Stay@School

Workshop on Module 3 "Teaching methods"

Mislata (ES), 1 December 2012

Minutes

Participants

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All participants mentioned above attended the workshop and the chairwoman called the meeting agenda at 9:20 which was discussing Module 3 of the European Project Stay@School which regards teaching methods, making suggestions for the posts to the forum and proposing future actions in our school. The meeting was held during two sessions on the mentioned dates.

1. In relation to the first point we went through the main concepts of module 3 and highlighted the basic points:

- We agree "the main need is specific training for teachers".
- Those actions which make students protagonists of their learning processes, that is active learning, are the most useful and appropriate ones.
- The methods are meant to integrate and none of them exclude other solutions.

Within the active learning and teaching chapter we focused our attention to its promotion of knowledge, motivation and inclusion as well as enhancing each student's competences. The initial searching phase is very important for teachers in order to plan and organize appropriate strategies more effectively.
We have learnt about the stages of active learning with great interest and a very important point is the correspondence between the school curriculum and the content of active learning.

As far as cooperative learning is concerned we think that is a teaching/learning strategy which integrates interaction and communication; it allows students to create a social system based on cooperation; the method teaches them to define problems, seek solutions, achieve information and develop skills; it inevitably increases the young people's "intrinsic motivation" to learn. It also promotes social skills, which are not innate abilities.

Regarding Peer education they say that it is an educational strategy aiming to activate spontaneous processes of passing knowledge, information as well as emotions and experiences among peers and is mainly used in non-formal education.

In relation to Educational Technologies we went through the mentioned multimedia communication and the new cognitive paradigms, as well as Community of practices and learning, Information Literacy, Self Regulated Learning, Assessment in E-learning and WebQuests.
All teaching methods in the module seem very interesting and very convenient to us since the school has a numerous department of ICT and it could help to spread their knowledge to the teacher; it has also been proved that they are very well accepted by the students.

2. Regarding the suggestions for the forum we would like to contribute with the following posts:

A) POST 1

Hi everyone,

We, Spanish team at CIPFP Mislata, have looked through the teaching methods on module 3 with great interest and are following very attentively to the practical knowledge on cooperative learning that most of you have.

From our point of view active Learning and Teaching is not the best methodology to apply in VET studies, it seems more appropriate to apply in primary or secondary education. However questionnaires about teaching style sound interesting. They could be useful to question what and how we teach and are applicable to the teaching-learning process.

We acknowledge initial questionnaires to students can be necessary in order to investigate and evaluate their different cognitive styles, consequently should we know the different cognitive styles in the group we could improve our teaching methods more effectively.

Another consideration which we want to contribute with deals with cooperative learning. We think it is the best methodology we can apply in VET studies. It is perfect to solve real situations in the professional world. You can simulate a real case in a company and each group must find the solution.

Class group dynamics and working strategies are OK. They are totally applicable to our VET courses. In fact, we have a few teachers who are already using this methodology. We are just starting but we think we are on the way and want to share experiences on the training.

B)

POST 2

Dear all again,

This time we, CIPFP Mislata, want to highlight peer education as a useful teaching method which has been proved to be very effective.

On the one hand, although we are not currently using it, Peer education can be adequate for us designing activities for welcoming new students into the school community, that is, older students welcome first-year ones and help them with interpersonal or curricular problems, it could be included as a stage of the welcome plan process of the school at the beginning of the school year. In addition, transmitting and sharing positive practices: students/mentors help their peers to develop constructive, positive reflection on behaviours could also be very helpful.

On the other hand, the third task mentioned in the module is not feasible in our organization because we haven't got lower classes, we don't have different level paths in order to obtained a certificate. It is good to know that students of really "difficult" classes have shown great interest and active participation in lessons held by older students for, even though we do not have paths, we have students with serious learning difficulties to follow the lesson and carry out activities and this could be a stimulating technique for both of them. Moreover it may improve their self-esteem, which , in our case, is what most of them need.

As far as we know Peer education is rarely used at the moment at our school, it seems a really successful experience but we don't know if it is widely used in other European countries.

C)

POST 3

In relation to Educational Technologies we, Mislata, totally agree. ICT can help us to improve teaching task; furthermore, It can be used with any teaching methodology. Nowadays, both students and teachers are used to utilize ICT and this is a way to make the subjects more attractive.

E-learning is the basis and means for many purposes, and at our school we have a very widespread Virtual Campus which we use for nearly every activity. Our moodle platform promotes school management, favours customized slow learning help and formative assessment. Nowadays with the high number of students that we have in Spain, and together with all google tools offer, we have the chance to support and monitor our students' learning process.

Issues mentioned in the module regarding Additional Resources seem no applicable to us although they seem interesting.

3. **Finally and as far as actions or proposals are concerned all members agreed** that the dropout rate is high (around 20%) and even if reasons may be of different types, all of them cause feelings of unease which may lead students to quit school. One of the reasons of failures is surely the lack of good study skills and the subsequent, particular difficulties in learning theoretical subjects, so suggested teaching methods mentioned could be of much help.

Therefore we would like to promote:
- the use of ICT tools.
- Cooperative learning
- Problem based learning
- Peer education

And the most significant activities we could include are:
- Making students welcome
- Let's come into play
- Effective communication
- Information and guidance
- Counselling services for teachers

All members are reminded to continue on module 4, to have a preliminary reading before the next workshop to discuss the content of it.

Signed by   Recorded by
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