

HOW DO COORDINATED LEARNING ACTIVITIES HELP STUDENTS IN A HETEROGENEOUS CLASSROOM? WHAT POSSIBLE PROBLEMS STUDENTS OF MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES FACE IN COMPLETING SUCH TASKS?

Coordinated or collaborative learning (CoL) is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves small groups of students working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. The students are independently responsible for their work, and the work of the group as a whole is also evaluated. Through CoL, learners get to learn from each other and even teach each other, and the role of the teacher is a facilitator. In a heterogeneous classroom, coordinated learning activities help students in numerous ways, some of which are mentioned below:

- a. CoL improves social competencies:
 - Respect for human differences
 - Awareness of equity and justice
 - Willingness to negotiate differences
 - Patience for orderly participation
 - Openness to others' ideas

- b. CoL improves self-esteem:
 - More interaction with peers
 - Promote each other's success
 - Appreciate each other's competences
 - Give accurate and more immediate feedback

- c. CoL builds positive relationships between majority and minority students:
 - Greater cross-cultural interactions
 - Greater group support
 - Greater generalization of social interactions

- d. CoL fosters leadership skills:
 - A Chance to be a leader
 - Improved initiative skills
 - Better ability to provide positive feedback
 - Better resistance to peer pressure

e. CoL increases student achievement

Learner autonomy

Higher individual achievement

Increased retention with active participation

More frequent higher-level reasoning, deeper-level understanding and critical thinking

Learning is often best achieved through conversation among students

There is a common misconception that the only way to learn something is by reading it in a textbook or listen to a lecture on it, and the only way to demonstrate that we have understood something is by taking a short-answer test or maybe sometimes along with an essay question. Everything can be taught in more than one way, and anything that has been understood can be shown in more than one way. This is where Howard Gardner's (1983) Theory of Multiple Intelligences come into play.

- i. Linguistic intelligence
- ii. Logical-mathematical intelligence
- iii. Musical intelligence
- iv. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence
- v. Spatial intelligence
- vi. Interpersonal intelligence
- vii. Intrapersonal intelligence

Teachers can use multiple intelligences theory in CoL in dividing the groups. If students are divided into groups based on similar intelligences, they could benefit from it helping each other as they understood and appreciated each other's intelligences and could use techniques that enhanced their intelligence. But if the students are divided into groups based on different intelligences, there might be a conflict of intelligences and the learning outcome could end poorly.

A WRITING LESSON OF 20 MINUTES THAT FOCUSES ON COORDINATED LEARNING

Time: 20 minutes (min.)

Class: English

Language Focus: Writing

Topic: Animals

Teaching method: Coordinated Learning

Student level: Intermediate

Number of students: 20

Objectives: To teach students how to produce short written discourse by coordinating and collaborating with their peers in class.

Activity: 4 minds – 1 text

The teacher will divide the class into groups of 4 (5 groups for 20 students). This coordinated writing requires the students to research different aspects of one topic and then collate their findings to produce one piece of content. For example, have each group choose an animal to research from different sources using their cell phones or other gadgets, like the elephant. Each student chooses what he/she will investigate, whether it is the animal's habitat, eating habits, or characteristics. Students then work together to write one paper on the elephant. Give 5 minutes for the students to research, then 10 minutes for them to decide who writes before whom to have a cohesive text, and then in the last 5 minutes, the teacher discuss each text to the whole class.