

## 16. Making Teaching Methods More Interesting

<sup>1</sup>D. Kodandaram Reddy, <sup>2</sup>D. Sekhar Reddy

<sup>1</sup>University College of Technology, Osmania University,  
Hyderabad

<sup>2</sup> English Faculty, Panineeya Mahavidyalaya (CBSE), Hyderabad

\*[dekore20@gmail.com](mailto:dekore20@gmail.com)

Higher education faculty strives to become more effective teachers so that students can learn better, and many explore methods to improve their teaching practice. Depending on the nature of subject, number of students, and the facilities available, there are different methods teachers are using in the classroom. Below are given various methods and certain tips and techniques for improving these methods.

### 1. Lecture Method:

A lecture is a talk or verbal presentation given by a lecturer, trainer or speaker to an audience. With all the advancement of training systems and computer technology, lecture method is still a backbone widely used in teaching and training at higher level of education. This method is economical, can be used for a large number of students, material can be covered in a structured manner and the teacher has a great control of time and material. A study conducted by Benson, L., Schroeder, P., Lantz, C., and Bird, M (n.d.). provides evidence

that students may place greater emphasis on lecture material than on textbooks. Lecturing is not simply a matter of standing in front of a class and reciting what you know. The classroom lecture is a special form of communication in which voice, gesture, movement, facial expression, and eye contact can either complement or detract from the content. (Davis.1993). McCarthy, P.(1992) in article “Common Teaching Methods” stated strengths of lecture method that it presents factual material in direct, logical manner, contains experience which inspires, stimulates thinking to open discussion, and useful for large groups. Our findings also revealed that most of the students considered lecture as best method because according to opinion of students; it creates new ideas, it is good for large class, develops creativity among students, teacher is experienced and has mastery on subject, explain all points and can answer all questions by students. Sullivan & McIntosh (1996) said that with planning and effective presentation techniques, the lecture can be a highly effective and interactive method for transferring knowledge to students. Lecture gives the pupils training in listening and taking rapid notes. (Kochhar. 2000, p.345)

#### Tips and techniques for improving lecture method

- Lecture material should be stimulating and thought provoking.
- Information should be delivered dramatically by using example to make it memorable.
- The teacher needs to use questions throughout the lecture

to involve students in the learning process and to check their comprehension.

- Reinforce learning by using visual supports like transparencies, flip charts, whiteboard/ black board etc.
- Teacher should take feedback of students to improve lecture method.

### **Discussion:**

It is a free verbal exchange of ideas between group members or teacher and students. For effective discussion the students should have prior knowledge and information about the topic to be discussed. McCarthy, P. (1992) stated strengths of class discussion as; pools ideas and experiences from group, and allows everyone to participate in an active process. Kochhar (2000, p.347) stated that; a problem, an issue, a situation in which there is a difference of opinion, is suitable for discussion method of teaching. Our study also revealed that the students rated group discussion (class discussion) as the second best method by giving reasons that; it has more participation of students, the learning is more effective, the students don't have to rely on rote learning, every student give his/ her opinion, and this method develops creativity among students. Tips and techniques for improving discussion method

- The teacher should spend sufficient time in preparing the process and steps of discussion.
- Different aspects of the topic and the parameters should

be selected for the focused discussion.

- Sufficient time should be allotted to discuss all the issues. At the same time students should know the time limit to reach a conclusion.
- The teacher in the beginning should introduce the topic, the purpose of discussion, and the students participating in discussion.
- Before the start of discussion, background information about the topic should be provided.
- There is a need to include questions to provide direction.
- Relaxed environment should be created to foster the process of discussion.
- Teacher after opening the discussion should play the role of a facilitator involving every one and at the end should summarize the discussion.
- Encourage students listen other's point of view and then evaluate their own.
- Teacher should give value to all students' opinions and try not to allow his/her own difference of opinion, prevent communication and debate.

## **2. Role Play:**

Role play occurs when participants take on differentiated roles in a simulation. These may be highly prescribed, including

biographical details, and even personality, attitudes and beliefs; or loosely indicated by an outline of the function or task. These techniques have already demonstrated their applicability to a wide range of learners, subjects and levels. (Singh, and Sudarshan, 2005, p238, 239). It is a memorable and enjoyable learning method. To gain maximum benefits from this method, the incidents selected for enactment should be as realistic as the situation allows.

Tips and techniques Before the role play, the teacher should brief participants about the roles they will play, give them time for preparation, confirm confidentiality of role play, and ask participants to behave naturally.

- Teacher should select & brief observers about their roles.
- During the role play, the teacher must keep quiet, listen & take notes, avoid cutting role play short, but give time warning if previously agreed. The teacher should be prepared for some action if participants dry up and can intervene as a last resort.
- After the role play, the teacher thanks participants, ask for feedback from lead participants, take comments from observers, ask other participants to comment,
- The teacher should use role names not those of participants, summarize, drawing out learning points, leaving the participants with positive comments and feelings.

### 3. Case Study:

Primarily developed in business and law contexts, case method teaching can be productively used in liberal arts, engineering, and education. This method is basically used to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as to present students with real-life situations.

The students are presented with a record set of circumstances based on actual event or an imaginary situation and they are asked:

1. To diagnose particular problem(s) only.
2. To diagnose problem(s) & provide solution(s).
3. To give reasons & implications of action after providing both problem & solution.

It is a time-consuming method and sometimes the case does not actually provide real experience. It could be inconclusive, and insufficient information can lead to inappropriate results. At the end, the students want to know the right answer by the teacher. The role of the teacher in conducting the case study should be to:

- read the case and determine the key problems faced by the decision maker,
- determine the data required to analyze the problems and for a synthesis into solutions,
- develop, analyze, and compare alternative solutions, and recommend a course of action. Tips and techniques

- Cases should be brief, well-written, reflect real issues, and open to a number of conflicting responses.
- Students should work in group to prepare a written report and/or a formal presentation of the case.

#### **4. Brainstorming:**

It is a loosely structured form of discussion for generating ideas without participants embroiled in unproductive analysis. It is a very useful technique for problem solving, decision making, creative thinking and team building. It develops listening skills. Tips and techniques Ground rules for running brainstorming session include:

- There should be no criticism and the wild ideas should be encouraged and recorded without evaluation.
- Emphasis should be placed on quantity of ideas and not the quality.
- There is a need of equal participation of members.
- It can be unfocused so teacher should know how to control discussion and facilitate issues.
- It works well in small group

#### **5. Assignment Method:**

Written assignments help in organization of knowledge, assimilation of facts and better preparation of examinations. It

emphasizes on individual pupil work and the method that helps both teaching and learning processes (Kochhar, 2000, p.358).

### Tips and techniques

- Teacher should describe the parameters of the topic of assignment.
- Fully explain assignments so that students know how to best prepare. When the inevitable question, "Will we be tested on this?" arises, make sure your answer includes not only a "yes" or "no," but a "because . . . ". Shea, A. (2009).
- Davis (1993) suggests that "Give assignments and exams that recognize students' diverse backgrounds and special interests. For example, a faculty member teaching a course on medical and health training offered students a variety of topics for their term papers, including one on alternative healing belief systems. A faculty member in the social sciences gave students an assignment asking them to compare female-only, male- only, and male-female work groups."

### Recommendations:

- To evaluate teaching effectiveness different methods can be used including: peer review, self-evaluation, teaching portfolios, student achievement and students' ratings of teaching methods used by their teachers.



- Students must be assured that the information they are giving is welcomed by the
- Faculty and will be used to improve the teaching and learning in the course; otherwise they are unlikely to take the rating process seriously (Doyle.T. n.d.).
- Teachers need to educate students in effective ways of giving precise feedback that addresses specific aspects of their learning experience.
- Teachers need to continually assure students throughout the semester that the ratings will be used for productive changes in teaching/ learning process and that there will be no chance of retribution to the students