



PARTICIPATORY TECHNIQUES TO ENCOURAGE AND EXPAND THE SCHOLARS' COLLABORATION IN ELT CLASSROOMS

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Abstract:

Participatory techniques are tools, resources and procedures within a given activity, which allows re-investigate and reflect on the practice of all those involved, without losing sight of the new advances in science and technology. The aim of this this research was to offer the teachers of English language some tools to surpass the difficulties that are characteristic of non-participatory methods. Particular recommendations of useful procedures were given with applied instances of activities that can be used in the beginning, intermediate and advanced levels. The students' learning difficulties and the potential education benefits were considered of primordial importance on suggesting methods and exercises

Keywords: participatory techniques, meeting class, learning difficulties, teaching methods

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Introduction

Participatory techniques according to Gonzalez, Nidia (1994), are resources and procedures that within methodology dialectic allow rethink the practice of the participants, permitting to extract from it creative scientific knowledge and educational development

The application of group work to education in recent decades has shown an increasing trend, which has largely been driven by the immediate effects of this form of teaching, shown on individual and group development. Group techniques have come has to respond to that urgent call for educators to have a set of tools that allows them to make changes in their immediate practice. Since late last century, the teaching has been insisting on the use of new methods that adhere to learning for social education,

including teaching in groups, work groups. From the theoretical and methodological approaches have been developed different educational models that emphasize the role of the group, not only as a means, a means for activating teaching, but also as a valuable instrument of action of a new education which implies both growth and learning and communication. The teacher-student and student-student interaction are avenues for intervention subject-subject, the mediating role the imitative process transmission or individual.

Participatory techniques are to be regarded as instruments, as tools that encourage reflection and expression of all participants. To choose the best, we must take into account the specific topic that is going to work, the level of depth to which you want to reach, and type of participants who carried out the process. The use of these techniques contributes to:

- avoid easy accepting the known;
- change approaches and try other alternatives;
- stimulate creativity and generate new ideas;
- contribute on learning to recognize problems and to discover them;
- correct the attitude of being afraid of losing, failing and facilitates the accepting of an error;
- encourage the use of sense of humor or a more relaxed approach;
- helps on discovering new relationships;
- remove the habit of trying to logically explain any facts;
- low resistance to participation;
- greater curiosity about what is done;
- more independence and discipline;
- an increased use of imagination.

When choosing a technique it must be clear what objectives should considered as target. One only technique usually is not enough to work a theme or content. It should always be accompanied by others that allow a methodical and systematic deepening. It is important to locate the features of each technique: its possibilities and limits. The method must be accessible to all and should be stimulating for student's creativity. No very technique we know it is appropriate o any situation, but knowing its recommendations and uses at the right time will contribute substantially to a successful teacher-student and student-teacher interaction.

The participatory techniques play an important role in the development of class meetings. In the development of this work criteria of different authors about how to use, its foundation and its role in development are given creativity. The groups often arise spontaneously within the home, school and community in which we perform as individuals and can be formed for the development of different activities such as work,

study, play and socialize. It is for this reason that the groups have been studied from different viewpoints by psychologists, educators and other professionals, allowing to form the so - called theory of groups as well as its concept and fundamental characteristics.

According to these approaches Bermudez et al. (2002) define the group as a group of people who interact directly with each other for a relatively stable weather, to achieve certain goals, by performing a task.

This concept allows to demonstrate the importance of the group for the development of the personality and to achieve common objectives, on the basis of activity and communication in a different way of when its members possess distinct identities. On the other hand, when talking about the techniques of dynamics is necessary group, consider some of the fundamental aspects of group dynamics understood as ... the process and result of the interaction of all the factors that constitute the group situation. (Bermudez and col.2002)

Associated with this, the authors quoted refer to the need to address other basics including this author considers essential for the implementation of participatory techniques such as: the task, as the purpose and process of learning, thematic, which refers to content that is being analysed in the group, and of course the art that expresses as the facilitator is able to organize the subject to work it, that procedures, means and strategies used to achieve the objectives.

The Class Meeting

The meeting class is defined as teaching organizational form characterized by contact between teachers and students in which necessary guidelines are offered to study the topic, new contents are explained program of the subject, it explores into the essential aspects of the topic, doubts are clarified, evaluated and independent study of students controlled and tasks are indicated teachers for the next meeting. It is not a traditional or lecture, but a type of teaching that encourages the controversy, the lively and open discussion to address the problems posed by the topic to study and deepen the content. Each meeting takes place through two moments.

The first one devoted to the discussion, clarification of doubts and assessment of the subject that was oriented in the previous meeting. The second is dedicated to guide the subject shall discuss and evaluate at the next meeting. The methodological structure of every moment responds to the established pair traditional classes (introduction development and conclusions).

The following examples are illustrative regarding the wide choice of participating methods and techniques that could be successfully implemented on the daily English Language Teaching routines:

a) Through questions

Patterns question the teacher has previously written on the blackboard are submitted. The questions must be direct and individually, students walk around the classroom asking questions while the teacher checks the activity, answer questions, assists in the preparation of the activities and makes corrections.

b) The bottle

The group is organized in a circle, a student presents, spin the bottle and when the student will match that required it to stop, the teacher can provide indications which may be questions, words, etc..

c) Swinger

Students exchanged personal information and then a student presents and explains to the other students the information they acquired. The information can be gradually oriented to imposed topics and can wear a multitude of forms: descriptive, comparative, analytical, etc..

d) Who is it?

It uses adjectives describing personality traits, physical characteristics; the teacher distributes bits of paper and students will write anonymously characteristics of people in the classroom, then try to guess who is the person described.

e) Short speech

The students must manage a description or presentation of a person, a fact, an idea or a characteristic of a product thru a self-made short speech. The topic and the structure of the speech can be a free choice, then restricted to a specific field of form and at the end imposed. Alternatively, the other students may participate with commentaries, opinions, questions at the end of the presentation. A personalized distribution of more\less competitive students as speakers and audience could improve the quality of the interactions.

f) A hidden\imaginary object

Each student brings a covered object. The others try to guess, from a description that could be made more difficult by restricting or emphasizing the use of certain properties, (the color or form property cannot be used). Alternatively, the material objects can be replaced with abstract ones, continuing with things located outside the classroom. The exercise stimulates the personal arsenal of description tools as well as the capacity of the listener to use a description.

g) Live Story

The teacher starts to tell a story that stop at any point and pupils will continue, various and alternative versions can be made, it can provide topics that need a deeper consideration, some of them can be assigned as homework. It may starts

with a free continuation of the story, but in time, some of happenings which follow can be imposed.

h) The market/shop

This exercise features the shopkeeper and the customer, it is appropriate to practice vocabulary related to food, clothing, quantities and prices. The difficulty of the exercise may be easily controlled by simulating situations that need negotiation or any other specific circumstance.

i) Common event description

The students must prepare the description of a common event happened more or less recently on the community. On presenting it the benefits will be sensibly augmented by other students knowledge and/or opinion on the event. As a possibly alternative that will capture the attention of audience is choosing an event that present general interest and only a few of the present students attended it.

j) Abstracting a larger story / adding details on an short one

Both exercises are very stimulating on developing very useful communication skills. The larger story can be a generally known one or one that represent an interesting point for the class. The interest of the short story depends largely on the ability of adding audience-attracting details.

Conclusions

Participatory techniques were described, as well as different types of activities that ensure student interaction and promote the success of teaching - learning. This allowed the development of different life skills for everyday communication and this constituted one of the main efforts of the language teacher in the classroom. Thus, it was possible to increase the motivation to make the active learning which influenced the quality of teaching and mastery of the objectives to achieve.

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