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An Investigation of Modern and Traditional Classrooms

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	i
Section One: Introduction	1
Section Two: Literature Review	2
2.1 Classrooms.....	2
2.2 Modern Classrooms	3
2.2.1 Approaches of Modern Classrooms.....	3
2.2.2 Teacher-Student Collaboration.....	4
2.2.3 Classroom Environment of Modern Classrooms	5
2.2.4 The Advantages of Modern Classrooms.....	6
2.2.5 The Disadvantages of Modern Classrooms.....	6
2.2.6 The Impact of Technology	7
2.3 Traditional Classrooms	8
2.3.1 Approaches of Traditional Classrooms	8
2.3.2 Classroom Environment of Traditional Classrooms	8
2.3.3 The Advantages of Traditional Classrooms.....	9
2.3.4 The Disadvantages of Traditional Classrooms	10
2.3.5 Students Learning in Traditional Classrooms.....	11
2.4 The Contrast Between Modern and Traditional Classrooms	13
Section Three: Experience and Reflection.....	14
3.1 Experience	14
3.2 Reflection	14
Section Four: Conclusion	15
References	16

Section One

Introduction

Generally, modern and traditional classrooms reveals how education has changed overtime. In traditional classrooms, the teacher is the one who is in charge, and the students are the listeners. On the other hand, in modern classrooms students are the active ones and the focus is on them. Examining each stage provides valuable insights into the evaluation of teaching and learning methods over time, offering a comprehensive view of how education has transformed in different settings.

This research project aims to compare, analyze, and assess the characteristics, methods, and outcomes of traditional and modern classrooms. The main objective is to provide advanced knowledge of these two distinct learning environments. The purpose is to clarify educators, and educational institutions about the benefits and negative aspects of each model.

Nowadays new methods of teaching are used in modern classrooms, students are the center of the educational process and the environment is well-prepared for them. According to Tripathy (2022) modern education includes current statistics and the latest study material. Since algorithms, strategies, and methods constantly change, modern education keeps up with the changes.

In traditional classrooms, the teacher teaches directly to the students without the use of any outside media and the students follow the structures. “Traditional classrooms can be defined as two way interaction between teachers and students. This is a situation which in classroom there is an interaction between two parties and they can interact face-to-face” (Hassan *et al*, 2014, p.20).

This study is divided into four main sections. The first section is introduction which includes background, project aims, the definition of basic terms and the division of the project. The second section is literature review. It contains teaching approaches, advantages, challenges, and classroom environment of modern classrooms and traditional classrooms also the similarities and differences between them. The third section is experience and reflection. In this section, the experience of attending classes is critically discussed with introducing new ideas and making judgments. The last main section is the conclusion, it summarizes the main findings and their implications.

Section Two

Literature Review

In this section, we explore the differences between modern and traditional classrooms, looking at their teaching methods, pros and cons, classroom atmosphere, and teacher-student dynamics. It emphasizes the shift towards student-centered learning in modern education, contrasting it with the traditional teacher-centered approach and highlighting the importance of practical, interactive, and innovative techniques in modern classrooms.

2.1 Classrooms

Trif (2019) defines that the class is simultaneously a formal group, as an effect of grouping according to the residence and age of pupils and an informal one, as a personal space for interactions. The interactions are dynamic relationships sustained by communication, mutual influence and empathy.

Malik and Rizvi (2018) argue that a classroom setting has two major components, namely, physical component and human component. Physical component comprises all the physical objects present in the classroom e.g. black board, furniture, lightings, projector, books, computers etc., whereas the human component comprises of individuals i.e., teachers and students in the classroom. It generally involves the nature of interaction of teachers with students and student-student as well. This pattern of interaction generates a particular atmosphere which may be called as learning condition/situation/environment. This aspect is also called the psycho-social environment of the classroom.

Classrooms around the world are recognizable on some basic features: there are a number of young people in the same space as one teacher. Some countries (for example, in the UK) organize same-age classes; others (for example, in Nigeria) organize classes according to attainment and not age. In every classroom there is often a physical boundary of some sort. The learners are usually engaged in the same or similar tasks as each other. The furniture is usually arranged so that the learners can write or draw at a table or desk. The desks are usually arranged so that the teacher can see what's happening (Watkins et al, 2007).

In conclusion, classrooms worldwide combine formal structure with informal interactions, contributing to diverse learning atmospheres. Through the interaction of physical elements and human dynamics, these spaces facilitate essential teaching and learning experiences, accommodating cultural and pedagogical differences.

2.2 Modern Classrooms

2.2.1 Approaches of Modern Classroom

The Eclectic Approach is a useful one in teaching languages in a comprehensive way because it integrates all methods, approaches and techniques and applies certain method, approach or technique which is suitable to the classroom environment. In ELT also, the Eclectic Approach is being used by the language teachers and it has been successful in achieving the objectives in EL classrooms (Srinivas Rao, 2018).

Task-based approach aims to provide learners with a natural context for language use. As learners work to complete a task, they have abundant opportunity to interact. Such interaction is thought to facilitate language acquisition as learners have to work to understand each other and to express their own meaning. By so doing, they have to check to see if they have comprehended correctly and, at times, they have to seek clarification. By interacting with others, they get to listen to language which may be beyond their present ability, but which may be assimilated into their knowledge of the target language for use at a later time (Larsen-Freeman, 1986).

In conclusion, the task-based approach emphasizes natural language use through interactive tasks, while the Eclectic Approach proves effective by integrating diverse methods in language teaching. Together, they offer a balanced and adaptable approach to a better learning.

2.2.2 Teacher-Student Collaboration

It is generally agreed that good teaching involves good communication between the teacher and students and also among students. The best productivity in a classroom comes from effective cooperation between the teacher and the students. Therefore, teachers' roles can be vital to the effectivity of the language learning. Teachers need to be supportive. A supportive teacher is one who creates efficiently a positive classroom environment, who encourages students to behave well in classroom and to be motivated. Supportive teachers also are teachers who emphasize the learning process by giving all the students the chance to construct their learning, and be engaged with the content. Communicative instruction and cooperative learning provide students with the necessary skills to succeed while learning a foreign language because they allow students to be the center of the learning process and can positively affect students' learning, promoting good interaction (Luz, 2015).

Kutumba Rao (2020) claims that the student-centered learning is that it stimulates students to initiate and monitor their own learning rather than depending on their teacher. It is clear that the students are encouraged to be active and pursuance of the knowledge by themselves.

In conclusion, when teachers and students communicate well and work together, it creates a positive learning environment. Encouraging students to take charge of their own learning helps them become active learners. By using methods like cooperative learning, teachers play a key role in helping students succeed in learning a new language.

2.2.3 Classroom Environment of Modern Classrooms

The environment created to facilitate learning can be a major motivator or demotivator. Everyone involved in design has a responsibility to ensure they are creating an environment that attracts students and stimulates the desire amongst them to be in that space. There is a strong movement away from basic utilitarian design towards a more contemporary, innovative design with greater student appeal. Color, lighting, shape form are all important aspects of any design and an effective design will integrate all these things in a cohesive manner. All classrooms should not look the same. Variety stimulates and motivates. Cleverly designed furniture can combine with attractive wall art/murals to create an appealing and inspiring classroom (Serridge, 2020).

Osborne (2013) believes that many of the modern learning environments being built today effectively promote and support a range of pedagogies including delivering, applying, creating, communicating and decision-making. Often they are centered around a student 'home base' where a lot of the teaching and learning occurs but these bases also allow access to other learning spaces. Not all classes will need all spaces all of the time, but students should have access to them should the need arise. Modern learning environments support strengths-based teaching. For example, two classes collaborating on a science project that requires them to publish what they've learnt in the form of an educational poster will achieve much better results if both classes have access to one teacher who has considerable skill in graphic design and one teacher who has excellent knowledge of science and scientific inquiry.

In conclusion, modern learning environments emphasize diverse teaching methods, collaborative learning, and the crucial role of design in motivating students. Varied educator skills and innovative designs contribute to inspiring classrooms that foster engagement.

2.2.4 The Advantages of Modern Classrooms

Student-centered learning enables students to develop the necessary workplace skills. It encourages innovation and creativity through deep learning and requires students to think about their learning, and about the issues and the problems. The student learns to be responsible for his own learning and actions. The student learns about things and likes working with others, team building, developing skills and how to be independent. (Kutumba Rao, 2020, p.133).

The other one of the most important advantages of the student-centered learning is that it gives the chance for the students to operate, manage and monitor his own learning process under the supervision and the guidance of the teacher, so that he could train his self to be independent and this qualifies him to be a good future leader (Kutumba Rao, 2020).

In conclusion, student-centered learning helps students develop important skills for the workplace by encouraging creativity and problem-solving. It teaches them to take responsibility for their own learning and actions, fostering independence and teamwork. Additionally, this approach allows students to learn how to manage their own learning process with guidance from teachers, preparing them to become future leaders.

2.2.5 The Disadvantages of Modern Classrooms

One disadvantage is that there are students who do not relate well to student-centered learning in spite of a teacher's best efforts. This is most prevalent at the lower levels but can occur in upper level classes. Judging from course evaluations, this is about 15 percent of the lower level and less than 5 percent of the upper level. However, because there are many different teaching styles encountered at a university and college level. These students have the opportunity to learn in alternate ways in many other classes. Another disadvantage is that the students have to work in teams. They complain about being on teams. But most often the complaints are accompanied by acknowledgments that they understand that they are preparing for the 'real world'. They appreciate real world experiences even when they do not like them. Also students find it difficult to work in teams because they have lack team skills (Kutumba Rao, 2020).

2.2.6 The Impact of Technology

Raja and Nagasubramani (2018) discuss that the latest insights as to how exactly modern students of today prefer to use technology and how does their learning get an impact if they use technology, it was revealed that the use of modern equipment technology and tools, the learning and interactivity of students increases. They also find it much more interactive, as well as full of interesting areas, when aided by technology. The transfer of knowledge becomes very easy and convenient, as well as effective. What this means is, that our minds now tend to work faster when assisted with the use of modern technology, here we talk about education. The internet has grown in importance by many folds, over the decade. Its importance in the education world can now never be undermined. Despite the chances of fraud and drawbacks, the use of the internet is like a blessing for students. Today, the internet is something that is present in almost everything we use. From television to gaming consoles, and our phones, the internet is literally everywhere. The use of the internet allows students to find amazing convenience, they can find various kinds of help, tutorials and other kinds of assisting material which could be used to academically improve and enhance their learning. Visual images always have a strong appeal compared to words. Using projectors and visuals to aid in learning is another form of great technological use. Top institutions around the world, now rely on the use of amazing PowerPoint presentations and projections in order to keep the learning interactive and interesting. Technological use such as projectors within the schools and colleges can take the interaction and interest levels right up and also improve motivation. Students like to see appealing visuals and something that entices them to think rather than just reading words.

2.3 Traditional Classrooms

2.3.1 Approaches of Traditional Classrooms

According to Sarina (2014) in a teacher-centered classroom, the teacher employs a traditional approach to teaching, employing methods, such as formal lectures, seminars, and examinations and designing assignments, tests and grading. In such a classroom, the main decisions about teaching aims and objectives, content, and methodology are finalized even before there is any encounter between teacher and learner. The approach focuses on the teacher, as the expert, transmitting knowledge to the student as the novice or empty vessel to be filled with knowledge.

2.3.2 Classroom Environment of Traditional Classrooms

Students will share in the typical classroom learning experience. Students learn best in a social learning environment where they can share knowledge with one another. The foundation of traditional learning is the notion that teachers have complete authority over how their pupils are taught curriculum subjects. Furthermore, traditional classrooms offer a unique learning environment, fostering effective education through social interaction and teacher guidance (Lade, 2021).

2.3.3 The Advantages of Traditional Classrooms

Alessa and Hussein (2023) argue that teachers of different schools are aware of the advantages and disadvantages of using traditional methods and that they are aware of the advantages of traditional methods and that they are aware of the advantages that have higher scores, which indicates that they have a higher impact on the teaching process, in which the advantages of traditional methods have more impact and affects the teaching process positively, because traditional methods teach students to be punctual and disciplined, they work face to face with the teacher in which it helps to form strong bonds between the teacher and students. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that not all majors or subjects can be taught online.

Karimova (2021) explains that in traditional education: students acquire information without disclosing it, by proving its truth, assumes the acquisition and repetition of knowledge and their application in similar situations. Its advantages: - In a short time, students learn provides knowledge of the basics and methods of operation; - provides rapid acquisition of knowledge and practical skills and abilities; - direct control of the process of acquiring knowledge and skills prevents the emergence of gaps in knowledge; the collective nature of assimilation allows the identification of common errors and ways to eliminate them.

Lue and Long (2014) claim that the traditional teaching is the most direct and effective method. Teachers control and inspire students effectively when the students encounter problems or arise conflicts, they take flexible teaching method adjusting the content according to actual requirement under the general teaching arrangement, which is not only conducive to cultivate the basic technique but also for the good habit in forming students' self-study ability. Teachers' action and language become the target imitated by learners, whose outlook towards right and wrong, attitude, value orientation and academic level have great impact on students.

In conclusion, traditional classrooms promote punctuality, discipline, and strong teacher-student bonds, while offering direct control of learning and rapid acquisition of knowledge.

2.3.4 The Disadvantages of Traditional Classrooms

Karimova (2021) states that among the major drawbacks of this type of learning is that more attention is paid to memory than to thinking. This training contributes little to the development of creativity, independence, activism. The most common tasks are: add, highlight, underline, remember, repeat, solve by example, and so on. The learning and cognitive process is mainly reproductive in nature, resulting in the formation of a reproductive style of cognitive activity in students. This is why it is often referred to as the “school of memory”. Practice shows that the amount of information transmitted exceeds the capacity to master it (the conflict between the structural and procedural components of the learning process). In addition, there is no opportunity to adapt the pace of learning to the different individual psychological characteristics of students (the conflict between frontal learning and the individual nature of knowledge acquisition).

Teaching mode is single. In the teaching process the teacher is the center, and the teaching process emphasizes system and completion but few thinking space for students. Students are passive in the class teaching and teachers cannot take care of every student in class who has different basis and interests. Students are listeners and put the teacher as the center. The knowledge is limited; the resource is scarce; the learning is passive but the knowledge is well formed and departed from real life. The main experience is insufficient or lack of subjective experience, which will restrict the effectiveness of learning strategy teaching. Many students lose interest in English because their initiative and enthusiasm cannot be fully exerted in class (Leu and Long, 2014).

The negative impact of traditional education considered as costly, student relay on teachers, Negative group, as well as time and so on. In the case of tradition learning students’ whole actions depends on teacher’s instruction thus students cannot approach themselves to account a real-world problem and they will be relay on someone else all time and also if there is any involvement of negative group in classroom destroys the student’s future (Razeeth *et al*, 2019).

In conclusion, traditional classrooms focus on memorization over critical thinking, leading to passive learning and reliance on teachers. Limited opportunities for individualized learning and real-world application may hinder student engagement and success.

2.3.5 Students Learning in Traditional Classrooms

Traditional (Face-to-Face) education (also known as in-person, F2F) focuses on a variety of components, such as lectures, capstones, team projects, labs, and studios. Teaching is done synchronously in a physical learning environment, which means that the students are "traditionally" at the same place at the same time. Face-to-face interaction between student and teacher as well as amongst students, is a key asset of the conventional classroom. Students are motivated by both the teacher and their classmates. It is a strategy in which a teacher moderates and controls the flow of information and knowledge. Students are required to continue strengthening their topic knowledge outside of school by completing homework activities. Students' sole resource in this situation is their instructor, who only teaches them face-to-face (Vyas, 2023).

‘In the case of traditional education, a student of higher education and others can gain interactivity, motivation, accessible, organizing and so on. Interactivity lead the direct communication in between teacher and students from that a higher education as a result student are able to grow their group work activity and direct clearing doubts of particular subject in timely manner’ (Green *et al*, 1990, cited in Razeeth *et al* , 2019, p217).

Al-Mubireek (2021) claims that English teachers continue to focus on imparting knowledge and skills using traditional teaching methods that require students to memorize information without understanding. Traditional teaching methods also encourage unhealthy competitiveness and sometimes illegal rivalry among students who struggle to obtain the best scores over their peers. So, it is high time to call for an up-to-date method that suits the modern age of technology and results in the best outcome learner that can use English effectively, communicatively and appropriately. There is an urgent need to call for the search of modern methods in teaching English courses that focus on learners' activity, engagement, creativity, participation and cooperation.

In conclusion, traditional face-to-face education relies on synchronous teaching in a physical setting, emphasizing direct interaction between students and teachers. It fosters motivation, interactivity, and organization, with teachers guiding the flow of information. However, it can lead to reliance solely on instructors and may promote unhealthy competition among students. To adapt to the modern age and promote effective English learning, there's a growing need for updated teaching methods that prioritize student engagement, creativity, and cooperation, ensuring learners can use English communicatively and appropriately in real-world situations.

2.4 The Contrast Between Modern and Traditional Classrooms

Traditional education was more focused on theoretical sessions. That time was more about cramming and listening to the teachers. In contrast to the modern education system focuses on practical and conceptual teaching. The students are taught through most practical ways to improve their retaining power. Traditional Education is teacher-centered. It is one of the most prominent differences between the two types of education systems. Modern education is learner-centered. The modern approach toward education is more focused on the students and not the teachers (Tripathy, 2022).

Wadhwa (2022) claims that A modern learning environment, unlike the traditional one, is a learning space (a classroom) that is more interactive, innovative, and connected. The primary purpose of a modern learning environment is to help students learn better and follow the modern ways of learning to meet future challenges.

In conclusion, traditional education focused on theoretical sessions and teacher-centered learning, while modern education emphasizes practical teaching in a learner-centered environment. The move towards modern learning environments aims to prepare students for future challenges through interactivity and innovation.

In modern classrooms, diverse teaching methods like the Eclectic Approach and task-based learning promote interactive language teaching. Collaborative environments and innovative designs motivate students and support varied approaches. Advantages include student-centered learning and enhanced interactivity through technology. Traditional classrooms, on the other hand, rely on teacher-centered approaches, such as lectures and exams, but they often limit student engagement and creativity. This can lead to passive learning and a disconnect from real-world applications, limiting critical thinking skills. Modern education emphasizes practical learning, interactivity, and prepares students for future challenges in an innovative environment. Analyzing and exploring the strengths and weaknesses, including perspectives on modern and traditional classrooms and make judgements.

Section Three

Experience and Reflection

This section investigates classroom experiences, comparing teaching methods in traditional and modern settings. By evaluating their effectiveness and pinpointing strengths and weaknesses, we aim to offer clear perspectives.

3.1 Experience

During my school years, I often found myself in traditional classrooms where the teacher held a central role in guiding instruction through lectures and assignments. Interactive learning and technology were lacking, and group work was not encouraged. Despite the value of traditional methods, they often led to boredom among us. However, as we progressed through high school, improvements such as the use of technology and increased student participation made learning more engaging and empowered us to develop our critical thinking skills.

3.2 Reflection

In traditional classrooms, teachers lead and focus on basic lessons like lectures and drills, helping students stay disciplined and focused. But overall, the classes were boring for us as there were no fun activities incorporated into the lessons. The lack of encouragement from teachers resulted in minimal participation from us. It would be better if our teachers actively encouraged group and pair work, allowing us to learn collaboratively and engage with our peers to deepen our understanding of the material, according to Kutumba Rao (2020) the student learns about things and likes working with others, team building, developing skills and how to be independent.. The learning would be more beneficial if we had data show and smartboards, and using interactive activities that enhance our knowledge. Moreover, Instead of relying solely on memorization and grammar drills, adopting an eclectic approach and task-based methods can significantly enhance interaction and integrate techniques and methods that benefit both students and teachers alike.

In our experience, traditional classrooms lacked engagement, leading to boredom. However, embracing technology and fostering collaboration in modern classrooms significantly enhanced our learning experiences and critical thinking skills. In the next section, we'll review our research findings, analyzing the impact of traditional and modern classroom approaches on student engagement and learning.

Section Four

Conclusion

In modern classrooms, the Eclectic Approach and Task-based Approach offer dynamic methods for language teaching, integrating diverse techniques and emphasizing natural language use through interactive tasks. Teacher-student collaboration is paramount, fostering supportive environments where students take center stage in their learning process. Classroom designs prioritize motivation and engagement, with modern environments leveraging innovative designs and varied teaching methods. Advantages of modern classrooms include student empowerment and the effective use of technology to enhance learning experiences. In contrast, traditional classrooms often rely on teacher-centered approaches, where formal lectures and examinations dominate the learning process. While these classrooms provide structure and promote social interaction, they may prioritize memorization over critical thinking and creativity, leaving students feeling passive and reliant on the teacher for direction. Despite the benefits of face-to-face interaction, traditional education can limit students' ability to think independently and tackle real-world challenges. Modern education differs from traditional methods by prioritizing practical, learner-centered approaches, whereas traditional education leans towards theoretical, teacher-centered methods. In modern learning environments, interactivity, innovation, and connectivity are emphasized to better equip students for future challenges.

While modern classrooms provide students with improved learning experiences compared to traditional settings, it is important to recognize that not all methods and techniques employed in traditional classrooms are outdated. Teachers must carefully consider and select methods based on contextual factors and student proficiency levels. Each method has its own context and suitability. By integrating techniques from various approaches, teachers can develop a more effective instructional approach customized to meet the needs of their students.

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