Collaborative Learning Redefined in an EFL Classroom in Digital Age

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Abstract

Aim: *Universities are nowadays required to quickly switch their educational programs to virtual teaching. This paper postulates references for optimizing collaborative learning virtually in terms of course design, and instructor and learner roles. We found that digital learning works well but involves a sense of balance between course structure and autonomy and needs to be actively monitored during execution.*

Methodology and Approach: *The study is based on Teamwork and thrives on the desire of people who have common goals and are interdependent. People must communicate with one another and form connections when they share the same*

objective. One of the three fundamental human needs that fuel growth and motivation is relevant.

Outcome: *We found that digital learning works well but involves a sense of balance between course structure and autonomy and needs to be actively monitored during execution. When this is completed, it is entirely possible to engage students and teachers in deep learning and develop collaborative skills*

Conclusion: *The behavior of students in the classroom and online must be understood by both teachers and students. Understanding student characteristics is essential for students to prepare for online learning. Teachers need to understand the process and dynamics of the group, as well as strategies to facilitate effective communication and learning for students. Recognizing students' abilities and limitations, understanding their expectations and motivations, and their personalities during online learning can help facilitate active learning.*

This study offers resources for enhancing teamwork in online courses. Is the COVID-19 dilemma forcing colleges to quickly transition from on-campus to online operations in the teaching process, not just as a result but more so? Of course, this has typically been taught on a college campus. This is a serious

obstacle for programs like These courses frequently employ problem-based learning (PBL), which adheres to the notion that learning is constructive, pertinent, collaborative, and spontaneous, although these principles are how can you deliver an online course without losing it?

Most learners of the medical profession are adults and often combine work and study. Given the benefits of collaborative learning for academic success, online learning activities need to be developed to facilitate this process. Collaboration fuels deep learning. In addition, the students must work to develop skills that are very important to the job market. Furthermore, collaborative online learning enhances opportunities for intercultural and professional learning. Often this is difficult to sort out directly. However, combining online learning and collaboration is never easy. Collaboration needs technical skills and the ability to use online collaboration tools. Also, virtual teams have a different group with dynamics and trust-building people. The purpose of this paper is to provide approvals for designing and delivering online courses to improve collaborative learning.

English language teachers can estimate how the students have learned and how far they have come in their English schooling. Every year, the number of ELLs has been growing rapidly. For instance, over the past ten years, ELL growth has dramatically grown in the United States. English Language National Clearinghouse Acquisition (2011) states, "More than one-half of regions have experienced a growth rate of over 100% in their ELLs numbers" (26). It is crystal clear that this increase is both in the United States and all over the world.

DESIGN

Suggestion 1: **Build learning chores that force pupils to work together to achieve mutual goals**

Teamwork thrives on the desire of people who have common goals and are interdependent. People must communicate with one another and form connections when they share the same objective. One of the three fundamental human needs that fuels growth and motivation is relevant. Interdependence subsidizes to connections by facilitating interactions and providing opportunities to connect with others.

Suggestion 2: **Collaborative environment:** In an online collaborative environment, the process of creating collaborative scripts that expressly configure activity and communication is clearly laid out, not only in terms of the desired outcome but also in terms of the necessary actions that must be taken to improve the logistic skills. A collaborative script is a set of guidelines that spells out how students organize into groups, communicate with one another, and work together to solve problems. They define the job and make clear what is expected of the learner and when to complete it, task-oriented scripts might be considered a good type of scaffolding.

Suggestion 3: **Offer a series of communication & collaboration tools**

Teams should be equipped to choose the best tools for many learning scenarios they may deal with. If your organization supports the availability of these technologies, then this is useful. The software enables asynchronous collaboration tools like email, discussion forums, blogs, Wikis, podcasts, and Skype, Zoom, Google Hangouts, Blackboard Collaboration, among others. Synchronous communication can be used to resolve problems in decision-making, update the coordination of ideas, and make critical judgments. When a problem needs to be thoroughly explained, asynchronous communication can be used. Everything is needed to attract learners and endorse deep learning.

How to explain Grammar in EFL Classroom

There are several ways to initiate grammar rules and goals to their learners. Choose from the following techniques based on your preferences. Additionally,

you may test out each technique to discover which one works best for your kid or test out many techniques to offer variety to various objectives.

1. Examine the grammar notes collectively

Direct Learners with grammar presentation and while sharing notes on the screen or attending on their device before you begin with a grammar practice. There are numerous ways to make this more interactive! Make students go through the examples aloud in turn so that they can also work on pronunciation (rather than remaining and keep listening). For instance, before reading about the format and features, does anyone know of two contracting methods, "he isn't?" Or "Does anyone know when to use the past participle tense?"

Ask the students to find their example in sentences. After reading the example of grammar, ask the students to ponder more and then share their views regarding the cited examples. Follow the discussion. Did the students comprehend the shape and function of the target? Do you understand the exceptions to the general rules? Need more examples from you? Do you have more questions about your target?

2. Assign grammar notes to homework. If you like explicit instructions but want the learner to take responsibility for their learning, try out this technique.

Assign a grammar note activity as your homework the day before a new grammar lesson starts. Make your students go through and write down the questions you need to ask the next day.

To become interactive, you can guide students to be ready to reply to the questions about the next day's notes. You can also ask a comprehensive question about the basics of the target form and features. You can also ask about exceptions, as they are more difficult to learn and memorize.

3. Allocate grammar practice questions before reading the grammar notes. If you need to get implied grammar, try out this technique.

This method skips grammar notes first. Assign one or more grammar questions and see if the student will teach you the grammar rules the next day. With this small practice, can they comprehend the rules and patterns of the target you are trying to teach them? Then check the grammar notes together or assign them as homework. If you do them together, you can see examples of the tasks they have already performed. After covering the notes, assign the remaining assignments for the lesson.

4. Allocate non-grammar lessons that use grammar in context. If you like a communication approach to teaching, try out this technique. There is a search icon (magnifying glass) in the upper right corner of the EFL Library website. After clicking on it, enter the grammar site.

Innovative Model of Collaborative learning aka Online Collaborative Learning

What is virtual or online collaborative learning?

Certain forms of constructive education have developed because of the confluence that includes both the development of the Internet and the constructivist learning philosophy, previously known as computer-assisted communication (CMC) or network learning. It is now called Online Collaborative Learning Theory (OCL). She describes her OCL as follows: OCL theory presents a learning model that inspires and supports students in collaborative knowledge creation. That is to explore how to invent and innovate to look for the theoretical understanding required to address a problem instead of reciting what you think is it correct. OCL theory encourages active learner involvement, but this is not seen as sufficient for knowledge creation or learning. In OCL theory, teachers are not as learning peers, but as members of a knowledge community or as a significant liaison to the state of the arts in its field. Knowledge acquisition is based on learning, which is described as a shift in conceptualization. Discipline standards and dissertation processes that emphasize conceptual learning and broaden knowledge must

inform and direct learning activities. Since the beginning of virtual learning, OCL has included conversational learning; some teachers have placed special emphasis on online communication skills. They generally use asynchronous online interactions between students and instructors to convey knowledge based on the idea of knowledge construction, or the gradual construction of knowledge. Online discussion forums have a long history, dating back to the 1970s, but in the 1990s, they received a boost with the creation of the World Wide Web, high-speed Internet access, and the development of learning management systems. As a result, they are now mostly online.

Timeworn

 Model of Collaborative Learning

Harasim emphasizes the reputation of the following three crucial stages of dialog-based knowledge construction:

Idea generating: To literally assemble the diverse thinking within a group, this is brainstorming.

Idea organizing: Here further discussion and debate, students compare, analyze, and categorize the various concepts they have previously developed.

 Intellectual Convergence. The goal here is to achieve a level of informed synthesis, comprehending the consensus (even agreeing to disagree), typically through collaboratively creating some kind of artefact or piece of work, like an essay or project.

This results in what Harasim refers to as the final position, but that position is actually by no means the last one for the learner because the process of creating, organizing, and integrating ideas continues at a deeper and higher level. The trainer's responsibility in this process goes beyond simply facilitating it; it also includes offering suitable resources and supplying learning activities that promote learning. Harasim offers the following diagram to capture this process:
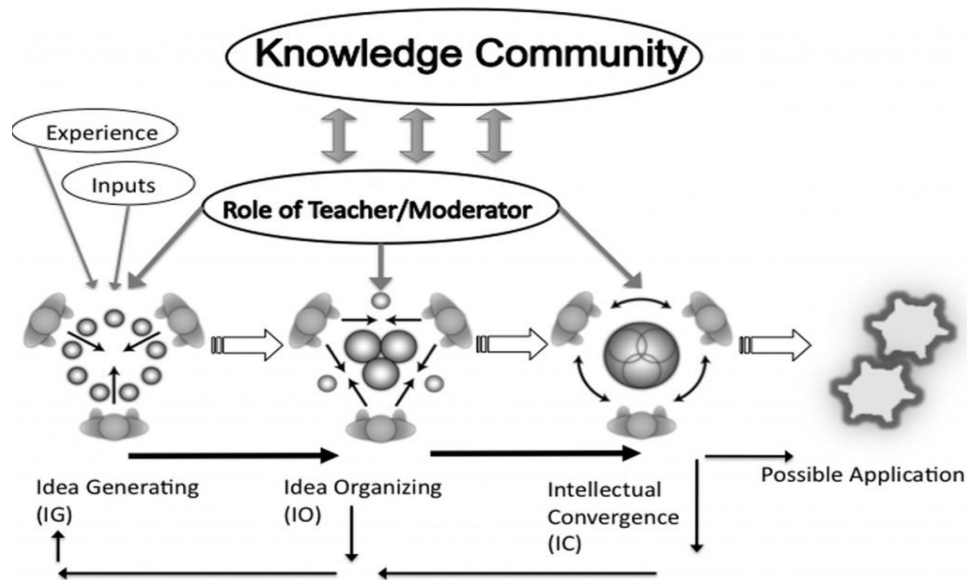
Figure 1.1. Harasim's pedagogy of group discussion (from Harasim, 2012, p. 95, with permission)

The discussion forum under the OCL model is a fundamental component of instruction rather than an add-on or supplement to the main teaching materials like textbooks, video lectures, or LMS textbooks. Instead of the other way around, books and other materials are chosen to facilitate debate. This crucial design element explains why instructors of more "conventional" online courses frequently gripe that students aren't participating in discussions. This is frequently the case when online discussions are secondary to more didactic instruction or when they are not purposefully designed and guided to knowledge building. In these situations, students often view the discussion as optional or additional work that does not involve direct work and thus influences grades or evaluations. Additionally, this explains why participation in online forums is not assessed. The inner worth of the dialogue is what matters, not the external action. When

appropriate, teachers who follow the OCL method may use learning management systems in a different way than in programs that use virtual learning environments.

Learner's Role

Invest in getting to identify each other to become an applicable collaborative group.

The group progresses gradually, and participant interaction and network motivation allow the growth of a learner. So, taking the time to get to know each other is essential to "warm up" and online setup. There is very slight non-verbal communication and far fewer opportunities for (informal) contact. If learners and instructors do not meet in person, schedule a time to meet "virtually", preferably they should meet at the beginning of a synchronous session. The virtual introduction should begin with a discussion of the relationships among the group members rather than the task at hand.

Focus on collaboration

Teachers and students are both responsible for leading and guiding group procedures. In virtual settings, it may not be clear. However, it is important for group members to be clear about their working arrangements, such as specific roles as chairman and the minutes and aspects that need improvement. If using a team charter, regularly reviewing documents is one possibility. In cooperative learning, "free-riding" (profiting from the course without effort) is frequent. It's critical to address the team's free-rider policy and the accommodations it wishes to make. However, it can be crucial to recognize that not every team member can always contribute in the same manner especially when the students are professionals with very different backgrounds.

There are different interactions and connections between professors and students, students and students, and student content traditional in-person instruction. Learners may not feel pressured or required to adopt a new

personality, yet they are able to do so. Participate in online communication when not meeting each other Students in charge of face-to-face encounters, people from diverse socioeconomic, linguistic, or cultural backgrounds are less inclined to speak out, engage in discussion, or ask questions. When learning online, the classroom might be quite obvious. Conversely, a lack of or low social standing in the learning and interaction of students can be impacted by cues and emotions such as body language, tone, and pitch. When compared to private chats, this aspect can lead to more uncontrolled behavioral situations for pupils.

Self-regulated learners, or those who are learning to become self-regulated learners, are required for successful online learning. Self-regulatory learners take advantage of the chance to choose many facets of their education. During the stages of goal setting, planning, monitoring, and evaluation of the learning process, they make decisions. Self-adjusting learners are adept at learning, reflecting on their learning, beginning new learning, and effectively managing their time. Online learners will be able to use their time and available resources efficiently once they have mastered these skills.

Instructor's Role

Be present in the virtual environment

The role of the teacher has an impact on the sustainability, learning, and pleasure of students in virtual learning. Garrison separates presence into three categories.

1.   Supervision of presence (development and implementation of courses, e.g. facilitating participation).

2.   Social presence (aiming to create an atmosphere of trust and attribution, for example, to display respect and compassion for others).

3.   On the other hand, presence is a concern for both teachers and students due to the characteristics of asynchrony and potential disconnection in virtual context communication.

Give feedback on the task and group processes

The most crucial way for tutors and students to communicate is by giving feedback. Positive and constructive criticism boosts motivation, and virtual criticism is even more important. Giving feedback is a cognitive activity that is crucial for learning but is frequently delayed until formal homework is allocated. However, extensive formative feedback during the course makes sense for what the learner has learned can be applied steadfastly to the final task. To promote personal development, tutors must focus on task-related elements and interpersonal teamwork. The difficulties of face-to-face collaboration apply equally to virtual collaboration.

B. **Personal disputes and disputes**. However, online communication has some additional issues, such as technological obstacles and a dearth of nonverbal cues. It is more difficult to act fast and effectively while communicating asynchronously. Although it is a continuous process during the execution of the course, the monitoring group procedure should be purposefully incorporated into the course design. To fully utilize the instructional potential of online learning, teachers must be competent to use the present online technologies. For instance, before the course starts, the instructor needs to email the student. Teachers can conduct technical skill surveys and needs assessments of students to provide valuable background information on the current online technical skills of learners. Teachers can also provide learners orientation and access to online courses. You can discuss and consider clear expectations, guidelines, codes of conduct, and special learner needs. The structure of the course and the structure of the materials are provided and may be discussed for user-friendly access. Peer support can be incorporated into the course and the FAQ section will help students with questions.

C. Institutional support. Learners need to be aware of self-regulation and self-regulatory strategies. Teachers and students can better understand how pupils are learning and what they need by using learning-style surveys. Practicing developing or enhancing skills in particular domains, such as self-regulation. Instructors can include exercises like problem-based learning, practical tasks, evaluations, and case studies in addition to varied sources, or possibilities for students with various learning styles and pedagogical approaches.

Considering manifold perceptions (course design, teacher role, and student role) allows collaboration in online courses in the PBL context. Online collaboration seems to work effectively, predominantly on the task side. Balancing course design (subject and collaboration) with autonomy requires sensitivity and thoughtful design. During implementation, you should constantly monitor aspects of collaboration and act as needed. Once this is done, it will be completely possible to use the tools that are becoming more and more readily available in higher education to engage students and staff to promote deep learning and develop collaboration skills. Instructors teaching online should be aware that traditional courses do not necessarily equip students with the level of interdependence and independent learning required for online courses. Online teachers are required to provide a vibrant learning atmosphere where students are empowered to take charge of their education. Both traditional face-to-face learning environments and online learning environments need to encourage and support active and autonomous learning. The behavior of students in the classroom and online must be understood by both teachers and students. Understanding student characteristics is essential for students to prepare for online learning. To learn well, students must develop the ability to actively seek out active learning tactics. For effective learning, learners' autonomy and collaborative strategies need to be negotiated. Students should be taught during education how to facilitate group processes and collaboration. Teachers need to

understand the process and dynamics of the group, as well as strategies to facilitate effective communication and learning for students. Recognizing students' abilities and limitations, understanding their expectations and motivations, and their personality during online learning can help facilitate active learning.

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