COOPERATIVE WORK AND SELF-ASSESSMENT IN CLIL CLASSROOMS

TREBALL COOPERATIU I AUTORREGULACIÓ EN AULES AICLE

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The study presented here is part of a wider research which analyzes the feasibility of the task of elaborating a mind map in groups (cooperative work), from both perspectives of teaching-learning and assessment of cooperative work and oral interaction in CLIL classrooms.

1. Mind map about Living things

The study is based on the theory of qualitative-naturalistic-ethnographic research; it means an analysis of qualitative data (Seidel, 1998).

The theoretical framework that provides coverage and support for the approach, analysis and development of this research includes two blocks, cooperative work and oral interaction, and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).

The aim is to analyze the impact which represent for the students reflecting on the strategies and key actions required to be able to communicate in a beneficial manner, which helps them to build knowledge among all members of the team, and at the same time provides a tool for evaluating their own work. For this purpose, the researcher-teacher agrees on a set of descriptors about cooperative work with the students before starting their work as a team.

Fig.1. Mind map about Living things

2. Oral interaction

The study, which adopts the methodology of action research is focused on the analysis of different types of learners talks: disputative, accumulative and exploratory (Mercer, 1996) when developing a team work.

Fig.2. Oral interaction

The research is carried out in a secondary state school in the Metropolitan area of Barcelona, with two classes of students of 1st of ESO, who participate in a CLIL school project. The research features two different phases.

First, we come into the classroom during one session and we propose students to prioritize some items of cooperative work that the teacher hands to each team in order to provide students the meaning of cooperation, while making them aware of what is expected of them in the classroom.

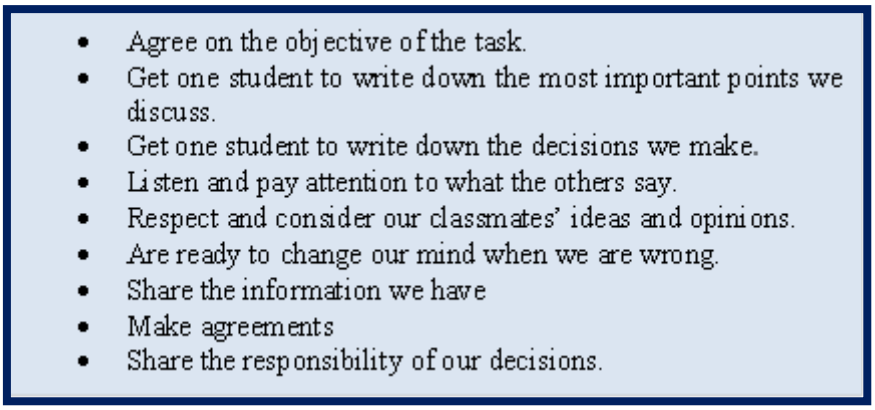


Fig.3. Descriptors

The second phase covers two sessions in the classroom and takes place once the implementation of the learning unit is completed. Students are asked to build a mind map of the content they studied all along the teaching unit, in groups; and finally, they carry out a self-assessment task, using the descriptors previously prioritized.

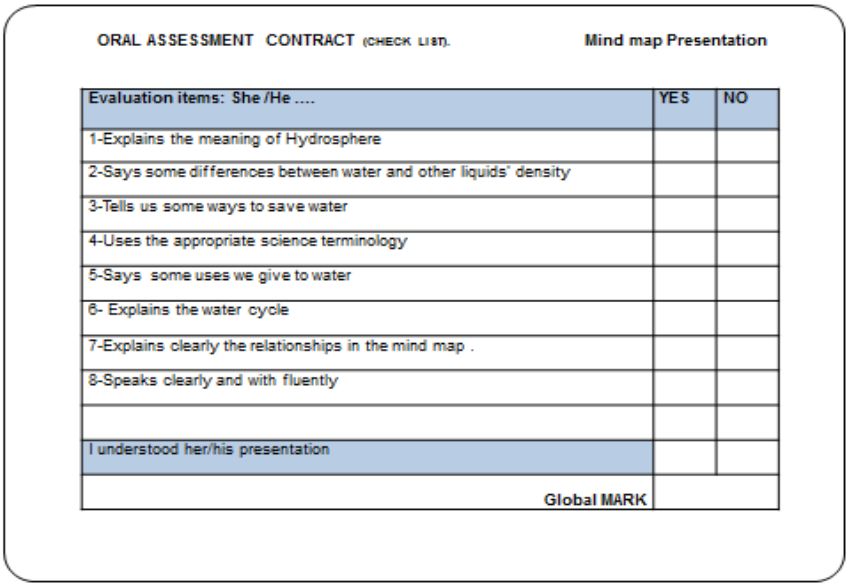
The researcher, as a participant involved in the research, becomes a member of the community observed, knows the reality of the school and can interpret the results better. She has been involved in the life of the school and participated in data analysis (Lincoln, 1991). She implements the activities previously scheduled and checks them with other teachers involved in the classroom.

The analyzed data is obtained from the recording of some students' teams while they carry out the collaborative task of developing a mind map. For the task to be successful, speech, and particularly conversation, is key. The task leads students to meaningful learning, allowing them to connect and relate the learnt concepts. This facilitates the achievement of properly structured and learned knowledge networks.

The study focuses on the analysis of the results of the self-assessment of each student and the type of talk used by each team when developing the mind map task.

The results of this analysis let us observe that the suggestion of the discussion of certain ground rules of working can lead to an improvement in motivation and student participation (Dawes, Mercer & Fisher, 1992). Moreover, the establishment of classrooms rules on cooperation also contributes to neutralizing individual social statuses and creating a more equitable intellectual environment, in which everyone participates. It is particularly remarkable the fact that, in the case of the study, cooperative work has led to the acceptance and respect towards differences among students.

Self-assessment from students shows evidence of the construction of their knowledge through sharing and discussing information, which has been assimilated by each of the members of the team.



ORAL ASSESSMENT CONTRACT (CHECK LIST). Mind map Presentation

Evaluation items: She /He	YES	NO
1-Explains the meaning of Hydrosphere		
2-Says some differences between water and other liquids' density		
3-Tells us some ways to save water		
4-Uses the appropriate science terminology		
5-Says some uses we give to water		
6- Explains the water cycle		
7-Explains clearly the relationships in the mind map .		
8-Speaks clearly and with fluently		
I understood her/his presentation		
Global MARK		

Fig.4.

Finally, evidence of emerging accumulative and disputative talk (Mercer, 2004) can be found throughout the development of the mind map (team 1B-2). A team which has enough time to internalize the set of descriptors, or ground rules, develops the task and evaluates individual and team work process and progress, thus achieving successful cooperative work, characterized by the sharing of ideas regarding relevant information

for the discussion of the content and achieving the goal, which in this case refers to the completion of the mind map (Mercer, 1996).

3. References

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