COOPERATIVE APPROACH IN THE LEARNER-CENTERED INSTRUCTION

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“Two heads are better than one.” This saying pertains that two or more ideas will create a more profitable result. Students in the new millennium enjoy functioning independently but they also enjoy functioning interdependently because most of the students prefer to work collaboratively. Through this collaboration, students are able to share their knowledge, talents or skills which may be useful to the activity of the group.

Cooperative learning is an instruction that involves students working in teams to accomplish a common goal, under condition that include positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face interaction, appropriate use of collaborative skills and group processing.

Promoting positive interdependence is one of the core elements of cooperative learning. It is important that every member of the group know their respective roles to avoid the monopolization of task. The group may assign such roles to team members like group coordinator, secretary, recorder, checker and other significant roles.

This approach will also provide individual accountability since every member has his own task to do. Moreover, this activity will provide them a sense of interaction with their co-members that will create a harmonious relationship or rapport and will lead to meaningful yet enjoyable learning experiences.

In developing the students’ teamwork skills, first we need to establish team policies and expectations for them to be guided accordingly. Second, it is necessary to keep the groups intact for at least a month or a grading period because it takes time to build teamwork. Third, it is also needed to provide periodic self-assessment of team functioning how well we are meeting our goals and expectations. What areas need improvement.

Aside from the abovementioned ways to develop teamwork skills we need to give our students tools for managing conflict. Caution them that dealing with conflicts quickly and rationally can avoid later serious problems that are almost certain to arise if they attempt to ignore the conflicts.

This approach to teaching is really useful to facilitate meaningful learning especially in our modern time. Students nowadays demand for different teaching approaches, methodologies and strategies.

There are several reasons why cooperative learning works as well as it does. First is the idea that students learn more by doing something active than by simply watching and listening. This has long been known to both psychologist and teachers. Moreover, cooperation enhances learning in several way. For instance, weak students working individually are likely to give up
when they stuck but if they work cooperatively they will keep going. Also, students working alone tend to delay completing assignments or skip them altogether, but when they know that others are counting on them, they are motivated to do the work in a timely manner.

Truly, this approach or strategy to teaching is beneficial and we must utilize this for the betterment of student learning.

References: