



CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING AT TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTE: AN EXPERIMENT

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Abstract

UNESCO's international commission on education for 21st century (1996) had tried to visualize the future framework of education and its responsibilities. Its report "Learning – The Treasure Within" (1996) emphasized on four pillars of education.

1. Learning to know, 2. Learning to do, 3. Learning to live together, 4. Learning to be.

The commission headed by Jacques Delor, suggested the direction of the education in future. Through these four pillars, the commission has shown the role of education in the coming time. i.e. to inculcate life long learning skills, to train for constructive behavior, to enable for social life and to prepare as a human being. Co-operative learning definitely is going to help to prepare a human being as Jacques Delor has mentioned above.

This paper deals with the concept of cooperative learning, role of teacher and students in cooperative learning, steps involved in cooperative learning in brief, group formation techniques, an experiment carried in Azad College of Education, Satara; In the last part of paper the benefits for students as well teachers of using this strategy are given.

Key Words : Co-operative Learning, Pair- Discussion- Share

Introduction:

It is rightly said that change is the only constant thing in the world. Every three to five years, there appears on horizon a new concept, theory or practice which demands renewal of knowledge or skills. Those who have developed the habit to keep pace with the change are always fresh in their approach and attitude. Others 'take it easy'. But that would not help hereafter due to globalization. We shall have to be on our toes. That's why we thought of using this new learning technique in the B. Ed. Class.

The process of globalization started from implementation of GATT in 1996. Coincidentally, UNESCO's international commission on education for 21st century (1996) had tried to visualize the future framework of education and its responsibilities. Its report "Learning – The Treasure Within" (1996) emphasized on four pillars of education.

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The commission headed by Jacques Delor, suggested the direction of the education in future. Through these four pillars, the commission has shown the role of education in the coming time. i.e. to inculcate life long learning skills, to train for constructive behavior, to enable for social life and to prepare as a human being. Co-operative learning definitely is going to help to prepare a human being as Jacques Delor has mentioned above. Cooperation is becoming more and more important in many parts of the world. More and



more people are coming to understand that we all live in a world where people must help each other.

Among the universal human values are cooperation, unity, peacefulness, harmony and the pursuit of knowledge. Moral development, stressing such universal human values, must have a central position in our school time tables and programs.

Concept of Cooperative learning:

Cooperative learning is a new and better way for learners to learn and teachers to teach. Students help each other to learn in groups in a carefully thought out and controlled way.

Cooperative learning helps students to work and play together in unity and to develop better character. Students usually learn both faster and better through cooperative learning. There are three basic ways students can interact with each other as they learn: competitive learning, individual work and cooperative learning. Many research studies in various parts of the world show that higher achievements by students and improved social interactions take place through cooperative learning compared to competitive learning and individual work.

Management of class in cooperative learning:

Good cooperative learning management is very different from management and discipline in traditional classrooms.

- A) Role of teacher in cooperative learning class: Teachers need to develop themselves so they have more positive attitudes towards the students. This always results in higher achievement. There is 'Happy Talk', where positive comments are given to the students.
- B) Role of students in cooperative learning class: Self- discipline among the students is developed. Observe the class rules formulated by them.

Training steps involved in cooperative learning:

1. The quiet signal
2. Class rules
3. Positive attention
4. Group formation Tacts

Experiment in Azad College of Education, Satara:

This year the admission process took place till the end of August. So classes started regularly almost from 1st Sept. 2013. Sample selected: 80 students from one division. They were taught quiet signal, they practiced it for fifteen days .This signal was used to quiet down a noisy classroom and gain the student's attention.

After that they were guided to form the class rules. The rules formulated were:

- 1) Talk quietly with friends.
 - 2) Be regular in the class after the recess gets over.
 - 3) Help the other when they need our help.
 - 4) Give attention while others speak.
 - 5) Keep mobiles off.
- They were asked to note down the rules in their notebooks as well they were pasted in a place where every one could see them in the class.



Then, they were given the idea of how to give **Positive Attention**. Positive attention is showing the students that the teacher is happy about what they are doing in a positive way. The ways in which the teacher can give positive attention are- by smiling, by nodding approval, by giving rewards for good behavior or good work.

Benefits of positive attention- If the teacher pays attention to a student's good behavior, he will probably repeat it. Other students are observing it and will also learn the positive behavior.

Group formation: In cooperative learning many different structures are used. Structures are ways of organizing learning in the classroom. At different times the different thinking skill structures are used. They are as follows:

1. Pair discussion: Group Size- two students.
Steps- 1. Teacher asks a question.
 2. Students discuss with their partners.
2. Pair- Discussion- Share: Group Size- two students.
Steps- 1. Teacher asks a question.
 2. Students discuss the question.
 3. Teacher asks some students to share what they discussed.
3. Think- Pair-Share: Group Size- two students.
Steps- 1. Teacher asks a question.
 2. Students think quietly.
 3. Pair Discussion.
 4. Teacher asks some students to share what they discussed.
4. Pair – Discussion- Write- Share : Group Size- two students.
Steps- 1. Teacher asks a question
 2. Students discuss in their pairs.
 3. Pairs write their answers to the question.
 4. Teacher asks some students to share what they wrote.
5. Team Discussion. : Group Size- Four students.
Steps- 1. Teacher asks a question
 2. Students discuss with their teams.

Team discussion works basically the same as the Pair Discussion. The advantage is that with a larger number of students in a group, more ideas can be shared. The care should be taken that in a group one fast, two medium, and one slower learner be involved.

Topics Learned through the cooperative learning strategy in training institute-

Subject: Information Technology

Subunits: Unit VI- Introduction to Computers

1. Computer architecture (Block Diagram)
2. Use of computer in various fields.

Subunits: Unit VII- Computer and operating System

1. Input devices and output devices



2. Central Processing Unit
3. Memory and storage units of computer.

Advantages of using cooperative learning strategy in training institute are:

Topics above selected are easy to understand to the students. At least 50 % time is saved which was utilized for the hands on practice in the laboratory which again helped the students for better understanding.

Benefits to the student-teachers: 1. They became polite to each other. 2. Few pairs found that their counterpart became more caring towards him/her. 3. They became active listeners, 4. Started helping others when someone demanded so, 5. Many of the students have told that they never got chance to participate in the discussion, but due to this strategy they could express themselves and got some confidence. 6. Last but not the least, which almost all of them have decided to use this strategy in internship programme at the secondary level.

References:

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