Using Collaborative Learning Skill in Teaching Foreign Language

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Abstract: This article is devoted to using interactive methods in teaching foreign language, especially, collaborative learning skill. In this article is given information about history of this teaching skill and how to use collaborative learning skill during the lesson and also highlighted benefits of this skill

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, Uzbekistan is developing day by day. Considerable changes happened in each sphere in our country. It is known that learning languages is becoming more and more popular. We meet many youngsters as well as adults studying foreign languages.

Learning foreign language is one of the demand of this rapid progressive period. To teach with effective way is also requirement of education sphere. At this time, there are so many modern approaches teaching English. This article is devoted to developing collaborative learning skills of ESP learners . In this paper is demonstrated several effective methods and technologies which we can use enhancing collaborative learning skills of ESP students .

Collaborative learning is rooted in Lev Vygotsky's concept of learning called zone of proximal development. Typically there are tasks that learners can and cannot accomplish. Between these two areas is the zone of proximal development, which is a category of things that a learner can learn but with the help of guidance. The zone of proximal development gives guidance as to what set of skills a learner has that are in the process of maturation. In Vygotsky's definition of zone of proximal development, he highlighted the importance of learning through communication and interactions with others rather than just through independent work. This has made way for the ideas of group learning, one of which being collaborative learning.

Collaborative learning is very important in achieving critical thinking. According to Gokhale (1995), individuals are able to achieve higher levels of learning and retain more information when they work in a group rather than individually, this applies to both the facilitators of knowledge, the instructors, and the receivers of knowledge, the students. For example, Indigenous communities of the Americas illustrate that collaborative learning occurs because individual participation in learning occurs on a horizontal plane where children and adults are equal.

Collaborative learning can occur peer-to-peer or in larger groups. Peer learning, or peer instruction, is a type of collaborative learning that involves students working in pairs or small groups to discuss concepts, or find solutions to problems. This often occurs in a class session after students are introduced to course material through readings or videos before class, and/or through instructor lectures. Similar to the idea that two or three heads are better than one, many instructors have found that through peer instruction, students teach each other by addressing misunderstandings and clarifying misconceptions. For more on peer learning, visit the Official Peer Instruction Blog. Group work or collaborative learning can take a variety of forms, such as quick, active learning activities in class or more involved group projects that span the course of a semester.

Check in with groups intermittently, but encourage students to handle their own issues before coming to you for assistance.

How can you evaluate group work?
Student group work can result in the production of: wikis, proposals, reports of case studies, in-class or video presentations, posters.

Here are some ways to provide feedback on group productivity throughout the process as well as on the group product.

– Evaluate students on both their contributions to group processes as well as the final product.
– Create a detailed explanation of what your expectations are.
– Provide scores for individuals as well as groups.
– Use rubrics. Consider asking students for feedback and including some of their ideas to the rubric.

Incorporate peer and self-assessment at various milestones. This is a good way to check in on the assignment progress as well as the group dynamics.

Communicate clearly to students at the beginning how you will calculate their grades.

What are some general strategies to keep in mind when incorporating group work?

- Introduce group work early in the semester to set clear student expectations.
- Plan for each stage of group work.
- Carefully explain to your students how groups will operate and how students will be graded.
- Help students develop the skills they need to succeed in doing group activities, such as using team-building exercises or introducing self-reflection techniques.
- Establish ground rules for participation and contributions.
- Consider using written contracts.
- Incorporate self and peer assessments for group members to evaluate their own and others' contributions.

We may also count several benefits of collaborative learning skill: Develops higher level thinking skills.

- Promotes student-faculty interaction and familiarity.
- Increases student retention.
- Builds self esteem in students.
- Enhances student satisfaction with the learning experience.
- Promotes a positive attitude toward the subject matter.
- Develops oral communication skills.
- Develops social interaction skills.
- Promotes positive race relations.
- Creates an environment of active, involved, exploratory learning.
- Uses a team approach to problem solving while maintaining individual accountability.
- Encourages diversity understanding.
- Encourages student responsibility for learning.
- Involves students in developing curriculum and class procedures.
- Students explore alternate problem solutions in a safe environment.
- Enhances self management skills.
- Fits in well with the constructivist approach.
- Establishes an atmosphere of cooperation and helping school wide.
- Students develop responsibility for each other.
- Encourages alternate student assessment techniques.
- Fosters and develops interpersonal relationships.
- Students are taught how to criticize ideas, not people.
- Sets high expectations for students and teachers.

In sum, collaborative learning skill is also effective method in teaching foreign language. In teaching group or pair works are considered more interesting way.

2. References

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