

Motivating Adult and Young Learners for Effective Collaborative Learning in EFL Classrooms: An Action Research.

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Introduction

- the social needs of the increase of English language learners, including young and adult ones
- a phenomenon of teachers' censuring their learners' passive and uncooperative participation
- a perceived lowering in EFL learning motivation, decreasing interest and achievement
- 'one of the issues that may affect learners' towards collaborative learning is the matter of age' (Harmer, 2002, p. 38)

Question

- How can the implementation of key innovative teaching strategies promoting learner motivation affect the EFL achievement in the context of collaborative classrooms?

Literature review

- 1. efficacy of motivation and motivating learners on collaborative learning
- 2. teacher-teacher and teacher-learner social professional relationship and teacher's identities
- 3. learner-learner interactional rapport and their identities

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- ‘the rights and duties of teachers and learners are related to power’ (Thanasoulas, 2002, p. 1)
- ... ‘bring along their motivational beliefs, tendencies and goals that these will play a mediating role in their actual engagement in collaborative learning’ (Jarvela, Volet & Jarvenoja, 2010, p. 18)
- ‘motivational strategies refer to those motivational influences that are consciously exerted to achieve some systematic and enduring positive effect’ (Dornyei, 2001, p. 28)
- ... ‘based on meaningful, purposeful and internal satisfaction’... (Cacciattolo & McKenna, 2012, p. 59)

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- Arkoudis (2006), Davison (2006) & Chamberlin-Quinlisk (2010) assumed that teachers collaborate with peers through a professional relationship and a clear conceptualization of sharing tasks to encourage students' collaborative learning in an empathetic, relaxed, supportive and real-life environment.
- ... help students promote their socially constructed motivational self-regulation in acknowledging the new horizons of broad knowledge in a 'living life-world within their world view' (Cacciattolo & McKenna, 2012, p. 63)
- teacher's teaching and evaluating need to be in relation with 'broader notions of curriculum, rather than just methodology and materials'. (Davison, 2006, p. 456)

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- ... 'level and quality of social interactions' (Underwood, 2003, p. 320)
- ... 'an increasing interest in group-based learning' to raise the capabilities of problem-solving, reach a higher EFL achievement and promote their critical thinking and learning beliefs (Laister & Koubek, 2001, p. 2)

Methodology

- Qualitative case study
- Quantitative techniques
 - Triangulation data methods:
 - Interviews
 - Observations
 - Questionnaire surveys
 - Participants:
 - 20 learners of different ages from different social backgrounds
 - General English, elementary level, eight-week course

Procedure

- Learners' feelings and attitude towards collaborative learning activities were observed for the first two weeks → an initial questionnaire survey was conducted.
- Innovative teaching practices were appropriately implemented for the purpose of enhancing learners motivation and learning outcomes.
 - Employ language activators at the beginning of class time.
 - Build and maintain learners' own motivation
 - Design appropriate tasks based on real-life contexts
- After the implementation and observation, a follow-up questionnaire survey was carried out.
- Four learners were randomly chosen for interviews.

Findings

- Sources:
 - Questionnaire surveys (initial and follow-up)
 - Observations
 - Interviews (2 adults and 2 young learners)

Questionnaire surveys

Initial questionnaire survey

Elements	Answers	No. of respondents	Reasons
1. Feelings during lesson time	a. worried	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T is serious • Ss did not prepare the lessons in advance
	b. tense	8	
	c. nervous	5	
	d. comfortable	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T gives appropriate instruction and teaching techniques
2. Importance of pair/group work activities	a. very important	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn mutually
	b. important	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange ideas
	c. not important	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noisy • Pay no attention to the lessons
3. Learners' attitudes towards collaboratively participating in pair/group work learning activities	a. afraid	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not confident in speaking skill
	b. confused	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do not know how to express ideas fluently
	c. anxious	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The topic is unfamiliar.
	d. comfortable	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve learning skills • broaden knowledge

Questionnaire surveys

Initial questionnaire survey

Elements	Answers	No. of respondents	Reasons
4. Teacher's responses and feedback towards learners performance in class	a. too critical	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T was not often pleased with learners' answer and performance
	b. unsatisfied	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T seldom praised and encouraged learners
	c. useful	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T helped learners identify their errors
5. Learning a lot from adult or young learners? Why (not)?	a. yes	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn useful and interesting knowledge from the experienced adults • Learn active and productive learning styles from the young
	b. no	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults talked too much, sometimes did not focus on the lesson • Young ones often made noise and did not pay attention to the lesson

Questionnaire surveys

Initial questionnaire survey

Elements	Answers	No. of respondents	Reasons
6. Being interested in participating pair/work group in every lesson?	a. yes	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• share ideas and learn from partners
	b. no	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• boring activities and waste of time

Questionnaire surveys

Follow-up questionnaire survey

Elements	Answers	No. of respondents	Reasons
1. T's behaviors towards learners	a. very strict	0	
	b. strict	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not receive much care from T as expected
	c. open	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> T pays more attention to learners' feelings and attitudes
	d. friendly	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> T calls learners' names in informal conversations
2. Importance of pair/group work activities	a. very important	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> feel relaxed to collaborate with partners Young learners could learn useful knowledge and valuable experience from the elder.
	b. important	5	
	c. not important	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults could learn effective and positive learning styles from the younger.

Questionnaire surveys

Follow-up questionnaire survey

Elements	Answers	No. of respondents	Reasons
3. Learners' attitudes towards collaboratively participating in pair/group work learning activities	a. afraid	0	
	b. confused	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not prepare the lesson in advance lack confidence in public speaking skill
	c. confident	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be familiar with this kind of learning activities be excited and learn more new knowledge
	d. highly motivated	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> interesting and appropriate activities more praise and encouragement on learners' performance from T

Questionnaire surveys

Follow-up questionnaire survey

Elements	Answers	No. of respondents	Reasons
4. Useful learning activities	a. Communicating effectively with peers in groups	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practise speaking English regularly • promote learner autonomy in the process of language learning • actively and proactively participate in collaborative learning • improve learners' language competence
	b. Taking part in role play	7	
	c. Learning individually	0	

Questionnaire surveys

Follow-up questionnaire survey

Elements	Answers	No. of respondents	Reasons
5. Learning a lot from adult or young learners? Why (not)?	a. yes	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adults are experienced and help the young solve the problems efficiently.• Young learners are active, positive in giving smart answers• Young learners are sociable and helpful
	b. no	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some adults are passive and prefer to work individually.• Some younger learners are stubborn and prefer playing games to learning.

Questionnaire surveys

Follow-up questionnaire survey

Elements	Answers	No. of respondents	Reasons
6. Being interested in participating pair/work group in every lesson?	a. yes	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• feel more confident and motivated in English language learning• be more cooperative and active• improve language learning skills and broaden social knowledge
	b. no	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• These learning activities are difficult and sometimes noisy/

Observations

- adult learners' initial negative attitudes towards the strategies implemented
- gradually advocate collaborative learning activities
- conveniences of task-based learning
- enhance learners' autonomous learning
- partly improve learners' English language competence

Interviews

- learners' feelings towards language activators implemented at the beginning of class period
- which ways?
- learners' feelings towards collaborative learning activities
- learn from partners
- advantages and disadvantages of the strategies implemented

Discussion

- Language activators 'can help the teachers to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful'. (Kaka, 2008, p. 1)
- Adult and young learners' partly improving English language competence emphasized the essence of collaborative learning.
 - the popularity of CLT method
 - the significant role of ICT towards language learning

Conclusion

- To some extent, this was a success for the following reasons:
 - promote adult and young learners' motivation in engaging in collaborative learning
 - create a relaxing, active and effective learning environment
 - improve learners' outcome
 - assist T well prepare for further research and teaching practices application
- There were some limitations which should be considered.
 - learners' interests and needs
 - cultural elements
- ... 'the most important factor in second language acquisition success is motivation' ...
(Lightbown & Spada, 1999, p. 63)

Thank You!