



EXPLORING EFFECTIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL IN LAHORE

SHUMAILA MANSHA

EMAIL: shumailamunir33@gmail.com

LAHORE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN UNIVERSITY

UZMA KHALIL

EMAIL: uzma.urooj.khalil@gmail.com

LAHORE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN UNIVERSITY

Abstract

This study investigates effective language learning techniques for secondary school students in the Lahore district. Interviews with award-winning instructors were done using a purposive sample technique in order to discover the essential pedagogical abilities and practices that lead to effective language education. Sixteen “best teachers of the year 2016-17” participated in the research.

The semi-structured interview was used as the research instrument, and its validity and reliability were ensured through expert opinion and a pilot study.

The key findings highlight the significance of interactive activities, cultural involvement, flexibility, well-organized instruction, cooperative learning, practical applications, ongoing professional growth, thoughtful practice, dispute resolution, and sustaining student involvement.

The findings emphasize the importance of interactive and hands-on learning experiences, the incorporation of cultural aspects, and the flexibility of instructional approaches.

This study offers significant insights for language educators, providing practical recommendations to strengthen instructional approaches and better student achievements in Pakistan.

This study also provides insight to policy makers for better teachers training programs.

INTRODUCTION

An effective teacher is a particular teacher who has been the most successful in helping the respondents to learn. A good or exceptional teacher has personal attributes that set them apart from other educators. His captivating nature distinguishes him and inspires pupils to pay attention to him.

A successful and great instructor usually follows the best practices in his profession. He had extraordinary success in helping his students attain great learning outcomes. Effective teachers play an important role in supporting student growth and success by providing interesting

learning environments, cultivating positive relationships, and applying different instructional methodologies customized to the requirements of individual learners.

Nurie Bogale et al. (2024) established in their recent study that effective teaching is very crucial for the excellence of education. Effective teachers encourage curiosity, critical thinking, and a love of learning, while also providing constructive comments, direction, and support to help students overcome problems and accomplish their academic goals.

Effective teachers, by their devotion, enthusiasm, and drive to continual growth, not only transfer knowledge, but also empower pupils with the skills, confidence, and resilience required to flourish in a quickly altering world. Kilag et al. (2024) shared in their study that effective teachers always work on continuous improvement of the students and believe in lifelong learning.

Passion, perseverance, risk-taking attitude, patience, flexibility, respect, creativity, authenticity, love of learning, and high energy are the essential traits of the best teacher.

It is essential to be passionate or enthusiastic about what you do. Enthusiasm is a fundamental trait that distinguishes a truly effective and best teacher. This is another feature that is common among excellent teachers. Perseverance equals devotion. A good teacher must be willing to work with students for a long time to make their lives better. A key rule for success in any job is to be dedicated to it.

Anthony and Walshaw, (2023) highlighted in their study that the best teachers are those, who always value their students and reflect enthusiasm in their behavior. Though a great deal of work has already been done on successful and best practices in education around the world, there are still many areas that require more research.

It is particularly important to find the best teaching approaches for language acquisition in Pakistan. In order to function as a guiding light for all educators, it is imperative to provide comprehensive and exhaustive information on these practices.

Teachers can significantly improve their student's learning experiences and results by implementing these tried-and-true techniques into their instruction. This research will not only benefit the field of education but also guarantee that efficient language learning techniques are easily available and applicable throughout the education sector of Pakistan. Djalilova, (2023) established in his study that Learners use cognitive, metacognitive, and social-affective processes as part of language learning strategies to improve their language acquisition.

Statement of the Problem

Despite extensive research on effective teaching approaches around the world, Pakistan has a substantial lack of context-specific language learning strategies.

Pakistan has its own unique educational, cultural, and linguistic landscape. This means that methods need to be tailored to meet the needs and problems of both teachers and students.

Current teaching approaches frequently fail to completely engage pupils and develop their language abilities effectively, resulting in unsatisfactory educational outcomes.

This highlights the critical necessity to investigate and identify the best teaching practices that are both effective globally and adaptive to the Pakistani setting.

Sulaymanovna, (2023) endorsed that the implementation of efficient study methods can foster students' autonomy, ignite their enthusiasm for learning, and provide them with the ability to assess and rectify their work.

The problem is made worse by the fact that teachers in Pakistan don't have access to a lot of resources and chances for professional growth.

Teachers frequently struggle to discover practical, evidence-based approaches that can be smoothly implemented into their classes.

By researching and documenting the most effective language teaching approaches suitable for Pakistan's educational context, we may provide essential information to instructors.

This would enable them to improve their teaching methods, eventually leading to higher language competency among pupils and better educational performance overall.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this study were as follows

1. To explore effective teaching practices used by language teachers.
2. To examine the pedagogical skills that contribute to effective teaching.
3. To investigate the techniques employed by the best teachers within the classroom.
4. To identify strategies for enhancing professional teaching abilities.
5. To identify the techniques used by best teachers in challenging situations

Research Questions

1. What effective teaching practices are used by language teachers?
2. What pedagogical skills contribute to effective language teaching?
3. What techniques do the best teachers use in the classroom?

4. What strategies can enhance professional teaching abilities?
5. How do the best teachers handle challenging classroom situations?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it seeks to uncover and assess successful teaching strategies, pedagogical abilities, and classroom techniques utilized by language teachers.

This research can improve the quality of education in the Lahore district by identifying the factors that lead to successful language instruction.

Additionally, the investigation's emphasis on professional development strategies and managing difficult classroom scenarios will offer educators practical advice, enabling them to enhance their instructional strategies and adjust to a variety of educational obstacles.

Ultimately, the recommendations that result from this research will assist educators in the refinement of their teaching abilities, thereby enhancing the learning outcomes of students and contributing to the overall development of the educational system in the region.

Delimitations of the Study

- 1 This study was delimited to “best teachers” declared in the year 2016-17
- 2 The study was delimited to the secondary level.
- 3 The study was delimited to language teachers only.
- 4 The study was delimited to the Lahore district only.

Literature Review

Teacher's Role

Teachers are essential to the educational process because they have an impact on student's social and emotional growth in addition to their academic performance. According to Hattie ,(2018) teachers have a substantial impact on student learning results. They play a more significant role in influencing students' attitudes, habits, and general development than just imparting knowledge. Teachers in this versatile position are expected to fulfill the roles of facilitators, motivators, and role models (Korthagen, 2022).

Teachers play a vital role in establishing an inclusive classroom atmosphere that honors and appreciates diversity, as emphasized by Yorqinoy et al. (2023). They stress the significance of culturally responsive teaching in promoting student involvement and academic success.

Effective Teaching and Student Achievement

The effectiveness of teaching is strongly correlated with the academic performance of students. Kilag et al. (2023) stated that high-quality teaching significantly improves student learning and performance. Key components of effective teaching include clear instruction, formative assessment, and adaptive teaching strategies that cater to diverse learning needs (Solissa et al., 2023). These components contribute to the establishment of a favorable learning environment that facilitates student achievement.

In addition, a recent study conducted by De Kleijn, (2023) suggests that teacher-student connections, feedback, and direct instruction significantly contribute to better student results. This underscores the crucial significance of effective teaching methods in improving academic accomplishment.

Effective Teaching and Character Building

Effective teaching encompasses character development in addition to academic success. Teachers who integrate values education into their curriculum assist students in the acquisition of critical life skills, including empathy, responsibility, and integrity.

Ranchman et al. (2023) highlight the importance of character education as a fundamental component of a comprehensive educational strategy.

Teachers can promote character development by demonstrating positive behaviors, establishing a nurturing classroom atmosphere, and including character education in daily instruction. Komalasari et al. (2023) highlighted the strong character education programs that excellently shape education. Therefore, character building is an essential component of a good and practical education

Handling Different Issues by Good Teachers

Skilled educators can effectively manage a wide range of classroom issues, encompassing both behavioral difficulties and academic obstacles.

Effective classroom management techniques are crucial for maintaining a productive learning environment. Hunter et al. (2023) highlighted that a good student-teacher relationship is important for maintaining classroom management. Effective teachers are skilled in addressing diverse learning needs through differentiated instruction (Roberts et al., 2023). Teachers must possess the ability to handle not only behavioral control but also social and emotional challenges, including bullying and mental health concerns. According to Gimbert et al.(2023), social-emotional learning (SEL) programs can help teachers equip students with the skills needed to

manage their emotions, build positive relationships, and make responsible decisions, thus enhancing the overall classroom climate.

Professionalism of Good Teachers

Professionalism is a distinguishing feature of good teachers. Professional teachers follow ethical norms, engage in ongoing professional development, and work with colleagues to improve their practices. Ahmed et al. (2023) established that the professionalism of teachers and their professional training has a huge impact on the education achievements of the students and that professional collaboration and continuous learning are linked to improved teaching practices and student outcomes. Additionally, professionalism entails a positive demeanor and a dedication to the field, which can serve as a source of inspiration and motivation for both students and colleagues.

Good Teachers are Lifelong Learners

Effective educators are dedicated to lifelong learning. Thew et al. (2023) ongoing professional development helps teachers refine their skills, adapt to changes in the educational landscape, and implement new teaching strategies effectively., therefore professional training programs can become the source for lifelong learning. Lifelong learning also reflects a teacher's dedication to personal and professional growth. Firat, (2023) recommended that AI can be integrated as a lifelong learning tool.

Pedagogical Skills of Effective Teachers

Competent educators possess various pedagogical abilities that empower them to provide exceptional teaching.

These skills include lesson planning, formative evaluation, classroom management, and the capacity to differentiate instruction based on the needs of the students.

Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) have conducted a recent study that strengthens the significance of PCK in attaining successful educational results.

Additionally, effective teachers employ technology-enhanced learning strategies to engage students and personalize learning experiences (Rintaningrum,2023)

Good Teachers as Mentors

Mentorship is another crucial role of good teachers. Effective teachers act as mentors to their students, providing guidance, support, and encouragement. This mentorship facilitates a

supportive learning environment by assisting students in overcoming personal and academic obstacles.

Culligan et al. (2023) stated that mentorship in education positively impacts student engagement, motivation, and achievement. Teachers who engage in mentoring activities also make valuable contributions to the professional growth of their colleagues, fostering a collaborative and supportive educational environment.

Methodology

Research paradigm

The present study was carried out within the framework of a phenomenology research paradigm. The primary objective of phenomenological research is to seek authenticity in individuals' accounts of their actual experiences, mental states, and behaviors, in order to provide comprehensive explanations of the phenomenon. Phenomenology is a research approach that aims to understand and analyze the personal and subjective experiences of individuals. This makes it particularly suitable for this type of investigation. Stolz, (2023) explained that phenomenology research describes the experiences of individuals regarding any phenomenon in detail.

Research Design

The research design provides a detailed outline of the project. It is a road map for conducting a study, collecting data, using the instrument, and analyzing the data. It is descriptive research. The qualitative research method was used in this study. Structured interviews were used as a data-gathering tool. Khoa et al.(2023) stated that qualitative research is based on the in-depth and detailed phenomena of the study.

The population of the Study

A research population is typically a big collection of individuals or items that are the primary focus of a scientific inquiry. This is the reason why researchers use sampling approaches. A research population is a well-defined collection of humans or items with similar features.

The study population consisted of the top-performing teachers in English and Urdu courses from both government and private secondary schools in the Lahore area during the 2016-

17 academic year. Out of a total of 53 language teachers, 16 were recognized as the top teachers of the year.

Sample of the Study

A sample is a portion of the population that is used to represent the full group as a whole in statistics. When conducting research, it is generally impractical to poll every member of a specific population due to the vast quantity of people (Rahman, 2023). Sixteen “best teachers” of the year 2016-17 were selected for the study sample. The purposive sampling technique was used to interview those teachers who got the best teacher award of the year. Eight males and eight females (government and private) serving as English and Urdu language teachers participated in this study.

Characteristics of Respondents

Serial	Gender	Level	Age	Qualificatio n	Experienc e	Category	Sector
1	Male	Secondary	40 y	PhD	18 y	English	Private
2	Male	Secondary	27 y	M.Phil.	8 y	English	Private
3	Male	Secondary	34 y	M.Phil.	10 y	English	Private
4	Male	Secondary	29 y	PhD	5y	English	Private
5	Male	Secondary	35 y	Masters	7y	Urdu	Govt
6	Male	Secondary	41 y	M.Phil.	10y	Urdu	Govt
7	Male	Secondary	43 y	PhD	11y	Urdu	Govt
8	Male	Secondary	54 y	Masters	20y	Urdu	Govt

9	Female	Secondary	46 y	M.Phil.	10y	English	Private
10	Female	Secondary	23 y	M.Phil.	3y	English	Private
11	Female	Secondary	25 y	Masters	4y	English	Private
12	Female	Secondary	52 y	PhD	23y	English	Private
13	Female	Secondary	40 y	M.Phil.	13y	Urdu	Govt
14	Female	Secondary	34 y	M.Phil.	9y	Urdu	Govt
15	Female	Secondary	26 y	Masters	7y	Urdu	Govt
16	Female	Secondary	45 y	M.Phil.	11y	Urdu	Govt

Research Instrument

The semi-structured interview was utilized as a data collection tool. It contained 24 open-ended questions. The researcher herself created it under the supervision of a supervisor.

Validity and reliability

A comprehensive validation and piloting process was implemented to guarantee the reliability and validity of the research interviews.

It was made sure that the questions were relevant, clear, and able to get meaningful and complete answers about the effective practices of award-winning teachers by five educational experts who looked over and approved the interview procedure.

In addition, five interviews were done as part of a pilot study to evaluate the interview guide and improve the questions in response to comments and observations.

The reliability and consistency of the data collection were improved by this pilot study's assistance in identifying any ambiguities or problems in the interview procedure.

Ethical Consideration

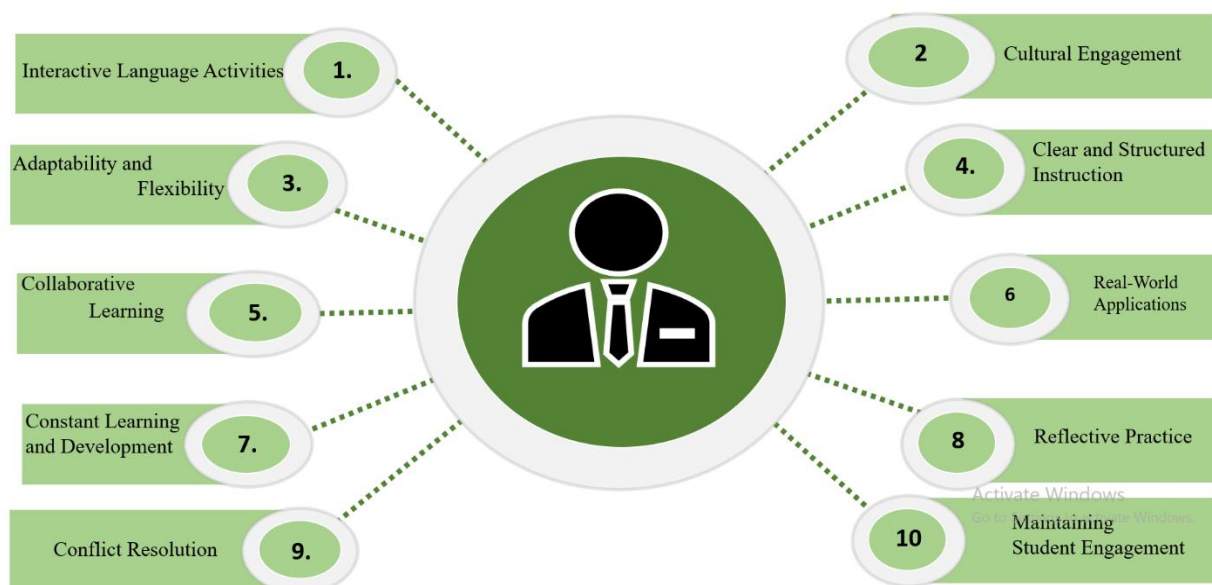
The researcher was granted permission by the school administrations to interview the most exceptional instructors of the 2016-17 academic year.

The researcher provided the respondents with an assurance that the findings would be only utilized for academic reasons and that any personal information would be maintained under strict confidentiality.

Data analysis

This part presents several themes derived from the in-depth interviews taken with the “best teachers”. Firstly, all recorded interviews were transcribed carefully with all necessary detail, then different themes were derived and narrowed down into meaningful form to get comprehensive insight.

BEST TEACHING PRACTICES FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING



Serial #	Themes
1.	Interactive Language Activities
2.	Cultural Engagement
3.	Adaptability and Flexibility
4.	Clear and Structured Instruction
5.	Collaborative Learning:
6.	Real-World Applications
7.	Constant Learning and Development
8	Reflective Practice
9	Conflict Resolution
10	Maintaining Student Engagement

Interactive Language Activities

The majority of teachers believe that interactive activities are necessary to engage children in language acquisition. They emphasize that activities like role-playing, debates, and group discussions make learning more dynamic and practical.

For example, one teacher mentioned, *"In my language classes, I use role-playing and debates to make learning more engaging and practical for students"* R2 interactive techniques enable students to practice language skills in a real-world setting, thereby improving their fluency and boosting their confidence.

Another respondent shared *"I often conduct activities in group and out-group competitions for better learning"* R16

Overall analysis shows that teachers find interactive activities crucial for effective language learning, as they provide practical, engaging experiences that boost students' language proficiency and self-assurance

Cultural Engagement

Most of the teachers also think that language instruction benefits much from cultural immersion. By integrating cultural elements, such as traditional stories, songs, and customs, teachers can provide a richer learning experience that goes beyond the mechanics of the

language. One teacher noted, *"Introducing cultural elements related to the language helps students understand the context better and sparks their interest"* R 14. This method not only helps one understand languages but also increases respect for the culture connected with them.

Similarly, another respondent shared *"I try different cultural and traditional stories through role-playing and storytelling methods to engage students"* R3

Ultimately, integrating cultural immersion into language instruction improves students' comprehension and engagement, enhancing their educational journey and fostering a more profound awareness of different cultures.

Adaptability and Flexibility:

Most teachers believe that adaptability and flexibility are essential instructional skills. Effective teachers are capable of adapting their lesson plans and teaching strategies to the feedback and requirements of their students.

One teacher explained, *"Being adaptable and ready to change my lesson plans based on student feedback has been key to my success"* R7. This adaptability guarantees that the instruction remains pertinent and responsive to the learning progress of students.

One of the best teachers said *"I often change my planning according to students' current situation, if I feel any concept is not that clear I try another class on the same topic"* R5.

According to the findings, teachers value adaptation and flexibility, emphasizing the significance of adjusting lesson plans depending on student input in order to retain relevant and successful instruction.

Clear and Structured Instruction

Most teachers agree that clear and structured instruction is essential for effective teaching. Providing pupils with well-organized lessons allows them to effortlessly follow along and grasp complex subjects.

As one teacher put it, *"I ensure my lessons are well-structured and clear, which helps students follow along easily and understand complex concepts"* R 8. Clear instruction reduces confusion and enables a more focused and efficient learning experience.

A female private teacher shared *"I always try to add such learning activities which are helpful to clear the concept of the topic with more clarity, this method enhances the quality and clarity of my lesson instructions"* R 9

Most teachers believe that clear and structured lessons are essential for effective teaching, as they help students understand complex concepts and facilitate a focused, efficient learning process.

Collaborative Learning:

The majority of teachers believe that collaborative learning is an effective strategy for increasing student involvement and understanding. Teachers can create a collaborative environment that supports deeper learning by engaging students in group projects and peer-to-peer instruction.

One teacher shared, *"Group projects and peer-to-peer teaching are central techniques I use to foster collaboration and deeper understanding among students"* R 4. This technique not only cultivates collaborative skills but also facilitates peer learning.

A govt male teacher shared his experience *"It is my habit to assign all projects and innovative work in groups, I always like group efforts instead of individual work, this way is very helpful for collaborative learning"* R 8.

It is evident from the above analysis that teachers perceive collaborative learning as an effective method for improving engagement and comprehension. This is because it encourages teamwork and peer learning, hence facilitating a more profound educational experience.

Real-World Applications:

Teachers emphasize the need to integrate teachings into real-world scenarios. The majority think that making the content relevant to students' lives boosts their interest and drive to learn.

One teacher remarked, *"Connecting lessons to real-world scenarios makes the material more relevant and interesting for students"* R5. Real-world applications can improve students' engagement and retention of information by demonstrating the practical value of the material they are learning.

Similarly, another respondent shared *"In my opinion any tough concept can be made easier through examples from the real world, therefore I always talk about current situations and the real world"* R6.

Based on the analysis provided, teachers emphasize the need to connect courses to real-world situations. This approach increases student interest and motivation by showing them how

their learning is practically relevant. As a result, it improves their engagement and ability to remember the information.

Constant Learning and Development:

Most educators believe continuous professional development is crucial for preserving and improving teaching skills. Regular participation in workshops, training sessions, and professional learning communities helps teachers stay updated with the latest educational practices.

One teacher mentioned, *"I regularly seek out professional development opportunities to stay current with the latest teaching methodologies"* R 10. By maintaining a dedication to ongoing education, teachers can incorporate new and impactful methods into their classrooms.

Another teacher mentioned *"Professionalism is an essential component for good teaching, therefore continued training is one of my strong learning mediums"*R13.

In conclusion, teachers emphasize the significance of continuous professional development in order to preserve and improve teaching talents. Active participation in learning opportunities allows teachers to stay updated with the most recent approaches, boosting their efficacy in the classroom.

Reflective Practice:

Educators also highlight the significance of engaging in reflective practice for professional development. Through a process of careful analysis and assessment of their instructional approaches, teachers can identify specific areas in need of enhancement and implement necessary modifications. Additionally, obtaining input and feedback from fellow educators can further contribute to this improvement process.

As one teacher shared, *"Reflecting on my teaching practices and seeking feedback from colleagues helps me continuously improve my skills"* R 15. Reflective practice promotes a culture of self-improvement and professional excellence.

Another teacher shared *"I try to discuss different important points with my colleagues, I often share my strategies with them and in case of any good suggestion, I also change my strategies accordingly"*R 14.

In conclusion, educators underscore the importance of reflective practice in their professional development. They contribute to a culture of excellence in education by

continuously enhancing their skills and requesting feedback by critically evaluating their teaching methods.

Conflict Resolution:

Most teachers believe that employing good conflict resolution tactics is crucial for keeping a pleasant school atmosphere during difficult circumstances.

Teachers can establish a respectful learning environment and avoid interruptions by handling issues swiftly and constructively.

One teacher explained, *"In challenging situations, I use conflict resolution strategies to maintain a positive classroom environment."* R 9. Effective conflict resolution helps maintain focus and harmony in the classroom.

In conclusion, teachers emphasize the need for effective conflict resolution procedures in promoting a positive school environment. By handling issues in a timely and constructive manner, they reduce disruptions and establish a respected learning environment, leading to an educational excellence culture.

Maintaining Student Engagement:

Teachers also believe that keeping students engaged is crucial, especially in challenging situations where students may be distracted or unmotivated. The majority of educators employ a variety of strategies, including to addition of new activities and the modification of their teaching methods, to re-engage students.

One teacher shared, *"When students are distracted or unmotivated, I introduce new, stimulating activities to regain their focus and interest"* R 11. These techniques help keep students attentive and involved in their learning.

In conclusion, educators prioritize student engagement by implementing a variety of strategies, such as the introduction of new activities, to refocus and pique students' interest, particularly in difficult circumstances. This approach guarantees active participation and effective learning.

Discussion and conclusion

The outcomes of this study show a number of critical strategies and pedagogical abilities used by excellent language teachers. Interactive language activities are vital, highlighting the need for dynamic and practical learning experiences.

This study's outcomes show several critical strategies and pedagogical abilities used by excellent language teachers. Interactive language activities are vital, highlighting the need for dynamic and practical learning experiences. These findings are aligned with the research conducted by (Rustamov et al.,2023)

Another important point to consider is cultural participation in language training. Incorporating cultural components, such as traditional stories and practices, enhances learning by offering context and inspiring interest.

This methodology facilitates the understanding of language and promotes the respect of different cultures, expanding students' viewpoints and enriching their educational experience. Eden et al.(2024) established a similar perspective in their recent study that cultural engagement is important for fostering diversity in education.

The study highlights the significance of being adaptable and flexible in the field of education. Skilled educators modify their instructional plans by taking into account student feedback and the dynamics of the classroom. This ensures that the teaching remains pertinent and adaptable to the requirements of the students. This aligns with the results of a recent study conducted by (Munda et al.,2023).

Clear and structured education emerged as critical to effective teaching. Well-organized classes make it easier for pupils to absorb complicated concepts and keep focus, resulting in a more efficient learning process.

. This finding is consistent with the research conducted on effective teaching strategies (Anthony et., 2023)

Collaborative learning is recognized as a very successful approach to improving student engagement and comprehension. Engaging students in collaborative projects and peer-to-peer instruction fosters teamwork and facilitates more profound learning.

This collaborative approach supports the development of social skills and reinforces academic concepts through peer interactions. These findings are aligned with the recent research conducted on effective teaching techniques by (Zhou et al.,2023)

The incorporation of real-world applications into teaching boosts student engagement and motivation. Connecting courses to real-life scenarios makes the subject more relevant and

engaging, thereby enhancing retention and understanding. Killen et al, (2023) recommended this technique in their recent book on effective teaching strategies.

Continuous professional development and reflective practice are critical for sustaining and improving teaching abilities.

Regular involvement in professional development opportunities keeps instructors updated on the most recent educational techniques, while reflective practice fosters self-improvement and professional excellence. (Berdaliyea., 2023)

Conflict resolution techniques are essential for fostering a pleasant classroom atmosphere. Effective conflict resolution reduces disturbances and promotes a conducive learning environment. Abosede et al. (2023) recommended this in their study as well that effective teachers successfully deal with different conflicts.

Maintaining student engagement, especially in challenging situations, is vital. Teachers utilize diverse tactics to maintain students' concentration and engagement, so promoting active involvement and efficient acquisition of knowledge.

Teachers utilize diverse tactics to maintain students' concentration and engagement, so promoting active involvement and efficient acquisition of knowledge. Anthony et al.(2023) recommended that student engagement can be a good teaching strategy adopted by effective teachers.

In conclusion, effective language teaching involves a combination of interactive activities, cultural engagement, adaptability, clear instruction, collaborative learning, real-world applications, continuous professional development, reflective practice, conflict resolution, and strategies for maintaining student engagement. These elements collectively create a rich and effective learning environment. Understanding and implementing these practices can enhance instructional methods, leading to improved student outcomes. This study provides valuable insights for language teachers and contributes to educational research, offering practical recommendations for effective teaching strategies in diverse classroom settings. This study also provides detailed qualities and abilities of effective teachers and policymakers can design different professional training programs to improve the teaching skills of teachers according to modern requirements.

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