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When a School Becomes a Pool - What Can We Do to Make Language Learning Interesting to Yemeni Students

Abdulghani M. A. Al-Shuaibi, Ph.D.

Situation in Yemeni Schools – Focus of This Study

The title of the present essay is picked out carefully to denote the whole concept of this essay. I attempt to review the educational situation of our pupils in Yemen in three stages. The salient aim is to present some suggestions for the improvement of the educational process in Yemeni schools. As a Yemeni teacher in the field, my objectives are constructed based on my own experience of teaching as well as the experience of some of my colleagues. I will describe some points to be followed and applied for the betterment of the educational situation.

The Teacher

It is important to commence by going back to the source which is deemed to be the teacher. The teacher is considered almost the main axis for the students to learn effectively. He/she is the one who makes students interested in learning or in neglecting a certain subject taught to them. Whenever I had conversations with some of my students I realized that there is truth in the above observation. Continuous interaction with them proved this point again and again.

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Affective Filter

This, in fact, comes in line with the “Affective Filter Hypothesis,” one of the hypotheses of Krashen’s **Monitor Model**. So, I highly commend that teachers read further about this model to deliver effective instruction in their classes. According to this hypothesis, emotional variables (e.g., anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence) affect language acquisition. Less language is learned if the affective filter blocks some of the comprehensible input.

In the classroom, this hypothesis requires an inviting and encouraging environment. I guess this can be effectively mastered by a qualified teacher through whom students will be highly motivated to learn.

Avoid and Eliminate Negative Factors

In this regard, Krashen argues that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in second language acquisition. Therefore, debilitating anxiety, low motivation and low self-confidence can combine to 'raise' the affective filter and form a 'mental block' that prevents comprehensible input from being used for acquisition. In other words, when the filter is 'up,' it obstructs the progress of language acquisition. On the other hand, positive affect is necessary, but not enough on its own, for acquisition to take place.

Another factor to enhance the educational process might be related to curriculum. Students may not be up to the level of the designed curricula taught to them. So, Yemeni teachers need to determine whether or not the prescribed course is suitable and practical to their students' level. By reporting on the suitability and practicability to inspectors of schools, the pre-designed curricula can consequently be revisited by curricula makers. Doing this, teachers would be able to handle students' cognitive difficulties and, in turn, would be able to deliver effective classes to them.

A Pool of Learning

By now, we can say that a Yemeni school would become a pool of learning for students after looking into all the previous suggestions explained in this essay. Thus, my main objective of writing this essay has been demonstrated in our discussion. It is, now, the responsibility of Yemeni teachers, inspectors, curricula designers and policy makers to practically apply these suggestions to making a school a real pool of learning.

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