

## DEVISING A LANGUAGE-RICH CLASSROOM

*by:*

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Language is not difficult to teach, especially to Filipino learners, since English is the second primary medium in the country. Many Filipino students can speak the language fluently even without proper training. While teaching strategy remains one of the indicators of a successful English class, establishing a language-friendly environment still poses the greatest challenge of sustaining lifelong learning of the universal medium. To address such, there are three ways that an educator may opt to do.

First, an educator must ensure that the environment or classroom is incorporated with all necessary materials that could invite language learning. Walls may be designed with the alphabet and English words to improve their vocabulary. More than this, a mini-library or a reading corner with books of different genres could be a good approach, too (National Children's Book and Literacy Alliance, 2015). Dictionaries and thesauri must not be forgotten, too, since those books would expand the students' English learning.

Secondly, writing and reading activities will always be an innovative way to sustain the learners' interest. Reading alone could be a tool for extensive English vocabulary learning for non-English speakers. According to Bostock (2020), reading further develops vocabulary by gaining new words from the narratives being read and strengthening writing skills. Through reading activities becoming a part of the daily English class, the joy of learning the language could be sustained, and learners would be more eager to participate in discussions after every reading session. From simple to compound and compound-complex structures of sentence writing, all these could be yielded from simply reading a narration before every class starts.

Lastly, Verner (2022) highlighted the essence of reflective thinking in sustaining language learning in the classroom. She said that one of the ways to do it includes conducting reflections before every session starts. An educator could conduct a survey or face-to-face interview of the learners for the latter to honestly rate which aspects of the previous activity were enjoyable and which were not. In this way, the teacher will know the lesson's strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, this highlights the importance of learning and the learners' consensus on what they think best suits their interests. Encouraging reflective thinking is encouraging the learners to take part in building a language-rich environment.

Establishing a language-rich environment could be challenging for Filipino educators, considering the number of students in a classroom. However, it must always be remembered that building such an environment depends on the creativity of the educator as well as the cooperation of the learners. Filipino teachers have been very persistent in improving every English classroom, and these efforts are seen to bear fruits in the context of language proficiency among Filipino learners.

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