



THINK PAIR AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY

Dr. B. NAGAMANI

Associate Professor of English
Geetanjali College of Engineering & Technology
Cheeryala, Keesara, Hyderabad.



Dr. B. NAGAMANI

ABSTRACT

Language games play a pivotal role in infusing interest among the learners. Teachers of English utilize all the available resources to make learning both enriching and appealing. They search for journals, books and internet to make teaching- learning process effective. They make necessary changes to the gathered material to suit the classroom environment and the needs of their students. Incorporating games in classroom teaching makes learning congenial and more so learner-centered. In the constant search to give the best to their students to improve their language skills, the teachers can take students into confidence and motivate them to design various games and activities.

Active learning environment has to be created in the English classroom to make the students participate, learn and perform. It is scientifically proved that activity based teaching enhances learning to the maximum. When both teachers and the taught work together, language learning needs of the students are fulfilled in a better manner and the classroom atmosphere is lively, creative and enthusiastic.

Key Words: Active learning, learner-centered, congenial, appealing

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INTRODUCTION

Globalization has increased opportunities to excel in the chosen fields and also the necessity to be more creative. It laid greater emphasis on language learning. Creativity is a recognized need to withstand tough competition among the peers in global market. The focus on creativity can be through continuous nurturing by the teachers. With this strong conviction, students are given an opportunity to design various activities in the English Language Skills Lab. In this process the think pair collaborative learning technique is usefully exploited. It caters to different levels of learners and size of the class is not a constraint. Students brainstorm and follow three distinctive steps to fulfill the task taken up.

Think: Students think independently to design a language game.

Collaborate: Later they are grouped into pairs to discuss and mull over the thoughts of themselves and others.

Share and Implement: Students share their ideas, refine them and plan meticulously to conduct the activity. This technique gives them many opportunities to learn, share, participate and implement their ideas. For this, students need abundant opportunities to talk in linguistically enriched environment.

This think, pair and collaborative learning develops learners'

- Inter-personal skills
- Analytical skills

- Organizing skills.
- Learn to reject somebody's ideas politely.

In addition, students' self-esteem will be boosted. They learn to think out of the box, respect others' ideas. Higher order thinking skills are developed. They work in a learner-centered class rooms and learner is accorded autonomy to create something constructive.

Methodology Adopted

The students are divided into groups based on the strength of the class. They were given one week's time to prepare and design language games and activities. They were also instructed to inform the teacher about the material they need to design and conduct the games. Students have asked for charts, markers, sketch pens and projector. Eventually, six language games/ activities have been designed by the students.

Alfa bash

Round -1

The first round is an eliminating round. A logo is designed. Learners are expected to identify the word in the logo within 20 seconds, to be qualified to enter the second round.

Round 2

Five idioms are given for which the participants have to write the meaning and frame a sentence using each idiom. The participants have to adhere to the time limit of five minutes.

Round 3

Participants are shown a list of 4 words, out of which three words will have the same meaning and one word has different meaning. They have to find the odd one out. Time limit is three minutes. Clearing the task in 3 minutes is mandatory to go for further round.

Round 4

A headline, particular paragraph or article is given to the participants. Certain cue words are provided and the participant has to find and write the particular sentence from the article. Qualified participants will move to the last round. The person who completes the task in one minute would be eligible to go to 5th round.

Round 5

A topic will be announced to the participants on the spot. They need to write their views on the given

topic without any grammatical ambiguity. Time limit is 15 minutes and the word limit is 75-100 words. The qualifier is the winner of the game.

Skills tested

- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Time Management
- *Interpreting Skill*
- Writing

Cryptogram

Round 1

Slogans are displayed, Speeches and Ad tunes are played. The participants should associate the slogan with either the person or tune and guess the person or tune accordingly. The maximum time limit is one minute.

Round -2

Blurred images of cartoon characters, general images are shown and the participants should guess them within 3 minutes to go to 3rd round.

Round 3

Content and image related slides are shown to the participants. At the end they need to write the sequence of the shown slides. The slides are shown twice and the participants have 5 minutes to recollect and write the sequence.

Skills Tested

- Knowledge of various themes.
- Ability to recollect

Wrango Pic

Round 1

Jumbled sentences are displayed and the participants should arrange them in an order. Maximum 10 sentences should be written in five minutes.

Round 2

A slide containing the Combination of four pictures is displayed on the screen. The collage is shown for two minutes. They need to guess the word from the collage. Time limit is five minutes.

Round 3

A meaningful sentence is given. The participants should substitute the sentence with one word.

Skills Tested

- arranging the sentences in a logical sequence
- Vocabulary/ one word substitutes

- synthesize

So You Think You Can Talk (Modified JAM)

This event is to test the attentive skills of all participants. Though it looks simple, it is quite intriguing.

The game has five players. The moderator conducts the Modified JAM

The event starts with the moderator asking the player to clap. There are certain rules to be followed by the players. The player, who claps first, starts the event. If the player who is speaking violates any of these rules, the players, other than the speaker can raise an objection with the moderator. If the moderator finds the objection valid, then the player who raised the objection can continue talking. All of them can speak for a minute

Rules of the game

- Moderator's decision is final.
- No repetition
- No player can say the same ideas of the other speaker.
- When the moderator asks the player to start, he/she must start speaking immediately. Any delay in speaking is objectionable.
- No pauses
- No grammatical errors.

Skills Tested

Active Listening

Speaking

Spontaneity

No hesitation

Speak a-thon

Round 1

It is one minute marathon to test the participant's spontaneity, speed, language of speaking and perception of the given picture. The participants will be shown a couple of pictures, out of which they have to select one and speak about it for a minute

Rules

- Time plays a crucial role, so participants should be swift.
- The participants will be given 10 seconds to choose the picture.
- Only 60 seconds will be given to each participant to speak.

- The criteria for assessment are, the body language, fluency, confidence and content.

Round 2 This round includes two kinds of debate. Character debate and Face off.

Character Debate

In this, the participant needs to impersonate the character given to them and debate accordingly, convincing the other participants to select the better one.

Rules

- The duration of the debate is 2 minutes.
- They will be judged on the content, vocabulary, confidence, body language and presence of mind.
- Cross talks lead to negative marks.

The Face Off

The top contestants are eligible for this face off which is an intense debate wherein the participants need to switch their roles on a clap.

Rules

- Duration of face-off is 2 minutes.
- Cross talks would lead to negative marks.

Skills Tested

The participants are assessed on the body language, fluency, vocabulary, presence of mind, confidence, content and spontaneity.

Spin a Yarn.

Students are divided into groups based on the strength of the class. Each group is given a hypothetical statement. Hypothetical statements given will have scope to enhance students' creativity and articulative abilities. For instance "a night in the forest..." Naturally every member in the group comes up with a new idea and the group selects one good idea and reaches to a consensus. Students then brainstorm on different themes that help them to complete the story that is woven around the given topic sentence and the concluding part of the story is most often creative with an unexpected twist. Students' imagination go wild and as a result they think out of the box. The onus is on the students and this responsibility generates interest in them to participate.

One student in a group begins the activity and continues to speak for some time and stops. The next speaker continues the narration from where the first speaker stopped and the chain continues.

Every member in the group contributes his or her might. This activity helps the learners to augment their speaking skills with the right language and appropriate expressions. All the groups complete their presentation. There is always a scope for necessary modifications to the game depending on the responses from the students.

Skills Tested

Ability to speak with right intonation and tone.

Narrative skills

Listening: The other groups are also active participants for the simple reason that they may be asked to determine various expressions used by their peers, appropriateness of language in accordance with the context

Writing: As the students brainstorm on different aspects for the given sentence, it helps them in arranging their thoughts in a logical sequence and this helps them to understand clearly the role of coherence in developing writing skills clubbed with clarity of thought and expression

Reading Skills: Reading with expressions with correct punctuation is an essential skill that has to be mastered by all second language learners. This activity helps the learners to read their written script with expressions that create interest in the audience.

Evaluation Pattern: Students are judged primarily on their creativity, speaking with right intonation, clarity of thought in writing and reading with expression.

Creativity is an essential ingredient, especially in English class. No two individuals think alike. As a result there are number of creative ideas and activities that can be designed and conducted by students. This facilitates learning with less strain. Creativity is an important key to success in a rapidly changing and highly competitive market. The activities designed by the students help them in improving the team spirit. It also teaches how to brainstorm on a particular topic or a problem and propose a solution. Working in teams and problem solving are the two main aspects here.

Role of the teacher: The teacher assumes multifarious roles. The teacher is a semblance of facilitator, mentor, motivator, and moderator.

Learning outcomes: The major premise of any language teaching is to emphasize the point that learners are dynamic, active and never passive. If the student is given opportunities to learn and explore, or vice versa, an optimum learning environment is created and learning becomes joyful and interesting. When learners design language games and activities, it gives them hands-on experience. These opportunities widen the learners' perspective. They enable the learners to strengthen their team building and team working skills. They also cultivate creativity and lateral thinking. Most of the activities that are performed as part of language learning demands learners' presence of mind.

Conclusion

The students conducted the games with enthusiasm. The participants also participated in the games designed by their classmates. It was altogether a different exposure for them. Finally the three hours spent in the language lab was a perfect example for Think pair and Collaborative learning.

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