

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Dr. Meena Prakash Kute,
Principal,
P.V.D.T. College of Education for Women,
S.N.D.T. Women's University,
Mumbai – 20.

Abstract :

Collaborative learning is based on different epistemological assumptions, and it has its home in social constructivism, collaborative learning occurs when students and teachers work together to create knowledge. It is a pedagogy that has at its center the assumption that the people make meaning together and that the process enriches and enlarges them. The closing decades of the twentieth century were exceptionally rich in producing a better understanding of the learning process.

Critical to our understanding of that process is the basic tenet of modern cognitive theory learners must be actively engaged in learning. Neurologists and cognitive scientists agree that people quite literally “build” their own minds through – out life by actively constructing the mental structures that connect and organize isolated bits of information. Much as we would like to think that we as teachers can ‘tell’ students what we have learned and thus transfer it into their heads efficiently and accurately, the evidence is clear that we cannot “transfer” our knowledge ready-made into student’s minds. Instead students must do the work of learning by actively making connections and organizing learning into meaningful concepts.

Introduction

Collaborative learning is an educational approach to teaching and learning which involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task or sometimes to create a product. Collaborative learning is based on the idea that learning is naturally a social act in which the participants talk among themselves. Through talk or interaction, the learning occurs. The interaction among subjects generates extra activities which trigger extra cognitive mechanisms, through collaborative learning. It focused on working with another, working with pairs or in small groups, one can achieve shared learning goals. In collaborative learning, all activities are designed and carried out through small interactive groups. It is based on different epistemological

assumptions. In view of Matthews, “collaborative learning occurs when students and teachers work together to create knowledge.”

Definition of collaborative learning

“Collaborative learning is a situation in which two or more people learn or attempt to learn something together, where members support and rely on each other to achieve an agreed-upon goal.”

It is based on the model that knowledge can be created within a population where members actively interact by sharing experiences and take on asymmetry roles. It is an umbrella term for a variety of approaches, education that involves joint intellectual efforts done by students or students and teachers. Every classroom is the best place to develop a team-building skill with collaborative learning.

Essential components of collaborative learning :

- 1. Intentional structure or design** – Teachers structure intentional learning activities for students. This can be done by selecting from a range of pre-structured activities. Teachers may plan by creating their own structures, but the focus is always on intentional design or structure of learning activities.
- 2. Collaborative work** – To achieve shared learning goals, the class is organized to work in pairs or small groups. This kind of activity is followed in other terms like co-operative learning, team learning, group learning etc. instead of learning by working alone, in group the students can learn collaboratively.
- 3. Co-laboring** – Co-laboring is an important feature of collaborative learning. Collaborative means to co-labor. All participants in the group must engage actively in working together toward the stated objectives.
- 4. Meaningful learning** – The task assigned to the groups must be structured to accomplish the learning objectives of the course or subject. The participants do the assignment collaboratively. They increase their knowledge or deepen their understanding of the subject, topic or course-curriculum.
- 5. Positive Interdependence** – The participants have two responsibilities. They learn the assigned material and they have to ensure that all the members of the group learn the material. They must be sure that they are linked with group mates in such a way that they cannot succeed unless all the participants do or that they must co-ordinate their efforts to complete a task.
- 6. Individual Accountability** – The teacher expects that how much efforts each member is

contributing to the group's work. Thus the contribution of each individual is recognised by the groups. Teachers has to provide feedback to the groups.

7. **Face to Face Interaction** – Unless there is positive interdependence, successful interaction will not take place in group. All the participants act face to face discussions in groups.
8. **Group Processing** – The main purpose of group processing is to enhance the effectiveness of collaborative work. So group members have to set a goal. After completing their given assignment, they have to check whether the goal is achieved. Otherwise they identify changes to work more effectively.
9. **Use of Social Skills** – Trusting Co-operativeness are the essential qualities for collaborative learning. The students should interact in group accurately and unambiguously. They should accept all the members in group and support each other. If there are any conflicts in group, they must resolve it constructively with efforts. They must be ready to give and take help to each other.
10. **Open minded discussion** – The discussion plays an important role in collaborative learning. Group work makes learner to share his/her assigned role. Generally in traditional classroom, students do not get opportunity to discuss among themselves on any topic or subject. They are never allowed to gain the knowledge by their own efforts. They are not allowed to study in a meaningful group with open minded discussion. But through collaborative learning students play important role in learning process.

Techniques of Collaborative Learning :

The following techniques add meaningful, effective learning. It develops many learning skills and contribute in personality development.

They are as follow –

1. Round Table Technique
2. Focused Listing
3. Structured Problem Solving
4. Structured Learning Team Group Roles
5. Send a problem
6. Planning etc.

Conclusions :

Through these techniques the teacher must be aware of planning of collaborative learning, careful explanation to the class, how the groups will operate and how the students will be graded. The teacher has to give the students the skills, which they need to succeed in groups.

Skills developed among students during collaborative learning, It develops higher level thinking skills. It promotes student teacher interaction and familiarity, It increases students retention, builds self-esteem, enhances students satisfaction with the learning experiences, develops oral communication skills, develops social interaction skills, promotes positive race relations, creates an environment of active involved exploratory learning, uses team approach to problem solving. Thus collaborative learning is one of the best devices for teaching-learning effectively.

References :

1. Co-operative learning (1992), U.S. Dept of Education office of Research.
2. M. H. Siddiqui (2008), Educational Technology, New Delhi, APH Publishing Corporation.
3. R. C. Mishra (2009), Teaching of information Technology, New Delhi, APH Publishing corporation.
4. Smith(1996), The instructional use of small groups – a report.
5. Tapkeer Dattatraya, Londhe G. (2009), New Trends in Education, Nityanutan Prakashan, Pune.

The logo for GOEIIRJ features a stylized globe in the background with a grid of latitude and longitude lines. Overlaid on the globe is the text "GOEIIRJ" in a large, bold, serif font. The letters are a light brown or tan color, and the "O" and "I" are slightly larger than the other letters.