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OLIY TA'LIM, FAN VA INNOVATSIYALAR VAZIRLIGI

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IQTIDORLI TALABALAR,
MAGISTRANTLAR, TAYANCH
DOKTORANTLAR VA DOKTORANTLARNING

"TAFAKKUR VA TALQIN"

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RESPUBLIKA MIQYOSIDAGI
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BENEFITS OF BRAINSTORMING METHOD IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS

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Abstract: This article deals with the benefits of brainstorming technique in developing language learners' communicative skills. Implementation of brainstorming in teaching improves not only students' language skills, but also their critical thinking skills, as well as their communicative competences.

Key words: brainstorming, communicative approach, interactive activity, language skills, critical thinking skills, learner-centered approach, communicative competence, interpersonal and communicative skills.

Communicative language teaching, or communicative approach emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of study and communicative activities include any activities that encourage and require a learner to speak with and listen to other learners. Thus, students' motivation to learn comes from their desire to communicate in meaningful ways about meaningful topics and the teachers in communicative classrooms will find themselves talking less, listening more, becoming active facilitators of their students' learning.

One of the most effective communicative methods is brainstorming, which is widely used in foreign language classes nowadays in order to improve students not only language skills, but also interpersonal and communicative skills. This method is a tool that uses a relaxed, informal atmosphere combined with lateral thinking to solve problems.

So, what is *"Brainstorming"* ? *Brainstorming is a strategy used to generate a number of ideas to help solve a particular problem*. The technique has been around for over 70 years and is still used today to engage students in solving a range of problems.

In 1939, *Alex Osborn* developed brainstorming as a method for creative problem solving. Osborn, a partner in an advertising agency, was frustrated by his employee's inability to develop creative ideas for advertisement campaigns and products working on their own. In response to this problem, Osborn began hosting group - think sessions and noticed that the quality and quantity of ideas produced was much greater than those produced by individual employees.

So, brainstorming is a method of producing a large number of creative ideas for subsequent evaluation. The rules are that:

✦ *All ideas are welcomed, however off beat or daft;*

✦ *The group aims for quantity, not quality;*

✦ *Judging ideas is not allowed;*

✦ *Ideas are common property; combining or improving previous ideas is encouraged.*

This communicative activity can be carried out in any language classes. Mostly in ESL classes brainstorming can be effective in a wide range of areas of instruction. For instance, in reading and writing, as well as, listening classes, even in teaching grammar and vocabulary it can be used as an interactive activity:

✦ *Pre-reading* - Teachers ask questions that are central for the overall comprehension of the text and students try to give as many answers to them as possible. The questions must involve a wide variety of possible answers.

✦ *Pre-listening -* The same as above. Students come up with as many answers to open-ended questions.

✦ *Pre-writing* - A topic can be fully brainstormed in an individual or group brainstorming (or a combination of both) to generate as many ideas as possible. At home students use their notes to prepare an outline and write the first draft to be edited in class. The purpose is to get down on paper as many ideas as possible without worrying about

how you will use them. To brainstorm, you simply make a list of as many ideas as you can about a topic. Your list can include words, phrases, sentences, or even questions.

✦ *Grammar* - In order for students understand how grammar works they should explore it instead of having the teacher explaining everything. It would be an interesting experience for students to brainstorm how different structures are used, what their meanings are and how they are formed.

✦ *Vocabulary -* ESL students are often faced with difficult vocabulary. It is a good idea to teach students how to use a dictionary, but it would be better if students use brainstorming sessions to find the meaning of difficult vocabulary using the context. Again, encourage students to provide their guesses and accept all of them even the wildest ones. Only later with the help of the teacher students try to evaluate them and pick up the most appropriate definitions.

Brainstorming is the best way to develop the skills of initiative, communication, problem-solving, self-awareness, and working cooperatively in teams, and it can be seen as an interaction between play, games and simulations and the student that performs an activity with learning outcomes. Teachers can develop this technique to fit their students' needs. No materials are required apart from a pen or pencil and sheets of paper. After the problem or issue is presented, students are organized into groups to brainstorm all possible ideas which could solve the problem. Discussion of these ideas takes place after the activity ends, usually after a defined period of time. Each idea will be discussed and considered, some ideas will be eliminated, and a final list will be ranked for possible use as a solution toward solving the problem.

In conclusion we can say that brainstorming as a communicative activity is aimed at enhancing learners' learning strategies, more independent reading, self-directed and cooperative learning and making the students leading lights in teaching-learning process, and it has both advantages and disadvantages:

The main advantages are:

✦ Brainstorming brings new ideas on how to tackle a particular problem – the freethinking atmosphere encourages creativity, even imperfectly developed thoughts may push the thinking of other participants.

✦ Problems are defined better as questions arise – alternatives appear in a new or different perspective and novel approaches to an issue can arise during the process.

✦ Brainstorming helps to reduce conflicts – it helps participants to see other points of view and possibly change their perspective on problems.

✦ All participants have equal status and an equal opportunity to participate.

The drawbacks are:

✦ The importance of the moderator is often under estimated.

✦ Often the two phases are confused, ideas start to be discussed just after they are thrown out and the specific value of this technique is wasted.

✦ Sometimes the ideas produced are unworkable. The outcomes depend on the ability of the facilitator of maintaining the discussion alive.

✦ Opponents may refuse to consider each other's ideas. It is important to explain to participants how the results will be used to underline that they are not wasting their time.

So, the implementation of brainstorming activities in language teaching process plays a pivotal role in improving students' communicative skills. They encourage students to think more critically about complex and controversial subjects and to see a situation from a different perspective. When properly employed, brainstorming can motivate students in a fun and engaging way.

Moreover, the implementation of brainstorming activities in language classes is beneficial, as:

✦ *It enables students to learn and practice the target language in meaningful context.*

✦ *It improves students' different skills needed for the language acquisition process.*

✦ *It motivates students to be interested and involved in learning.*

✦ *It creates low-anxiety learning environments for students.*

✦ *It offers students a variety of experiences and improves their four language skills.*

✦ *It increases students motivation and engages shy students in class activities;*

And also we can say that brainstorming is a cooperative approach in which a number of people collectively agree upon a solution after all of their ideas are brought forth and discussed, but a good and successful brainstorming depends upon the quality of the students involved and seriousness which is shown by the students. In addition, it should be content-focused, match learning objectives, and be relevant to real-world situations.

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