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Fostering Collaborative Skills Via University Group Works

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Abstract

This study investigates university students' experiences with group work during project-based learning designed to foster collaborative skills. Collaborative learning always presents participants with several obstacles due to differences in academic disciplines, language, and cultural backgrounds. The study examines students' perceptions of group work before and after participation, with particular attention to collaborations between local and international students employing translanguaging. The research question addresses the learning outcomes and challenges associated with group work. An online survey was conducted with 51 students at a private university in Japan. Pre- and post-surveys assessed four domains related to the group work: student perception, self-awareness of skills, identification of strengths and weaknesses, and troubleshooting strategies. Quantitative analysis was applied to the first two domains, while qualitative analysis addressed the latter two. Findings indicate that mean scores for student perception and self-awareness increased in the post-survey, suggesting that students from diverse disciplines and backgrounds generally develop more positive views of group work and greater self-awareness of their skills. Qualitative results demonstrate that communication, collaboration, and leadership significantly influence group outcomes. The study concludes that international collaborative group work incorporating translanguaging can enhance academic learning, foster social skills, and improve intercultural communication.

Keywords: Academic Exchange; Projectbased-Based Learning; Socialization; Intercultural Understanding; Translanguaging in English & Japanese