "just a little" option.

Questionnaire 2 relies upon learners' self-report and aims at determining learners' current level and their language requirements. Four learners took part in the questionnaire consisting of 4 questions, and each question includes several components or options except the last one, which is an open-ended question.

At first, learners were asked to rate their language competencies. The first graph reveals that according to learners' self-assessment, their level is between per-intermediate and intermediate with more inclination to the former level. For example, more than half of the learners inform that their speaking, grammar, and writing are at the per-intermediate level. It should be pointed out that they have a consensus about their writing skill with all four participants choosing the per-intermediate level. Learners are also not confident about their reading and listening skills with some of the learners opting for beginner level as well. None of the learners go for upper-intermediate or advanced level in their self-report.

Following that, participants of the questionnaire were asked about the reasons behind their learning L2. It can be seen in the second graph that all of the learners intend to pass national entrance exams for which they are learning English, while only one learner needs L2 to enter an international university. It can be assumed that the majority of the learners need to work more on their grammar, vocabulary, and reading for this since these 3 language competencies are assessed in the national entrance exams. At least half or more than half of the students also opt for self-development and traveling as the reasons for learning L2. Yet, they later pointed out in the interview that these are secondary reasons.

Interview. Two students (Student A and Student B), who both study in grade 11 at school, were chosen to be interviewed. They both have had additional English courses for two years, so their level is per-intermediate. The interview consists of 7 questions aimed to know more about them to hold further surveys according to their answers. The questions were mainly about their interests in languages and their preferred ways of learning them; they were also asked about their feelings towards their teachers.

Student A has good comprehension and speaking skills, and she could show them during the conversation. She kept an eye-contact well enough. Additionally, she is highly motivated by her dreams that she knows what she is doing and has certain plans for the future. This student thinks grammar and vocabulary are needed to learn reading, so for her, these skills are essential. As she has some problems with learning new words and a few serious grammar mistakes, she wants to work on them more. However, while she was talking, I noticed that she has better proficiency than she thinks, and she only needs to be

proven. When it comes to her activeness in class, she is very good at working in a group and prefers doing activities with her class-mates. And finally, she thinks positively about her English teacher, as for her, the teacher has taught the class a lot that they are happy with her.

Student B, who is a friend of Student A, surprisingly has almost the same answers. She has the same preferences on the skills and struggles to memorize and use new vocabulary. However, as she said, she is very active in classes and enjoys group activities. Listening to her, I realized some grammatical problems in her speech, but very confident and eager to learn more.

Results. From the instructional perspective, some skills related to the academic task, and they followed the instruction and completed the assignments very accurately. More particularly, the students responded to the tasks very actively and objectively. The last subtopic analyses were about how is their social interaction with their peers during the activities. Consequently, it can be seen that the participants had a friendly relationship with their peers and actively engaging during the tasks and in an academic setting.

The result revealed that all four students demonstrated high preferences for lessons to be conducted only in English and to be given homework all choosing the option "often." Similarly, all students equally opted to work in pairs sometimes. Regarding grammar, three respondents preferred it to be explained with a little L1, and one favored L1 more during grammar explanations. All students showed positive attitudes toward various activities and techniques in the lessons, namely, doing written exercises, listening, speaking and writing activities, seeing and hearing the language items in the form of illustrations and recordings, and when the teacher asked individual questions and corrected the occurred mistakes.

The participants have satisfactory language competence and skills, and their teacher is probably teaching them correctly. Even so, their concerns about grammar and vocabulary should be taken into consideration in further learning processes. Following that, participants of the questionnaire were asked about the reasons behind their learning L2. It can be seen in the second graph that all of the learners intend to pass national entrance exams for which they are learning English, while only one learner needs L2 to enter an international university.

It can be assumed that the majority of the learners need to work more on their grammar, vocabulary, and reading for this since these 3 language competencies are assessed in the national entrance exams. At least half or more than half of the students also opt for self-development and traveling as the reasons for learning L2. Yet, they later pointed out in the interview that these are secondary reasons.

Results proved our assumptions made above to a certain extent about the importance of certain language competencies. In the graph, language competencies are compared in terms of their importance for learners' current goals. It demonstrates that the majority of learners believe that speaking, reading, grammar, and vocabulary are important or highly important for them. Despite admitting that their writing is at a per-

intermediate level, learners think that they currently don't need to work on it since they rate the importance of writing at 3 out of 5 or below. Learners do not have an agreement about their listening with half of the learners thinking that they do not need to develop their listening and the other half holding contrary opinion.

Discussion. It can be inferred from the needs analysis that the learning environment is friendly and supportive, and learners are eager to work in collaboration. Anxiety level during classroom activities is low, resulting in learners sharing their opinions freely with each other. However, sometimes a teacher's individual instruction and student's individual work are recommended. Regarding their learning preferences, it is also assumed that learners prefer using more target language during the classes. They are mostly accepting about being corrected during lessons and being asked individual questions. Group work activities are favored by only half of the participants with the other half preferring individual work

Conclusion. Their satisfaction with their L2 teachers' teaching approaches is high, yet some of the learners would like their concerns about vocabulary and grammar to be taken into consideration. In particular, some of the learners have mentioned that the vocabulary introduced during classes is sometimes too difficult for them. Concerning the linguistic competences, learners' level is between per-intermediate and intermediate. They are less confident about their writing and listening. Despite facing difficulties during writing activities and tasks as well as accepting being not competent enough at their writing, most of them also presume that writing is not necessary for their goals as L2 learners. They are motivated to improve their speaking. They also understand they need to work more on their reading, grammar, and vocabulary.

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