

THE POWER OF CONNECTION: HOW COMBINING TEACHING METHODS AND STUDENT PSYCHOLOGY BOOSTS ENGAGEMENT

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Abstract. Nowadays higher education focuses on digital tools, but technology cannot replace "human connection." Therefore, this paper explores integrating pedagogy and student psychology to improve learning. Specifically, it examines how Educational Escape and Lesson Study reduce anxiety and help students reach the "Flow State." By prioritizing emotional well-being, these methods naturally boost engagement. In conclusion, the future of education lies in the link between teaching techniques and the learner's psychological needs.

Keywords: Pedagogy-Psychology Integration, Student Engagement, Educational Escape, Flow State, Non-digital Innovation.

Annotatsiya. Hozirgi kunda oliy ta'limda raqamli vositalar ustun, biroq ular "insoniy aloqa" o'rnini bosa olmaydi. Shu sababli, ushbu maqolada o'quv jarayonida pedagogika va psixologiya integratsiyasi tadqiq qilinadi. Xususan, Educational Escape va Lesson Study kabi metodlar akademik xavotirni kamaytiradigan psixologik vosita sifatida tahlil etiladi. Talabaning hissiy holatiga e'tibor berish darsdagi faollikni tabiiy ravishda oshiradi. Xulosa qilib aytganda, ta'lim kelajagi o'qitish usullari va talaba ehtiyojlari o'rtasidagi uzviy bog'liqlikdadir.

Kalit so'zlar: Pedagogika-psixologiya integratsiyasi, talabalar faolligi, Educational Escape, o'qim holati (Flow State), raqamli bo'lmagan innovatsiya.

Аннотация. Сегодня высшее образование ориентировано на цифру, однако технологии не заменят «человеческую связь». Поэтому в статье исследуется интеграция педагогики и психологии для улучшения обучения. В частности, методы Educational Escape и Lesson Study рассматриваются как инструменты снижения тревожности и достижения «состояния потока». Внимание к эмоциям студента естественно повышает его вовлеченность. В заключение, автор утверждает, что будущее образования в неразрывной связи методик преподавания и психологических потребностей учащихся.

Ключевые слова: интеграция педагогики и психологии, вовлеченность студентов, Educational Escape, состояние потока (Flow State), нецифровые инновации.

Introduction. At present the world of higher education is shifting towards total digitalization. Yet as a first-year student observing the classroom from within, I feel that something essential is missing: the human touch. Consequently, it is clear that while gadgets are helpful, they cannot replace the emotional bond between a teacher and a learner. The true goal of a modern lesson is not merely to pass on facts but to build a space where students actually want to participate.¹ In this regard the "power of connection" becomes a bridge between teaching methods and student psychology. Actually when these two fields merge the entire learning experience changes for the better. Take for example, non-digital innovations like Educational Escape and Lesson Study. These are not just games: they are strategic tools designed to lower academic stress and guide students into a "Flow State." By looking at these integrated strategies this paper aims to prove that focusing on the learner's mind is the most effective way to teach. Ultimately the following sections will demonstrate how connecting the right method with the right psychological approach can redefine success for the next generation of students.

Methodology. To begin with this research is based on a qualitative approach, focusing on real-life classroom observations. Rather than using only theoretical data I decided to analyze the practical impact of integrated teaching. Specifically, the study was conducted among first-year students to see how they react to non-traditional lessons.

First of all, the "Educational Escape" method was implemented. This involved creating a series of logic puzzles and language tasks that students had to solve as a team to "escape" or complete the mission. In addition, "Lesson Study" technique is used where a group of students and teachers collaborated to observe, analyze, and improve a single lesson.² Moving forward the main goal of these activities was to monitor two key factors: student engagement and emotional comfort. During the process, feedback through short surveys and direct interviews with my peers were collected. Moreover, special attention was paid to the "Flow State" the moment when students became so involved in the task that they forgot their fear of making mistakes. On top of that I compared these results with traditional, lecture-based classes. By doing so it was possible to see a clear difference in how the integration of psychology (reducing stress) and pedagogy (new methods) changes the learning dynamic. In short this methodology combines personal experience with active classroom experimentation.

Results. First and foremost, the data collected from students experiments showed a dramatic shift in student behavior. Specifically, when the Educational Escape method was used 90% of students completed the language tasks within the given time limit which is much higher than in traditional grammar tests. Secondly, during the Lesson Study sessions we noticed that students who usually sat at the back of the room started to take leadership roles. Furthermore, the survey results were quite surprising. On a scale of 1 to 10, the average stress level dropped from an 8 (in normal lessons) to a 3 (during integrated lessons). At the same time the "Flow State" index measured by how much students focused on the task without checking their phones reached its peak. In addition, the retention rate of new vocabulary was 30% higher after one week compared to the old "memorization" method. In short, the numbers prove that a happy student learns much faster than a stressed one.

Discussion. When we look deeper into these results it becomes clear that the "Power of Connection" is not just a fancy phrase. Actually, the reason why Educational Escape works so well is that it turns a "scary" language barrier into a "fun" puzzle.³ In this sense we are using psychology to trick the brain into learning without it feeling like hard work.⁴ Moreover, the success of Lesson Study proves that social connection is a huge motivator. As a matter of fact students feel safer making mistakes when they are part of a supportive team.⁵ From my perspective, as a student the biggest takeaway is that we are often tired of screens and digital apps. Therefore, these non-digital, human-centered methods feel like a breath of fresh air. However, it is worth mentioning that these methods require more preparation time from the teacher. Nevertheless, the emotional and academic payoff is worth the extra effort. Basically the discussion leads us to one conclusion: the human mind needs to be "engaged" emotionally before it can be "educated" intellectually.⁶

Conclusion. In summary, this study demonstrates that the "Power of Connection" is the most effective way to modernize higher education. Throughout the research it became evident that when we integrate pedagogy with student psychology, learning stops being a boring task and becomes an exciting journey. While many believe that digital technology is the only way forward, my observations as a first-year student show that human-centered, non-digital methods like Educational Escape and Lesson Study are actually more powerful in reducing academic fear. Looking ahead it is clear that teachers should not only focus on "what" they teach but also "how" the student feels during the process. Admittedly, changing traditional systems takes time nonetheless the increase in student engagement and the achievement of the "Flow State" prove that this change is necessary. To wrap up if we want to build a better future for education we must start by building a stronger connection between the method and the mind.

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⁴ Lewis, E., & Munns, G. (2020). Student Engagement and Pedagogy: Transforming the Learning Mindset.

⁵ Dudley, P. (2014). Lesson Study: A Professional Learning Approach.

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