

V.I.P LEARNING IN BEUN PREP SCHOOL

(Video and Interactive Peer-Learning)

Learning English usually comes up with certain problems that are generally difficulty in communication or not being able to use the language, and feeling unmotivated throughout the learning process. In order to cope with this situation, the School of Foreign Language Teaching conducted a priceless project together with the all classes studying English in prep class. The project let the learners both develop their language skills and enjoy with the learning. We called this project as **VIP Learning**, which means Video and Interactive Peer Learning, as it involves getting in a communicative, social relationship with peers, and supporting it with technology.

As for the implementation of the project, certain tasks were assigned to groups of students to prepare a daily life conversation in which that topic is stated. The groups were generally formed from each classroom. However, the students who asked to work together from different classes were also allowed. Even, the ones who had not met before became team members and got involved in a totally friendly atmosphere. After writing a conversation, they were asked to perform and record it in appropriate environment outside the classroom with a cell phone or any camera device. For instance, one of the groups whose topic was *'sports'* made interviews to the people doing sports on the beach. Or another one assigned with preparing *'shopping'* conversation went to a clothes store and acted as customer and salesperson. The recorded performances were uploaded on both computers in school labs and web page of prep school so that other students who did not take part actively could watch them, too. At first step, this activity was conducted by 15 groups. After watching the videos on computers, different students from different classes became volunteer participants for the next time of task delivery. The project echoed so much that even the same students wanted to prepare a new one again. For the next implementation step of the project, more tasks such as *'Meeting someone'*, *'Supermarket'*, *'TV shows'*, *'Making Suggestions'* were given to volunteer students to be prepared and performed.

This activity helped students to feel more relaxed and enthusiastic for language learning. When they had any problem, their teachers were ready to help them, thus they overcame the barriers. They managed to cope with anxiety and became more active in the lessons. Moreover, they built strong social binds with their peers. They learnt how to work cooperatively rather than competitively.



“It was honorable to see the people looking us enviously.”

A Frame from the video *'Making Suggestions'*

Another benefit was that learners realized technology could be used as an aid while learning a language. Cell phones are here not only for communication, but also for education. Even an integrated camera could be helpful in learning a language and making the course process more entertaining.



A frame from breakfast

During the implementation of the project, the students were reinforced by a ‘surprise award’ which would be given to the best 3 videos. They were all curious about that award, which made them study much harder and get it. At the end of the spring term, the videos titled ‘Making Suggestions’, ‘TV Shows’ and ‘Finding a Job’ were chosen as the best 3 ones, and they were given a breakfast at a café. What the students stated was that though being a challenging process for them to record the videos, it was totally different experience. One of the participants Emre ÖZ shared his feelings: “While we were trying to perform and record our video, we also communicated with people from public. Our video took place in a supermarket, so we even met the manager of the supermarket get permission. It was really enjoyable to realize people watching us zealously.” Volkan BOZKIR, another student from the best videos, told that “We loved the first task so much that we wanted a second one to write a dialogue and perform. We recorded our videos outside on the streets. First, people were surprised when they saw us speaking in English. They thought we were really foreigners. When we explained that it was a kind of assignment, they congratulated us. It was honorable to see the people looking us enviously.”



A frame from the video "TV Shows"

The feelings that the students shared were almost in common. Even the ones who were not active participants, but watched the videos from computer labs thought it was an effective project. They considered it as a useful device to remember the topics and conversations in the videos more easily because they saw their friends acting in an environment they usually shared together. Those ideas were also made more concrete by the questionnaire presented both the participants and watchers of the videos. The results revealed that more than half of the students think technology is helpful and creates fun in language learning. In addition, they agreed on the idea that preparing a video by studying the language they were learning in a collaborative way was enjoyable and fostered learning positively.



A frame from breakfast

Based on the students' positive attitudes, their increasing achievement level and the concrete results gathered from the questionnaires, The School of Foreign Language is going to pursue this project in 2013-2014 academic years, too. Thus, students will be enabled constructive atmosphere in which they can feel more relaxed, enthusiastic; study cooperatively, and become the leading actor of their own language learning 'scenario'.