

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCE IN YOUNG LANGUAGE LEARNERS THROUGH INTERACTIVE METHODS

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Abstract. This article examines the importance of developing leadership competence among young language learners through interactive teaching methods. In modern education, language learning is no longer limited to acquiring grammatical knowledge and vocabulary. It also involves the development of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and leadership abilities. Interactive methods such as group discussions, role plays, debates, project-based learning, and problem-solving activities create opportunities for learners to demonstrate initiative, responsibility, and teamwork. The study highlights how these methods contribute to building self-confidence, decision-making skills, and social interaction among students.

Key words: leadership competence, interactive methods, young learners, language education, communication skills, collaborative learning, critical thinking, student-centered learning.

Introduction. In the twenty-first century, education aims not only to provide academic knowledge but also to prepare learners for social and professional life. One of the essential skills required in modern society is leadership competence. Leadership is the ability to guide, motivate, and cooperate with others to achieve common goals. Developing leadership skills among young learners has become an important objective in language education because communication and interaction are central components of both leadership and language learning.

Young language learners often participate in activities that require cooperation, idea sharing, and problem solving. Interactive methods provide effective opportunities for students to become active participants rather than passive listeners. Through such methods, learners improve not only their language proficiency but also their confidence, responsibility, creativity, and leadership potential.

The Importance of Leadership Competence in Language Learning.

Leadership competence plays a significant role in learners' academic and personal growth. In language classrooms, students communicate with peers, express opinions, negotiate meaning, and work collaboratively. These experiences help them develop interpersonal and organizational skills that are necessary for leadership.

Young learners with leadership abilities tend to demonstrate greater motivation and participation during lessons. They are more likely to take initiative in group tasks, support classmates, and contribute creative ideas. Leadership competence also encourages learners to become independent thinkers and effective communicators. As language learning requires constant interaction, leadership development naturally complements communicative language teaching approaches. Moreover, leadership skills help students adapt to multicultural and multilingual environments. In globalized societies, learners need the ability to cooperate with people from diverse backgrounds. Therefore, integrating leadership development into language education supports both educational and social objectives.

Interactive Methods for Developing Leadership Competence

Interactive teaching methods create dynamic learning environments where students actively participate in the educational process. These methods encourage collaboration, communication, and decision-making, all of which are essential components of leadership competence.

Group discussions allow students to exchange ideas, listen to different perspectives, and defend their opinions. During discussions, learners often assume leadership roles by organizing ideas, encouraging participation, and guiding conversations. This process develops confidence and communication skills.

Role-playing activities simulate real-life situations and encourage learners to think creatively. Students learn how to solve problems, make decisions, and communicate effectively in different contexts. Such activities help learners develop emotional intelligence and leadership behavior.

Project-based learning is one of the most effective interactive methods for leadership development. Students work collaboratively on tasks that require planning, research, presentation, and evaluation. Each learner may take responsibility for a specific role within the project, which promotes accountability and teamwork.

Debates improve learners' critical thinking and persuasive communication skills. Students learn how to present arguments logically and respectfully respond to opposing opinions. Problem-solving activities encourage learners to cooperate and make collective decisions, strengthening leadership qualities and analytical abilities.

Conclusion

Developing leadership competence in young language learners through interactive methods is an essential aspect of modern education. Interactive teaching strategies not only improve language proficiency but also help learners acquire valuable social and personal skills. Group discussions, role plays, project-based learning, and debates encourage students to become active, confident, and responsible participants in the learning process.

Leadership competence enables learners to communicate effectively, collaborate with others, and adapt to different social situations. Teachers play a key role in supporting this development by creating engaging and learner-centered classrooms. As a result, integrating interactive methods into language teaching contributes to the formation of independent, motivated, and socially competent individuals prepared for future academic and professional success.

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