THE IMPACT OF INTERACTIVE GROUP ACTIVITIES ON LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstract: In recent years, language education has shifted from traditional, teacher-centered methods to more dynamic, student-centered approaches. Among these, interactive group activities have gained significant attention for their ability to foster engagement, collaboration, and deeper language acquisition. The use of learning methods plays an important role and receives special attentions for a learner's life. We live in digital era, where everyone wants something efficient, effective, dynamic, fast and interactive. Traditionally, most of the learners have been acquiring information and knowledge through less involvement of learners whereby learners only sit and listen to the unfaltering lectures. In addition, learners will copy down the endless indescribable notes that have been written on the whiteboard.

Key words: language learning, education, interactive game, group activities, challenges and solution.

The Concept of Interactive Group Activities: Interactive group activities refer to collaborative tasks where students work together to achieve a common language-learning goal. These activities may include role-plays, group discussions, problem-solving tasks, games, debates, and projects. Learners have the chance to learn from their teachers and peers, enhance their language, process of acquiring knowledge as well as gather their thoughts and creating logical thoughts. Unlike passive learning,

they require active participation, critical thinking, and meaningful use of the target language.

Benefits of Interactive Group Activities

1. Improved Communication Skills: Group activities encourage learners to speak, listen, and respond in real-time, which enhances fluency and conversational ability. Learners become more confident in using the language for actual communication, rather than just rehearsing textbook phrases.

2. Increased Motivation and Engagement: Working with peers makes learning more enjoyable and less intimidating. Activities like games or storytelling foster a fun atmosphere that keeps learners motivated and attentive.

3. Cultural Exchange and Social Learning: In diverse classrooms, group activities provide a platform for cultural exchange and mutual learning. Students learn not only the language but also cultural norms and expressions, which are vital for real-world communication.

4. Development of Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills: Tasks such as debates or collaborative projects require learners to think critically and express their opinions logically, thereby expanding both language skills and cognitive abilities.

5. Enhanced Retention and Understanding: When students are actively involved in using the language, they are more likely to remember vocabulary, grammar rules, and expressions. Learning through practice leads to better retention compared to passive listening or memorization.

In overcoming the unsupportive classroom environment and passive learners, Interactive Language Learning Activities are implemented in current language teaching as it helps to improve learners' English-speaking ability. Speaking skills need to be enhanced with language activities through interactive learning as interactive learning activities provide opportunities for improvement are highly importance. In addition, interactive language learning activities encourage learners to speak their thoughts and ideas in many ways.

Examples of Effective Group Activities

- **Role-Plays**: Students act out real-life scenarios like ordering food, job interviews, or travel situations.

- **Group Discussions**: Small groups discuss a topic and present their ideas, practicing vocabulary and structures.

- **Language Games**: Games such as "20 Questions," "Charades," or "Taboo" help reinforce vocabulary and grammar in an engaging way.

- **Peer Teaching**: Students prepare and teach a topic to their classmates, reinforcing their own learning.

- **Project-Based Learning**: Groups work on a topic, such as making a video or designing a brochure, using the target language throughout the process.

Challenges and Solutions

Despite all advantages, interactive group activities can face several challenges:

- **Unequal Participation**: Some students may dominate the group, while others stay silent. Teachers can address this by assigning roles or monitoring groups.

- **Language Barriers**: Beginners may feel shy or lack the vocabulary to participate. Using visual aids and scaffolding can help.

- **Time Constraints**: Group activities can be time-consuming. Proper planning and time management are essential.

- **Off-Topic Behavior**: Students may switch to their native language. Clear rules and engaging tasks can keep them focused.

"Through the review of previous empirical research on the impact of interactive technologies on language education, we can infer that many types of technologies have positive impacts on most aspects of language education, but there are still a few exceptions left. Moreover, considering the inconsistent meta-analysis results of previous studies on certain types of interactive technologies mentioned in the introduction, we cannot fully affirm the positive role of interactive technologies in language learning. Therefore, based on the proposed null hypotheses, our research needs to integrate all types of interactive technologies and conduct data analysis to examine their roles in the field of language education."

Conclusion

Interactive group activities are important in enhancing language learning by making the process more engaging, communicative, and student-centered. They improve not only linguistic competence but also social and cognitive development. While there may be difficulties, the benefits of using group activities in language classrooms far outweigh the drawbacks. Educators should include a variety of interactive tasks to create a dynamic and inclusive learning environment that prepares learners for real-world communication. As a whole, interactive language learning activities improve learners' English-speaking ability. In correlation with the findings, participants agreed that by having self-confidence, suitable learning environment and motivation improved their English speaking communicatively. Moreover, these three factors improved through interactive language learning. Furthermore, it showed that interactive language learning activities provide the ways to improve English speaking as learners were able to experience real conversation when they were interacting with their classmates during the learning activities. However, some participants needed time to speak as they have had low self-confidence and it led to low motivation to speak English language. Teachers' support in conducting suitable interactive language learning activities during English lesson is proved to be important for improving learners' English-speaking ability.

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