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Փորձառության հետազոտություն

ԹԵՄԱ

 **Թիմային աշխատանքը որպես մոտիվացիայի խթանման միջոց**

Մասնակից՝ Լիլիթ Ղազարյան

Դպրոց՝ Այբ

Մենտոր՝ Լիլիթ Պետրոսյան

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 **TEAM WORK AS A MEANS TO AROUSE STUDENTS’ MOTIVATION**

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, educators have carried out various teaching methods in order to find the most effective ways of teaching and learning. Flipped learning, project-based learning, problem-based learning, and collaborative learning have received a lot of attention lately, mainly because they deal with a paradigm shift: from teacher-centered to student-centered learning.

The crucial thing in student-centered learning is motivation. This is an important factor which explains the success or failure of any task. Motivation defines the readiness of learners to communicate.

Two main types of motivation are defined\_intrinsic and extrinsic. Dörnyei (1998 as cited in Alizadeh, 2016) defined the terms as intrinsic motivation referring to the motivation to engage in an activity because that activity is enjoyable to do. Extrinsic motivation defines actions that are performed in order to achieve instrumental aims like earning a reward or stopping a punishment.

What are the conditions that increase motivation? According to Gardner and Lambert (1972 as cited in Alizadeh, 2016), learners are motivated to learn when they think of themselves as competent persons, see goal in their activities, see their studies as significant, have opportunity to make decisions and feel responsibility for participating, and experience more success and achievement than failure.

Thus, it is vital to implement teaching methods that boost students’ motivation. In this regard, collaborative learning or group work/team work plays a crucial role as it enables students to engage in activities with other students in a less threatening environment. In EFL classrooms team work is considered to be an effective method of teaching for various reasons: for example, it increases the time the students speak the target language at the same time reducing the time the students spend listening to others. , It avoids the anxiety that hinders some language learners from speaking and interacting with the teacher in front of the whole class (Foster, 1998). As a result, this promotes being independent and encouraged to learn from the others. Moreover, team work maximises the benefits for students as it can be used for wide scope of activities.

The **aim** of the research is:

* To see the correlation between team work and motivation
* To study methods of collaborative learning and cognitive engagement
* To explain students’ attitudes towards collaborative learning

The main **task** of the research is:

* To find out if team work promotes motivation or not
* To decide if motivation can lead to cognitive engagement
1. CURRENT SITUATION AND THE CONTEXT OF RESEARCH

At “Ayb” high school students are mainly of good intellectual and academic skills, they are mostly motivated to gain quality knowledge and enter well-known universities worldwide. However, there are difficulties with engagement in the learning process sometimes, which can relate to being exhausted of a heavy school program, lack of interest towards the topics in the course books and even the fact that 12th graders, in particular, finish their admission process for the university at the beginning of the year, doesn’t allow them to concentrate on studies. Another problem with my 11th graders is that there are a few students, who are reluctant to express opinions, avoid working in teams as they feel insecure to make mistakes or just are unable to produce extended speech.

I have conducted my research in the context of 11th and 12th graders. The main problem is the lack of motivation towards specific tasks, such as giving opinion, which may be limited to short answers, collaborating with each other which is mainly demonstrated by the reluctance to work with each other and in some cases lack of cognitive involvement.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Those strategies that are based on student collaboration provide numerous benefits.

When collaborating, students learn to handle controversy and different perspectives while working on a task and this fosters deep cognitive learning (Stobaugh, 2019).Another benefit of collaboration is the increased level of student engagement. Teacher Gareth Hancox (as cited in Greenberg & Nilssen, 2014) in The Role of Education in Building Soft Skills, states: “If you watch two learners working on something together, you see that their learning is deeper”.

The student ownership of learning and active participation are results of collaboration. Collaboration implies that the final result is a better outcome and improved student learning.

Educators Ron Ritchhart, Mark Church, and Karin Morrison (2011) ( as cited in in Rebecca Stobaugh- Fifty Strategies to Boost Cognitive Engagement (2019)) propose that students engage in authentic intellectual activity by “solving problems, making decisions, and developing new understanding using the methods and tools of the discipline “Working cooperatively in teams is a wonderful experience for students which provides opportunities for students to develop social and life skills that will serve them well throughout life” (Kagan 2009, p. 165).

When you peek into a cooperative learning classroom, the first thing you notice is the seating arrangement. Students are seated in teams which is a typical characteristic of cooperative learning. Teams promote strong bonds between students, facilitate interaction over curriculum, and improve learning (Kagan, 2019).

There are 4 types of teams-Heterogeneous, homogeneous, random and student-selected. Each type of team has positives and negatives (Kagan, 2019).

In this research heterogeneous and random types have been applied.

1. METHODOLOGY

As Davidson and Major ((2014) as cited in Elizabeth G., 2016 ) acknowledged, the research supporting collaborative learning tends to be qualitative and descriptive, rather than quantitative and statistics-driven, because the collaborative learning model originated in the humanities.

Taken this into account, I will describe the methods I have applied with the students.

Grade 11 and grade 12 students have taken part in my experiment. I have applied 3 methods of team work with them.

*Method 1: Round Robin[[1]](#footnote-1)*

The students were sitting according to Round Robin method.The students were to discuss “Animal farm” by G. Orwell and carry out deep analysis.

There are students who sometimes find it difficult to structure a speech and fit into the given time frame. As the topic was quite challenging, not all the students were motivated to express opinions during the previous lessons. The Time Round Robin method itself hinders those students from laying back and requires immediate involvement.[[2]](#footnote-2)

*Method 2: Station Rotation*

The students were to revise the unit in order to get ready for the module test. The revision has always been fun during our lessons, however, it lacked productivity as sometimes students may get distracted and not focus on the given task, even the games usually applied for revisions do not always satisfy their interests and require cognitive involvement.Based on this method the students were working in small heterogeneous groups mingling around the classroom and working on various tasks at each table. The 4 aspects of the language were covered during this activity[[3]](#footnote-3)

*Method 3: Spider web[[4]](#footnote-4)*

This is a speaking lesson based on a Spider web method as a team building tool. The students loved the method and gave positive feedback. The method required 100% of cognitive engagement and contribution, where each student had an important role.[[5]](#footnote-5)

1. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

*Method 1*

The feedback for this activity was received through exit tickets. Based on their feedback, the most important thing they gained out of the activity was the productive team work which had a nice outcome in the form of a persuasive speech. They found really important and effective to collaborate by the suggested method as they had equal opportunities to speak and were not shy to speak up inside the groups.

*Table 1*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of students | 14 |
| **Some answers by students on 3 things that they found important** | “I loved the team work, when we were speaking in turns” |
| “It was important for me that the others were listening to me” |
| “ I don’t like the book and it is hard for me to discuss this topic, I have no idea about this period in Russia, so it was important for me to listen to other’s opinions and have a chance to learn from their thoughts, I liked today’s discussion” |
| I liked everything, especially Shushik’s final speech. It was important to feel comfortable while working together” |

*Method 2*

The “Station Rotation” ensured equal participation of each student, offered variety and movement around the classroom. This created a lot of enthusiasm and the students felt comfortable to work with their groups, make mistakes, be corrected and directed by their friends.

The reactions at the end were quite positive: they reacted with a positive emotion on polleverywhere. com

***Question 1: How do you rate your knowledge on the unit?***

***Question 2: What are you still wondering about?***

Based on the rating, only 2 students were less happy and only one student gave neutral response. The revision exercise was quite successful as they were all equally involved and motivated enough to test their knowledge in this setting.

Total number of students: 15

Satisfied Unhappy Neutral

*Method 3*

At the beginning of the lesson the students completed a survey by Google forms, where most of them had negative associations with team work.Despite this they really liked the method and were fully involved in the process. They enjoyed the process and stated about that. At the end of the lesson they completed Google forms in order to give feedback on the activity. All the comments were positive.

***Pretest questions and some of the answers***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Do you think team work motivates you?** | **Is that easy to express thoughts while working in a team?** **Do you feel more comfortable in a team?**  |
| I believe that team work motivates me, if people in my team members are motivated as well. | I can express my thoughts in a team, but I think it is easier for me to work individually. |
| No | I feel bullied |
| It depends on the team. There are teams that I don't want to work in and can't express my thoughts, but when the teacher let's us choose the team I feel more motivated because I work with people that I want to and I can. | I feel comfortable working both alone and in a team. |
| In some cases yes but others no, because while working in group sometimes I feel myself responsible for doing job, however sometimes I just don't integrate at that work. | It doesn't make any significant difference in expressing my thoughts. |
| Sometimes yes because you don't want to let your teammates down as it affects their grades, too. | No, it's not |

**Number of students surveyed: 15**

**Post test survey**

**Number of students: 15**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***How did you like this kind of team work? Did it change your initial attitude towards team work?*** | ***How would you rate this kind of team work?*** |
| I liked it very much.  | 5 |
| Yes, it was funny and entertaining. Also it was interesting for everyone. | 5 |
| As for me, this teamwork was quite effective, as we learned new things from our teammates as well. Also, we received feedback from them, which, I think, is a good way to work on yourself. | 5 |

1. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS
2. As for the first method, i.e. Round Robin, the students liked the procedure as the discussion questions were more general rather than based only on the plot of the book. Round Robin method was quite helpful in this regard as the students were reluctant to speak on the topic and tensed team work ensured active involvement into the procedure.
3. As the groups were heterogeneous, leading students seemed to be satisfied with their roles giving instructions and directions, the week students seemed to feel encouraged and supported. The lesson was noisy enough, however it didn’t hinder the healthy working environment, as everybody was obsessed with the idea to fit into time limit.
4. The students were open for any suggestion and welcomed the criticism by their friends and me. The feedback was really positive, so this kind of activity will definitely be an undeniable part of our curriculum. The best part of this activity is that it ensures 100 % cognitive engagement.
5. CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

In my opinion, the experiment was a success as those 3 team working methods worked well and the students’ attitude towards team work has already got another shape. My conclusion is the following:

* An effective and well-structured team work boosts motivation towards learning
* Motivation leads to cognitive engagement
* Team work creates secure environment for reluctant and shy learners
* Team work develops trust and positive attitude towards the team and the lesson
* It is necessary to have teams set their own goals so they are intrinsically motivated to reach their targets

However, this research has been carried out within extremely short period of time and the results may alter if I go on. On the whole, these 3 methods proved to be successful as the level of the students’ enthusiasm, motivation and involvement has remarkably increased.

Previously, I have carried out a lot of team work and this is not the first time I have applied collaborative learning, but the thing is that some of my previous methods didn’t work as they were not well-structured and goal-oriented. I still have some doubts as some of the students may stay reluctant at times, though their intrinsic motivation to join team works have increased.

All in all, I hope that a detailed and well-thought team work will promote motivation in the classroom, the students will involve in the learning procedure with pleasure and delight and the lesson will flow.

“The flow is being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you’re using your skills to the utmost.”

 ( Csikszentmihalyi,as cited in Kagan, 2019)

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1. See Annex 1 for the lesson plan [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See annex 2 for the feedback form [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See annex 3 for the lesson plan [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See Annex 4 for the lesson plan [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See annex 5 for the rubric [↑](#footnote-ref-5)