Chapter 2

Implementation of Cooperative Learning Strategies to Create 3D–Videos in EFL Teacher Training

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ABSTRACT

This chapter deals with the implementation of a teaching innovation in the context of higher education, based on the creation of 3D-videos through the use of cooperative learning and the development of digital teaching competence in English as a foreign language teacher training. Specifically, this methodological proposal is situated within the framework of the course Foreign Language for Primary School Teachers (English) of the Degree in Primary Education at the University of Cordoba, Spain, and it has been implemented in three academic years (2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19). The most important result of this study is that CL strategies develop pre-service EFL teachers' engagement in learning and improving their knowledge on English and enhance their digital competence while reducing the achievement gap with lower-achievement pre-service teachers thanks to heterogeneous groups. Nevertheless, this process of teaching innovation highlights that there is still much to be done to maximize the impact of cooperative learning in foreign language teaching-learning processes.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the implementation of a teaching innovation in the context of Higher Education, based on the creation of 3D animation videos through the use of cooperative learning and the development of digital teaching competence in English as a Foreign Language Teacher Training. Specifically, this methodological proposal is situated within the framework of the course "Foreign Language for Primary School Teachers (English)" of the Degree in Primary Education at the University of Cordoba, Spain, and it has been implemented in three academic years (2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19).

In the field of language learning, teachers frequently need to deal with different levels of students, and it is not always easy to look for a solution to the problem. How to close the achievement gap in the classroom is consequently one of the most important issues today.

Therefore, this educational innovation proposal is based on two key concepts: a) cooperative learning strategies (Johnson, Johnson and Holubec, 1999) to engage all EFL pre-service teachers, and b) the development of digital teaching competence (INTEF, 2017) in pre-service EFL Primary teachers. The combination of these two components is crucial, since the success of the integration of ICT in language learning depends on the ability of teachers to develop socially active classrooms where cooperative learning is encouraged (Cortés, 2016).

Digital tools are currently a new form of interactive content which play an essential role in both collaborative and cooperative learning. Game-based digital resources can engage and motivate students/players in a constructive, enriching learning environment (Admiraal, Huizenga, Akkerman, & ten Dam, 2011; Hung, Young, & Lin, 2015; Ravenscroft & Matheson, 2002; Smith, Majchrzak, Hayes, & Drobisz, 2011). Moreover, digital competence is essential for pre-service and in-service teachers:

Developing digital competence in the education system requires a correct integration of ICT in the classroom and teachers that have the necessary training in that competence. The latter is probably the most important factor for the development of a digital culture in the classroom and to ensure that the education system is in tune with the new 'network society'. (INTEF, 2017, p. 5).

Therefore, based on the pedagogical framework of cooperative learning, this study developed a game-based proposal integrated into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in compulsory pre-service teacher training with three main objectives: (i) to improve pre-service teachers' academic performance in the English language by increasing their motivation and fostering their creativity; (ii) to reduce the achievement gap

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