Network-based Group Learning and its Instruments - The Use of Shared Space in Network-based Learning and Research

The research was defined as a development work and its focus was a mediated action in the learning process of a network-based group. The subjects of study were the instruments that support group work. The shared space was used as a media to improve co-operation and as a promoting base of cognitive tools. The context of the study was the change in working life and in the operation model of the trade unions. The result of the development work was a network-based group-learning model in the trade unions’ shop steward training. The development process created various tools for network-based group learning and for the shop stewards. The network-based group-learning model led into a more self-directed method than originally intended. The learning task, access to materials and linking them by means of the user interface to an oriented agenda, intensified this self-learning process. Teachers felt themselves to be obsolete until they got the idea of using the learning-network as a tool to follow-up and support the group activity.

The starting point for the development work was a model of modernizing the activity, where work development, fairness and social responsibility unite. The main focus of the model is to develop the functionality of working places and professional skills of employees. The target is to improve the usage of the employees’ capacity. The operation model presumes tools, which support co-operation, data processing, networking and that suit into a complex production to co-operative concept building.

The shared space is the main concept of this study. The shared space, which was implemented with a wall table, a display unit or a virtual community, tempted the group members to an intensive knowledge building. The conscious use of the media promoted a dialogue between teachers and students. The shared space can be understood as a physical, virtual, cognitive and cultural space, where a group of people co-operate.

The complementary learning task proved to be the most important cognitive tool of network-based group learning. The role of the teacher changed into maintaining the dialogue and the learning process. Overloaded tasks, technical disorder and unsatisfactory tools in user interface led to frustration among the students. The use of action media and group dynamics brought good results. Network-based activities and playful approach generated a free atmosphere. Taking turns in action learning and network-based learning caused promoted learning.

According to the study the teachers favoured individual working and a light network-based model, the levels of which were individual working, pair work, alternating pairs, team-based working pairs and a network-based community. The role of the team and the researcher in the development work was to keep up the dialogue. The use of the shared space as a tool of co-operation between the teachers promoted the planning and development work.

Aavainsanat-Nyckelord-Keywrods
network-based learning
dialog - shared space
cognitive tools - boundary crossing laboratory
group learning - action research
work development

Säilytyspaikka-Förvaringsställe-Where deposited

Muita tietoja-Övriga uppgifter-Additional information
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