

If Lecture is the Teaching Option, than Why Not an Effective One?

Humaira Zafar

Like many other professions, teaching is an art. Teacher plays a significant role for knowledge dispersion to the learner. Literature review had supported the usage of sundry effective teaching skills to triumph successful outcomes. Despite best efforts by the teachers, a learner always found it difficult to acquire new knowledge by moving with teacher's pace.

The literature review has shown adoption of various teaching strategies to facilitate learner. For the purpose, various learning processes were analyzed to see their effective correlation with teaching strategies. It has been explored from the published studies that the learning process involves five steps i.e dissonance, refinement, organization, feedback and consolidation. All these should be given due importance by the teacher to enhance learning.¹ Effectiveness regarding learner centered approach is accentuated. This enables a learner, to learn as per their contextual outcomes, objectives and needs.² Tracing back the changing trends in medical education, *Harden et al*, described that teacher's role should be a facilitator besides knowledge transmitter. An appropriate assistance and guidance should be given to augment learning process and to motivate them for acquisition of advanced knowledge.³ The success to achieve all the above mentioned outcomes depends upon the effectiveness of teacher's communication and presentation skills. Besides changing trends in medical education, lecturing strategy by adoption of power point presentation is still considered the preferred choice by most facilitators. Most facilitators are deficient in an art of delivering the ideal, effective, interesting and thought provoking power point presentation lecture. Contrary, from the learner's perspective digesting a lengthy, ineffective, teacher centered and boring power point presentation is of no use.

Actively engaging the learner during particular session is no doubt the most powerful tool. Two rules shouldn't be compromised while having a teaching and learning session. Firstly providing respect to the audience or learner and secondly there should be an enthusiastic well prepared and refined talk to handle all the critiques and questions.^{4,5}

At the level of lesson design, the Gagne's nine events or points of instruction, were emphasized to be practiced for appropriate lesson organization. Out of these nine events, first three emphasized preparing a learner for learning. These three involves gaining learner's attention by explicating the previous knowledge, informing about objectives, session proceedings and making relevance with prior knowledge by stimulating recall process. Presenting an interesting problem or asking relevant question on a particular topic can be helpful for gaining attention. The information regarding the knowledge acquisition from specific session will generate interest in learning. The brainstorm by recalling previous knowledge can help them making realize how a new knowledge can be linked with the baseline one.⁶

The next four events navigate actual learning cycle. Dispersion of new knowledge via text, graphics, figures, pictures, verbal explanation and demonstrations, all can be helpful gaining updated information. Guidance regarding hands on performance of specific tasks and application of new knowledge or skills will strengthen the learning process. Provision of feedback on specific tasks will be helpful to identify the weaknesses and areas of improvement. Enhancing the retention and transfer of knowledge is the last ninth point accentuated by Gagne's instructional points.⁶

Nutshell of entire story is that facilitator's presentation skills is directly related to the learning process.⁷ A key point for which is to inculcate methods that can actively engage the learners and minimizing ways of losing concentration. The significance of simple, less crowded and clear concept delivering was emphasized.^{8,9} *Bloom et al*, described that an appropriate eye contact with the audience, use of moderate speed, prior rehearsal of readable presentation with light background, timely summarizing entire session and reinforcing session objectives by formative assessment, can improve learning process.⁸ Making the slides simple means limiting the number and concept to maximum seven points per slide in bullet form with a preferred font size of 24 to 32. Moreover, incorporation of relevant pictures, graphs, flow charts, tables etc, also strongly recommended. It was analyzed from published data that human cannot gain more than seven concepts at one time.^{6,10} These all efforts are to minimize the cognitive overload and enables learning.

Summarizing the entire scenario, effective teaching is directly proportional to effective learning. Lecturing is the preferred choice by various facilitators. A student centered approach, facilitator's communication power and application of Gagne's nine instructional points in a session will no doubt a great facilitation for the learner. The easily readable, crisp and comprehensive presentation, followed by summary, quiz or addition of video will reinforce student's learning. The well known fact that today's good learner will be beyond doubt tomorrow's good facilitator is equally applicable in field of medicine as well.

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Correspondence to:

Dr. Humaira Zafar
Associate Professor of Pathology,
Al-Nafees Medical College, Isra University, Islamabad
Campus, Islamabad
Email: dr.humairazafar@yahoo.com

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