DISCUSSION AS A METHOD FOR ENHANCING COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Annotation. *This article explores the use of discussion as a method to enhance communicative skills among university students. It highlights the benefits of active engagement, critical thinking, and collaboration, along with effective strategies for implementing discussion-based learning.*
Keywords: *discussion, communicative skills, critical thinking, active engagement, collaboration.*

Effective communication is essential for university students, not only for academic success but also for future professional opportunities. Discussion as a pedagogical method plays a vital role in enhancing communicative skills, fostering critical thinking, and encouraging active participation among students. This article explores the benefits of discussion-based learning and presents strategies for its implementation in higher education settings.

In today's interconnected world, the ability to communicate effectively is paramount. According to P21 (2015), communication skills encompass verbal, non-verbal, and written forms, all of which are crucial for collaboration and interaction in diverse contexts. For university students, developing these skills is essential for engaging in meaningful discourse, presenting ideas clearly, and collaborating with peers.

Discussion encourages students to actively participate in their learning process. As Hattie and Timperley (2007) emphasize, active engagement leads to deeper learning experiences. When students are involved in discussions, they take ownership of their learning, which enhances motivation and retention of information. Engaging in discussions requires students to think critically about the topics at hand. According to Facione (2011), critical thinking involves analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information, which is essential for effective communication. Discussions prompt students to consider multiple perspectives and articulate their thoughts coherently.

Discussions foster collaborative skills as students learn to work together, respect differing opinions, and negotiate meanings. Johnson and Johnson (1994) highlight that collaborative learning environments enhance interpersonal skills and build a sense of community among students. In discussion settings, students receive immediate feedback from peers and instructors, which helps them refine their communicative abilities. According to Hattie (2009), feedback is one of the most powerful influences on learning, allowing students to adjust their approaches and improve their skills in real-time.

To effectively incorporate discussion into university curricula, educators can employ the following strategies:

1. *Small Group Discussions:* Breaking students into small groups allows for more intimate discussions where all voices can be heard. This setting encourages

participation from shy students who might be reluctant to speak in larger groups (Gokhale, 1995).

2. *Structured Formats:* Providing a clear structure for discussions can help guide student interactions. Formats such as fishbowl discussions or Socratic seminars promote focused dialogue and ensure that students stay on topic while exploring various viewpoints (Wells, 1999).

3. *Diverse Topics:* Introducing a variety of discussion topics, including current events, ethical dilemmas, and subject-specific issues, keeps students engaged and allows them to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts (Hewitt, 2012).

4. *Role Assignments:* Assigning specific roles (e.g., facilitator, note-taker, challenger) during discussions can help students focus on their contributions and develop specific skills associated with each role (Davis, 1993).

5. **Reflective Practices:** Encouraging students to reflect on their discussion experiences can enhance their learning outcomes. Reflection helps students assess their participation, identify areas for improvement, and develop self-awareness regarding their communicative skills (Schön, 1983).

In conclusion discussion as a method for enhancing communicative skills offers numerous benefits for university students. By promoting active engagement, critical thinking, collaboration, and immediate feedback, discussions create a rich learning environment that prepares students for successful communication in both academic and professional settings. Implementing structured discussion strategies can further enhance the effectiveness of this method, fostering a culture of dialogue and respect among students.

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