



Use of Maxims in Teaching

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Abstract:

Every teacher wants to make maximum involvement and participation of the learners in the learning process. He sets the classroom in such a way so that it becomes attractive for them. He uses different methods, rules, principles etc. in order to make his lesson effective and purposeful. He uses general rule or formula and applies it to particular example in order to make teaching – learning process easy and up to the understandable level of students.

These settled principles, tenets, working rules or general truths through which teaching becomes interesting, easy and effective are called the maxims of teaching. They have universal significance. Every person who is expected to enter into the teaching profession have to familiarize himself with the maxims of teaching. Their knowledge helps him to proceed systematically.

The different maxims of teaching are briefly explained below. The teacher should always proceed keeping them in view.

Keywords: *simple to complex, known to unknown, concrete to abstract, whole to part, definite to indefinite, particular to general, psychological to scientific.*

1. From Known to Unknown

When a child enters into school, he/she possess some knowledge and it is the duty of teacher to enlarge his previous knowledge. Whatever he possesses should be linked with the new

knowledge. If we link new knowledge with the old knowledge our teaching becomes clearer and more definite.

This maxim facilitates the learning process and economizes the efforts of the teacher and the taught. For example is teaching English to the children and he is to teach the word „water“. He reminds them the Kashmiri word „Aab“ which they already know and then tells them that in English we say „water“. This way of teaching helps the learners to understand things fully. This way the teaching becomes definite, clearer and more fruitful.

2. From Simple to Complex

The main objective of teaching is to teacher and the learners objective is to learn something. In this process of teaching and learning, simple or easy things should be first presented to the students and gradually he should proceed towards complex or difficult things. The presentation of simple material makes the learners interested, confident and feel encouraged. As they will show interest towards the simple material, they becomes receptive to the complex matter. On the other hand, if complex matter is presented first, the learner becomes upset, feel bored and finds himself in a challenging situation. For example in mathematics we first present the idea of +, -, x and then division.

When the child gets admitted to 9th and 10th class we introduce algebra, surds, trigonometry, geometry etc. As he proceeds further he becomes familiar with the complex material like matrices, integration, differentiation etc. In this way a learner shows interest by proceeding from simple mathematics to complex one. But if we reverse the situation, he will find himself in a challenging situation and will left his studies due to complexity of matter. Simplicity or complexity of the subject matter should be determined according to the view point of the learners. It makes learning convenient and interesting for the students.

3. From Concrete to Abstract

Concrete things are solid things and they can be visualized but abstract things are only imaginative things. The child understands more easily when taught through their senses and never forget that material. On the other hand if abstract things or ideas are presented, they forget it soon. As **Froebel** said, “Our lessons ought to start in the concrete and end in the abstract”. For example when we teach the solar system, we first visualize the sun through our senses and gives the concept of eight planets, galaxies, meteorites etc. Through this process, the learners understand the materials more easily. Some power of imagination also develops in them .But if we reverse the situation, it will become difficult for learners to understand anything. Another example, when we teach counting to the students we should first take the help of concrete objects like beads, stones etc. and then proceed to digits and numbers.

4. From Analysis to Synthesis

When we divide a thing into easy parts or separate elements in order to understand it easily is called analysis. It is the process which helps in understanding the hidden elements of a thing or the cause of some incident or behavior. For instance, in order to tell about the structure or functions of heart, the parts of the heart are shown separately and knowledge of every part is given. After it the students are made to understand the structure or system of working of the heart. In this way, even a very difficult thing can be easily understood. Synthesis is just opposite of analysis. All parts are shown as a whole. The process of analysis is easier than synthesis for understanding a thing. This process develops the analytical power of the students. It is the best method of starting the teaching process. For example while teaching digestive system, we should first analyse the different parts of digestive system one by one and then gives the synthetic view of it. Hence a good teacher always proceeds from analysis to synthesis.

5. From Particular to General

A teacher should always proceed from particular to general statements. General facts, principles and ideas are difficult to understand and hence the teacher should always first present particular things and then lead to general things. Suppose the teacher is teaching continuous tense while teaching English, he should first of all give few examples and then on the basis of those make them generalize that this tense is used to denote an action that is going on at the time of speaking. Hence a teacher should proceed from particular to general.

6. From Empirical to Rational

Empirical knowledge is that which is based on observation and first and experience about which no reasoning is needed at all. It is concrete, particular and simple. We can feel and experience it. On the other hand rational knowledge is based upon arguments and explanations. For example suppose the students are to be taught that water boils on heating. They should first be made to heat the water and see it boiling. Then the teacher should explain that when water is heated, the molecules gain kinetic energy and there is thermal agitation of the molecules which make the water boil. This maxim is an extension of some of the previous maxims, namely proceed from simple to complex proceed from concrete to abstract and from particular to general.

7. From Induction to Deduction

The process of deriving general laws, rules or formulae from particular examples is called induction. In it if a statement is true in a special situation, it will also be true in other similar situations. It means drawing a conclusion from set of examples. For example when hydrogen

reacts with boron, it gives Boron hydride, potassium reacts hydrogen, it gives potassium hydride, we come to the conclusion that all elements when reacts with hydrogen they form hydrides. While using this process in teaching, a teacher has to present particular examples or experiences and tell about similarity of their attributes. Deduction is just opposite of induction. In it, we derive a certain particular conclusion from general laws, rules or principles. For example in language teaching, before giving the definition of noun, the students are acquainted with the example of noun like man, chair, Delhi etc and then they are led to general definition of noun. So a good teacher always proceeds from induction and finishes at deduction.

8. From Psychological to Logical

Modern education gives more emphasis on psychology of the child. The child's psychological development is of utmost importance than any other thing. A teacher while teaching should follow this maxim via from psychological to logical. Psychological approach takes into consideration the pupil's interests, abilities, aptitudes, development level, needs and reactions. The teacher should keep in mind the psychological selection of the subject matter to be presented before the pupils. Logical approach considers the arrangement of the chosen content into logical order and steps. It is child centered maximum. For example a teacher tells the story of a poem to students when they are not interested in reading, with this a teacher proceeds from psychological to logical sequence.

9. From Actual to Representative

First hand experiences makes learning more vivid and efficient than to give them representative ones. A teacher while selecting the content for presentation should make all efforts possible to present it through actual, natural or real objects than from their improvised representative ones like pictures, models etc. For example to teach about „Golden Temple Amritsar“, a teacher should try his best to visit the actual place and that learning will be more vivid and the pupils will retain it for a long time in spite of teaching through sketches, model or a picture. Representative forms should be used at the higher classes than in lower classes.

10. From Whole to Parts

This maxim is the offshoot of gestalt theory of learning whose main emphasis was to perceive things or objects as whole and not in the form of parts. Whole is more understandable, motivating and effective than the parts. In teaching, the teacher should first give a synoptic view of lesson and then analyze it into different parts. For example the teacher while teaching the pollination in plants, he should first take the flower then analyze it into different parts and give detailed information about each and every part like the sepals, petals, androecium, gynoecium etc. In this way, maximum learning is possible. It is actually

the reverse of the maxim “analyses to synthesis”.

11. From Definite to Indefinite

A teacher should always start from definite because definiteness has its limited boundaries and jurisdiction than indefinite things. We always have confidence on definite and tested things. We learn easily indefinite things on the basis of definite things. Hence a teacher while teaching any content should first present definite things, ideas and then he can learn indefinite things easily. Definite things, definite rules of grammar help the learner to have good knowledge. Gradually he can be taught about indefinite things.

Conclusion:

Teaching maxims of teaching by our teaching experience and some collected information’s from the college of education teachers and many educational journals and books so that we feel that mentioning some as reference may not appropriate. We referred nearly 108 books over the two years so unable mention only few of them.

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