

混合カリキュラム授業へ応用したアクティブ・ラーニングのモデル

The Active Learning Model Applied to a Mixed Curriculum Class

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要約

授業によっては、アクティブ・ラーニングを使用した方が教育効果が高くなるという教育上の要請から、本学経営学部ではこの教授法を採用し、スポーツと英語・国際教育の授業を融合した指導を行うために、この方法論を採用するに至った。それぞれの分野を専門とする2名の教員がゼミの学生を指導し、学生が共にリサーチし、英語で結論を書き、ゼミで協力して二つの報告書を提出することができるよう、アクティブ・ラーニングモデルの主たる概念を利用し実施した。結果は、学生同士が協力することにより、学生にとって単に課題に関心を持っただけでなく、様々な情報源から学び、相互に緊密なコミュニケーションができ、学習効果を高めることができたことが明らかになった。

キーワード：アクティブ・ラーニング、国際教育、コミュニケーション

(Abstract)

More and more pressure for college and university instructors to use the active learning model in the classroom has led to the School of Business Administration at Takamatsu University in Kagawa Prefecture, Japan to conduct research in this interesting methodology, in order to teach a combined Sport and English/International Education class utilizing this model. Two instructors with specializations in each discipline, and their students, combined their seminar classes and utilized key concepts of the Active Learning Model, in order to let students work together to conduct research, write out their findings in English, and present the same reports to the seminar class. The results were that the students collaborated, studied and learned in a way that was not only interesting for the students, but helped them to communicate and learn from a variety of sources.

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Introduction

Active learning is the basis of a research class carried about by Takamatsu University's School of Business Administration in June of 2013. The objective was to teach students by utilizing the Active Learning Model in order to collaborate on a project that would combine the following different areas of study: Athletics, English, and International Studies. 2 instructors with specialties in these disciplines advised a group of Japanese university freshmen, who were members of different research groups, one focusing on sports and one focusing on English and International Studies, participated in the research class.

Concepts of Active Learning

In order to understand the main concepts of this research, one must first understand the basic concepts of active learning. According to Bonwell and Eisen (1991) , many people, to include educators, believe that any kind of classroom instruction is active learning, and tend to feel that students are always active. However, Meyers and Jones (1993) point out that active learning “stands in contrast to traditional classroom styles where teachers do most of the work and students remain passive.” Furthermore the same authors indicate that active learning is a student-centered approach and the students are required not only to listen passively in the classroom, but are required to read, write, listen and talk. One more concept that is required of students is for them to reflect.

The whole point of utilizing an active learning model is to activate students to learn and to help them to retain what they have learned in the long term. There is a great body of research that proves that the effects of active learning on the educational environment. The same research postulates that when you actively engage learners in the subject matter, you will stimulate deep and meaningful learning (Noddings, 2005; Piaget and Inhelder, 1969) .

In order to conduct an active learning classroom, several key processes are commonly utilized (Bonwell, n.d.) :

1. Students are more than just passively involved in the class

2. Students are required to take part in activities (eg. Discussing, writing, researching, presenting)
3. There is an emphasis on the transmission of information
4. Students work on developing their study skills.
5. At the same time, by using the active learning model, certain outcomes are predictable:
 1. Student motivation is increased
 2. Students receive immediate feedback from the instructor
 3. Students are involved in higher order thinking (analysis, synthesis, evaluation)(Bloom, et al, 1956)

In summary, active learning truly activates students to not only learn, but to retain what they have learned. Furthermore, students will become more interested in their classes, and hopefully enjoy the whole learning process, by actually becoming contributors in the classroom process.

Objectives and Method of the Research Class

The authors of this paper were tasked with conducting research by practically teaching a class utilizing the active learning model. The idea was to combine students from 2 disciplines, and to further combine the concepts of both disciplines into an effective and meaningful class. Associate Professor Kenta Yokote is an instructor of Physical Education, and Associate Professor R.T. Williams is an instructor of English and International Studies. Both are part of the permanent faculty of the School of Business Administration at Takamatsu University in Kagawa Prefecture, Japan. The individual professors' seminar groups were combined for the purpose of this research, and the class was conducted with both groups of students and both professors actively working to prepare and administer the class.

With a fully-Internet-connected computer room at the disposal of the instructors, a project that would allow the students to do some kind of online research was decided upon. Moreover, in keeping with the topic of International Studies, some kind of research related to foreign-country research was deemed appropriate. The instructors

also quickly chose the language of research would be in English. Therefore the following plan for the class was implemented with each task being carried about by a group of 2 or 3 students:

1. In groups, the students would plan for a trip abroad.
2. Students would decide on a particular foreign country that they would visit.
3. Students would research a special cultural point or activity that they would do or visit in that country and prepare a background description of the same.
4. Students would plan to attend a sporting event in that country, and prepare a background description of the event, the sport, or the team.
5. Students would prepare a written report on their research.
6. Students would make a presentation to the class of their research.

Since the lessons was conducted close to the students' upcoming summer vacation. It was decided that the students would make a presentation, simulating an overseas trip for their summer vacation.

Administration of the Class

A PowerPoint presentation was designed, where the instructors explained each step of the lesson. Since the students would give a presentation simulating a report of their plans to visit the same foreign country over the upcoming summer vacation, the instructors did a very brief explanation of how to make a basic report and discuss the usage of the future tense in English, since this would be used in describing their upcoming plans. This information was included in the PowerPoint demonstration. There was also advice and practical demonstrations on how to use online search engines and online dictionaries. A copy of the individual PowerPoint presentation slides was provided to the groups for closer reference. The demonstration took 10 minutes of class time.

The groups were also given a worksheet that contained the following information:

1. Name of the Country
 - A. Point of Interest
 - B. Sports Activity
2. Explain at least 2 points about your point/activity

3. Explain at least 2 points about your sport event
4. Write about your trip

Students were then tasked with filling out points 1 through 3 on the worksheet, and then writing what would be their presentation to the class in space required for number 4. While they worked on this project, the instructors roamed around and the computer room, checked on the groups and the progress that they were making on their projects. The groups and individuals were offered help and advice as deemed necessary, making sure that the students were collaborating on doing the work. Students took 55 minutes to do this part of the task.

In the final 25 minutes of the class, students gave their presentations to the class. A world map was provided, and while one student gave their brief 2 to 3 minute presentations, the other student(s) demonstrated on the map, the country that each student would visit.

Evaluation

Overall, the class went very much as planned. The timing was precise, and the class started and ended at the proper time. One major problem that existed was the connection speed of the Internet. At times, a few of the groups' computers seemed to freeze. While this caused a minimal disruption in the class, it could have been worse, had the problem been more severe, and is definitely something that instructors who try to emulate this research may have to contend with if they are doing a similar project.

The distribution of responsibilities for the entire project seemed to be handled very well by the students, without any coaching by the instructors. For example, students who found it difficult to do the work on the computer research part of the project, quickly delegated themselves as the one would take notes and/or fill out the top 3 sections of the worksheet. Moreover, students who found the writing part of the English more difficult, delegated themselves at the students who would give the final presentation.

Conclusion

During this research class, 2 research groups were combined into one class, and the active learning model was used with a PowerPoint prepared by the instructors. In groups, students planned a trip around the world where they would not only visit culturally significant landmarks, but also become involved in sporting events local to the places that they were visiting. This required active participation by the students, and the use of discussion skills and presentation skills.

At first, doing all of the requirements in English was difficult for some students. However, because of the group method used in the class, students were able to quickly settle in and move along smoothly as a group. Moreover, students were able to deepen their international understanding by doing research about world sports and sightseeing spots around the world. They were also able to collaborate with different research groups, and work on their planning skills. The project was in English, as was the idea-rich PowerPoint presentation. It was plain and clear enough to allow students to develop their own ideas as a group, and feed them the necessary knowledge to make a group presentation.

The project showed that the active learning model can therefore be used to foster determination and independence. It allowed students to use their heads and the knowledge that they have, and work in collaboration to produce effective results that will help our society of the future to be filled with talented and well-educated individuals.

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研究紀要 第60・61合併号

平成26年 2月25日 印刷
平成26年 2月28日 発行

編集発行

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高松短期大学
〒761-0194 高松市春日町960番地
TEL (087) 841-3255
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高松市多賀町 1-8-10
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