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USING PADLET WALL IN COOPERATIVE GROUP INVESTIGATION METHOD

The demand for innovation and creativity is very high nowadays. The term 21 century skills is used every now and then by educators, scientists and teachers around the globe. The need for these skills is determined by rapid development of technologies and science. Among the most valued 21century skills are skills to collaborate and skills to effectively use scientific innovations.

This abstract is aiming to investigate the issue of structuring cooperative learning methods with involvement of online tools on the example of group investigation cooperative learning method and free online resource – Padlet Wall.

Under the term ***cooperative learning*** we understand an educational strategy based on group-work and, the main feature of it is a *structured collaboration* of all members of each small group with the purpose of mutual help in the process of learning and optimization of interaction [1]. Cooperative learning can be used within a wide range of topics and subjects and can be adjusted to various curriculums. There are many cooperative learning methods and techniques developed by different scholars, which are different by means of involvement into the group-work, ways of motivation, and ways group-work assessment. Among the most popular are Learning Together (D. Johnson, R. Johnson), Group Investigation (Sh. Sharan), Jigsaw procedure (E.Aronson), Student Teams Achievement Divisions (R.Slavin), Cooperative structures (S. Kagan) etc. It is well-known that if properly organized they can become a powerful tool in any language classroom. Taking into consideration the variety and availability of online resources for educators it becomes more and more expedient to involve students not only into face-to-face collaboration but also into synchronous or asynchronous online cooperation with the help of modern online tools.

We would like to highlight an example of organizing a cooperative learning process using the group investigation method at the university setting with the help of online interactive Padlet Wall [4]. Padlet is a free online virtual wall that allows people to express their thoughts on some topic and it works like an online sheet of paper where people can put any content (e.g. images, videos, documents, text) anywhere on the page, together with anyone, from any device [5]. So, it is up to the teacher to initiate a collaborative work using this online 'sheet of paper' and find a thought-provoking content. In order to make members of the group eager to participate, the content must be authentic, stimulating and motivate every student to be involved in all phases of the learning process [2]. That is why the content we'd like to focus on is the area of international exchange programs (e.g. the topic may be "Opportunities and Challenges of Modern Individual Mobility Scholarships"). This area is not included into the language syllabi and is not usually stressed in the university curricula, but the topics which are studied within the range of the most university EFL syllabi ("About Myself", "Food and Eating Habits", "English-speaking Countries", "Ukraine", etc.) can incorporate part of it and make the process of language learning more connected to the real life situations. In our case the problem of international mobility includes various subtopics such as: finding a scholarship and a university with the relevant study program, writing an essay,

completing an application, passing the interview successfully, exploring a culture of the country, facing culture shock, overcoming challenges of living in the unknown city and many more. When students feel that the language skills gained in the classroom can have real positive outcomes for their careers they would have a better idea of why there is a need to improve their language skills, and moreover they would learn a useful content. For instance, when the curriculum topic is "About Myself" it can incorporate sub-topic "How to write a successful CV for Erasmus Mundus Programs". The cooperative method to be used to study ways of writing a successful CV can be Group Investigation. Type of group organization should be formal cooperative group. Formal cooperative learning groups have fixed membership, usually last from a few days to a few weeks, and have a well-defined task to accomplish [3, p. 73]. This type of group-work is the most appropriate for the group investigation cooperative method because it requires students to work for a certain period of time on a specific problem and come to a common solution of it as a group. According to the rule of four "I's" group investigation includes four important components: investigation, interaction, interpretation and intrinsic motivation [6]. During the process of work in a cooperative group students must interact in order to fully investigate the selected topic, they also have to interpret the information found during a process of research and moreover there should be a strong personal motivation stimulus of why this research would be beneficial for them. In our case students have to investigate the peculiarities, opportunities and challenges of Erasmus Mundus exchange programs and as a result each member of the group has to present a CV and as the whole group prepare a presentation about peculiarities of the program.

The steps for completing group investigation are the following: groups choose the subtopic for investigation and plan steps of carrying it out, and then they work with their group-mates collecting information, synthesizing it, and arranging it in the appropriate form, prepare the presentation for the whole class and finally present it. While working in the groups students are required to save their findings on the online Padlet wall. In this way the teacher has an opportunity to monitor the work of the group online and check the involvement of every student. At the end of the allotted time for preparing the CVs students have to upload them on the Padlet wall (Fig. 1.). The features which are available on Padlet allow students to be as creative as they can. They can upload pictures, photos, documents and even power point presentations. When they are working on the joint project they can add comments and discuss their ideas in a synchronous or asynchronous way, meaning if all members of the group are online they'd be able to participate at the same time in a synchronous way and if some members of the group are offline they'd be able to respond after some time. After the presentation there is a step of assessment of the individual CVs and group presentations. Assessment can be structured in different forms. It can be peer assessment of CVs and teacher assessment of presentations, or peer assessment of presentations and teacher assessment of CVs. What is more important is the fact that the results of the group work must be evaluated as well as each individual effort within the group.
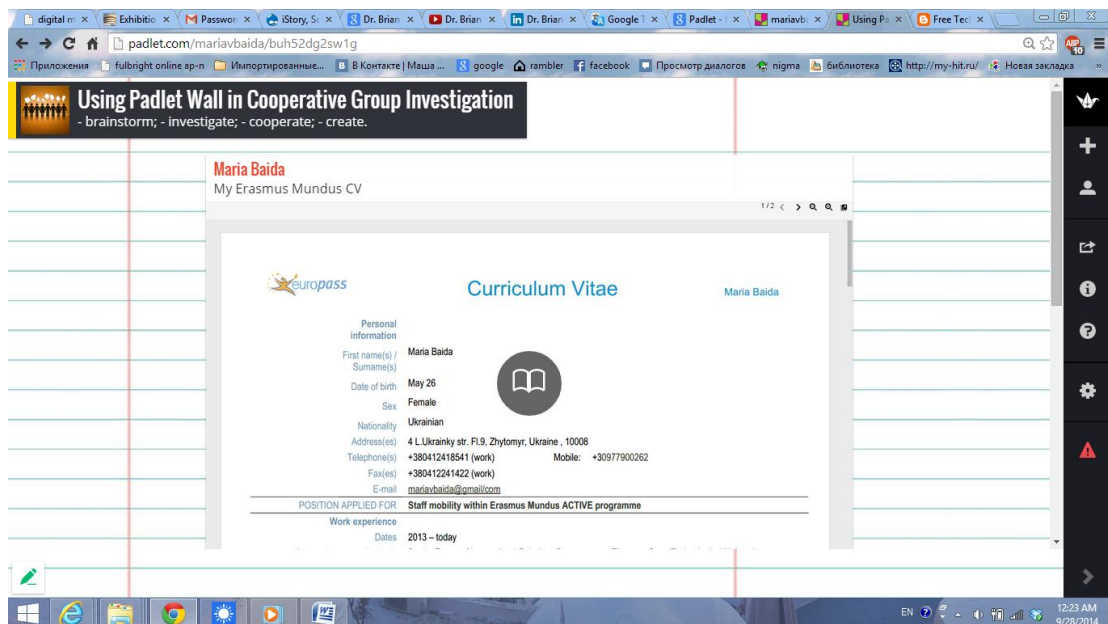
Fig. 1. *Example of Using Padlet Wall in Cooperative Group Investigation*

To sum up, there is an abundance of online resources that have a lot of potential in organizing various types and methods of cooperative learning, but in this abstract we have focused our attention on the usage of group investigation cooperative learning method in combination with online Padlet wall.

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