

F-05: An enlightening experience in learning

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This study was undertaken as an exercise to train 3 M.Phil. students in doing qualitative research. For this purpose the instructor has allowed the postgraduate students to observe her lessons on methods of science teaching to undergraduates. The subject matter content of this component was one eighth of a minor course--Science Education, and was taught in 11 lessons. All the lessons were conducted in a classroom in the university, and students were grouped into 3 groups. The postgraduate students were assisted to take the responsibility as instructors of the groups. They attended the lessons as participant observers, and collected data by taking field notes of observation, interviewing undergraduates and collecting their written reflections. Verbal data was audio taped. At the end of each lesson, the postgraduate students prepared detailed transcripts and had discussions with the instructor.

On analysing data by triangulating, it was found that various strategies have been used, such as, building the lesson on students' needs, receiving students' attention through active participation, allowing students to build up mutual

understanding, challenging to find a solution for a small problem, encouraging students in cooperative and collaborative learning, reflecting on students' notes and getting students' reflections on teaching. Students have developed their personality, tolerance and respecting others through this exercise. It was also found that a thorough training in observing, interviewing and recording is essential to undertake qualitative research, which will be useful to improve classroom teaching.