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PROJECT WORK IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Abstract

The problem of using project work in teaching English is of great importance. Project work is characterized as one of the most effective methods of teaching and learning a foreign language through research and communication, different types of this method allow us to use it in all the spheres of the educational process. The main idea of project work is considered to be based on teaching students through research activities and stimulating their personal interest.

Key words: project work, effective method, research activity, educational process.

1 Introduction

The problem of using project work in teaching English is of great importance. It is well known that for any teacher the most important thing in the work is to increase the effectiveness of training. This question requires a continuous search for solutions that can optimize the learning process. How can the teacher form a positive motivation of students to study educational material, create conditions for the full disclosure of the creative and intellectual potential of students, the development of their cognitive interests? There are a variety of innovative forms to make learning activities as effective as possible. Project work is characterized as one of the most effective methods of teaching and learning a foreign language through research and communication, different types of this method allow us to use it in all the spheres of the educational process. It involves multiskill activities which focus on a theme of interest rather than of specific language tasks and helps the students to develop their imagination and creativity. Nevertheless, teachers are not keen on the idea of providing project work into their lessons because of the disadvantages this method has. The main idea of project work is considered to be based on teaching students through research activities and stimulating their personal interest.

2 Materials and methods

The fundamental researches in the given field were carried out by such prominent scientists and methodologists as Legutke M., Thomas H., Heines S., Brumfit C., Hutchinson T., Fried-Booth D. and others.

Legutke and Thomas in their book «Process and Experience in the Language Classroom» suggest and analyse three types of projects: encounter projects, which enable students to make contact with native speakers; text projects which encourage students to use English language texts, either a range of them to research a topic or one text more intensively, for example, a play to read, discuss, dramatize, and rehearse; class correspondence projects which involve letters, audio cassettes, photographs, etc. as exchanges between learners in different countries [1].

Another explorer of the Project Work Method, Brumfit, in «Communicative Methodology in Language Teaching» provides the analysis of projects in which advanced adult students elect to work in groups to produce a radio programme about their own country. A range of topics, for example, ethnic groups, religion, education, are assigned to the groups, who research their topic and write and rehearse a script.

Hutchinson in «Introduction to Project Work» dwells upon a project on ‘Animals in Danger’ for secondary school students, in which they use knowledge from Science and Geography to research threatened species, write an article, and make a poster.

Fried-Booth in his book «Project Work» suggests a more teacher-directed example suitable for junior learners at an elementary level, in which they are asked to collect food labels or wrappings from tins, cartons, packets, etc. for a period of a week. These are used to create a wall display with a map of the world illustrated with the labels, which are attached to the relevant countries of origin and export with coloured threads and pins. The map is then used for oral practice and controlled writing.

Another scientist, Haines, in «Projects for the EFL Classroom» considers four types of project work, namely: informational and research projects, survey projects, production projects, and performance and organizational projects [2].

3 Results

Project Work Activities for the Advanced Level.

Taking the Plunge.

1). Ask your class what they think are the main problems of being a more advanced learner. They usually talk about difficult vocabulary, complex structures and other language items. Accept these points but put it to them that there is often a much more fundamental problem, namely how they go about their learning. If any student raises any of the more fundamental areas outlined in the handout, use this as a direct springboard into the next step.

2). Give each student a copy of the following handout.

Being a good advanced learner.

Many learners of English manage to reach a level where they can understand, speak and write for everyday purposes. Yet only a relatively small proportion of these people ever become genuinely advanced users of the language, though many make the attempt. As you are just beginning a course in more advanced English, it is important for you to be aware of what you need to do and how to go about it, so that you can make a success of your course.

You are going to read a short text, with a series of tasks to do as you read. This will provide an opportunity to reflect on your learning and, through your answers to the tasks, will give your teacher valuable information about you as a learner, so that he or she can give you greater guidance for the future.

Beyond spoon-feeding.

In many language courses the teaching at lower levels tends to follow a pattern of what could be described as 'spoon-feeding' – the teacher chooses the elements of the language to teach (the food), plans how to present it (puts it onto a spoon) and teaches (feeds) the learners with it, as if they were children. However, just as children become progressively more independent and in due course have to assume full responsibility for themselves as adults, so learners of a language, as they advance, have to become more independent and assume greater responsibility for their own learning.

To be successful at an advanced level, you will have to commit yourself not only to attending classes but also to spending a substantial amount of time studying out of class. This should partly be directed by your teacher (homework and preparation) and partly through your own initiative.

A typical student with three to five hours of English classes per week should expect to spend about the same number of hours studying out of class – doing grammar exercises and writing tasks, learning vocabulary, reading extensively, and so on. The fewer hours you have with a teacher, the

more you will have to work on your own. Without this kind of commitment, you cannot expect to make a lot of progress. Important questions in learning process:

1. How many hours of English classes do you have each week?
2. How many more hours can you commit to learning English each week?

It is easy to commit yourself to a theoretical number of hours per week, but unless you set aside particular days and times, you will keep finding you are too busy doing other things. So decide now which days and times you are going to dedicate to studying English.

3. In the light of your commitment, how much progress do you expect to make? In what areas (e.g. listening/speaking/reading/writing, accuracy/fluency)? Be specific about your objectives.

Ways of studying.

Making good progress depends not only on how much time you spend but also how you go about studying. For example, how do you organise the things you want to learn?

4. Write about how you organise the notes you take in class and the things you want to learn when studying on your own.

5. What techniques do you use to memorise things?

6. When you are studying alone, you need good reference materials. What dictionaries, grammar books and other materials do you have?

The quantum leap.

Ironically, one of the greatest problems that often arises among more advanced learners is the fact that they can already function in English for a lot of everyday purposes and, instead of extending their knowledge, go on just using what they already know. To be successful at an advanced level, this is not enough. You have to make a 'quantum leap', in other words a significant jump towards something much more sophisticated and wide-ranging. You have to aim to function like a mature, well-educated native speaker of the language. This means that you need to be able to draw upon your experience of the world and to have a reasonable, though not specialist, knowledge of any subject you are speaking or writing about. The content is vitally important, because if this is too limited, your language will be correspondingly limited – you won't need and therefore won't use more advanced structures and vocabulary [3].

7. How old are you?

8. What areas do you feel you have some knowledge about?

9. In what areas do you feel you have very little knowledge?

There are three areas that contribute substantially to making the quantum leap and particularly to writing in a more sophisticated way: observation, imagination and thinking.

10. Do you consider yourself to be good at:

a) observing;

b) imagining;

c) thinking.

Explain your answers.

Good luck with your advanced course.

Ask them to read the text and answer the questions. Set a time limit of thirty minutes. Tell your students that you will want to collect the completed handouts in to read, but that you are interested in what they say, not in how correct the English is. With students that finish early, take the opportunity to speak to individuals and discuss some of their answers.

3). When they have finished, initiate a discussion about what they have read and written. Ask them if they feel they have learnt anything important that they perhaps hadn't thought about before. Encourage an exchange of views among the members of the class. Collect in the completed handouts.

4). Later, go through the handouts, noting down any points you want to use for feedback and any you want to keep for your own reference. Make comments on the handouts about the contents where you feel this would be helpful to the student but don't correct. In a follow-up lesson, preferably the lesson immediately following, go over any points that emerged from the handouts. In

particular, you may want to draw attention to reference materials you would recommend.

Variation. In Step 3, after the students have completed their handouts, put them into groups of four to compare and discuss what they wrote. In particular, ask them to discuss the specific contexts where the quantum leap would be important and the sort of tasks that might involve the three areas of observing, imagining and thinking. This can be very valuable but you will need to set aside about twenty minutes extra.

4 Discussion

A project is an extended piece of work on a particular topic where the content and the presentation are determined principally by the learners. The teacher or the textbook provides the topic, but the project writers themselves decide what they write and how they present it. This learner-centred characteristic of project work is vital, as we shall see when we turn now to consider the merits of project work. It is not always easy to introduce a new methodology, so we need to be sure that the effort is worthwhile. Students do not feel that English is a chore, but it is a means of communication and enjoyment. They can experiment with the language as something real, not as something that only appears in books. Project work captures better than any other activity the three principal elements of a communicative approach.

These are:

- a) a concern for motivation, that is, how the learners relate to the task;
- b) a concern for relevance, that is, how the learners relate to the language;
- c) a concern for educational values, that is, how the language curriculum relates to the general educational development of the learner [4].

A project is an extended task which usually integrates language skills through a number of activities. These activities combine in working towards an agreed goal and may include planning, gathering of information through reading, listening, interviewing, discussion of the information, problem solving, oral or written reporting, display, etc.

Learners' use of language as they negotiate plans, analyse, and discuss information and ideas is determined by genuine communicative needs. At the school level, project work encourages imagination and creativity, self-discipline and responsibility, collaboration, research and study skills, and cross-curricular work through exploitation of knowledge gained in other subjects. Successful use of project work will clearly be affected by such factors as availability of time, access to authentic materials, receptiveness of learners, the possibilities for learner training, and the administrative flexibility of institutional timetabling [5].

Project work leads to purposeful language use because it requires personal involvement on the part of the students from the onset of a project, students, in consultation with their instructor, must decide what they will do and how they will do it, and this includes not only the content of the project, but also the language requirements. So from this point project work emerges as a practical methodology that puts into practice the fundamental principles of a communicative approach to language teaching. It can thus bring considerable benefits to our language classroom, like:

- Increased motivation – learners become personally involved in the project.
- All four skills, reading, writing, listening and speaking, are integrated.
- Autonomous learning is promoted as learners become more responsible for their own learning.
- There are learning outcomes – learners have an end product.
- Authentic tasks and therefore the language input are more authentic.
- Interpersonal relations are developed through working as a group.
- Content and methodology can be decided between the learners and the teacher and within the group themselves so it is more learner centred.
- Learners often get help from parents for project work thus involving the parent more in the child's learning. If the project is also displayed parents can see it at open days or when they pick the child up from the school.
- A break from routine and the chance to do something different.

- A context is established which balances the need for fluency and accuracy [6].

5 Conclusions

On the basis of the literary sources studied we can come to the following conclusions that project work has advantages like the increased motivation when learners become personally involved in the project; all four skills, reading, writing, listening and speaking, are integrated; autonomous learning is promoted as learners become more responsible for their own learning; there are learning outcomes – learners have an end product; authentic tasks and therefore the language input are more authentic; interpersonal relations are developed through working as a group; content and methodology can be decided between the learners and the teacher and within the group themselves so it is more learner-centred; learners often get help from parents for project work thus involving the parent more in the child's learning; if the project is also displayed parents can see it at open days or when they pick the child up from the school; a break from routine and the chance to do something different.

The disadvantages of project work are the noise which is made during the class, also projects are time-consuming and the students use their mother tongue too much, the weaker students are lost and not able to cope with the task and the assessment of projects is very difficult. However, every type of project can be held without any difficulties and so with every advantage possible. The types of projects are information and research projects, survey projects, production projects and performance and organizational projects which can be performed differently as in reports, displays, wall newspapers, parties, plays, etc.

Though project work may not be the easiest instructional approach to implement, the potential pay-offs are many. At the very least, with the project approach, teachers can break with routine by spending a week or more doing something besides grammar drills and technical reading.

The organization of project work may seem difficult but if we do it step by step it should be easy. We should define a theme, determine the final outcome, structure the project, identify language skills and strategies, gather information, compile and analyse the information, present the final product and finally evaluate the project. Project work demands a lot of hard work from the teacher and the students, nevertheless, the final outcome is worth the effort.

Throughout the course paper we can see that project work has more positive sides than negative and is effective during the educational process. Students are likely to learn the language with the help of projects and have more fun.

To conclude, project work is effective, interesting, entertaining and should be used at the lesson.

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ШЕТЕЛ ТІЛДЕРІН ОҚЫТУ ЖӘНЕ ОҚЫТУ САЛАСЫНДАҒЫ ЖОБАЛЫҚ ЖҰМЫС**

Ағылшын тілін оқытуда жобалау жұмыстарын пайдалану мәселесі үлкен маңызға ие. Жоба жұмысы зерттеу және қарым-қатынас арқылы шет тілін оқыту мен үйренудің ең тиімді әдістерінің бірі ретінде сипатталады, бұл әдістің әртүрлі оны білім беру процесінің барлық салаларында

пайдалануға мүмкіндік береді. Жобалық жұмыстың негізгі идеясы студенттерді зерттеу қызметі арқылы оқыту және олардың жеке қызығушылығын ынталандыру болып табылады.

Кілт сөздер: жобалық жұмыс, тиімді әдіс, зерттеу қызметі, білім беру процесі.

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ПРОЕКТНАЯ РАБОТА В ОБЛАСТИ ПРЕПОДАВАНИЯ И ИЗУЧЕНИЯ ИНОСТРАННЫХ ЯЗЫКОВ

Проблема использования проектной работы в преподавании английского языка имеет большое значение. Проектная работа характеризуется как один из наиболее эффективных методов преподавания и изучения иностранного языка через исследования и общение, различные виды этого метода позволяют использовать его во всех сферах образовательного процесса. Основной идеей проектной работы считается обучение студентов через исследовательскую деятельность и стимулирование их личного интереса.

Ключевые слова: проектная работа, эффективный метод, исследовательская деятельность, образовательный процесс.

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ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ КОММУНИКАТИВНОЙ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТИ УЧАЩИХСЯ С ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫМ ЯЗЫКОМ ОБУЧЕНИЯ НА УРОКАХ РУССКОГО ЯЗЫКА И ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ

Аннотация

Человек, являясь социальным существом, с первых месяцев жизни испытывает потребность в общении с другими людьми, которая постоянно развивается. Данное обстоятельство определяет потенциальную непрерывность общения как необходимого условия жизнедеятельности. Высокий уровень коммуникативности выступает залогом успешной адаптации человека в любой социальной среде, что определяет практическую значимость формирования коммуникативных умений с детства.

В статье показан один из подходов к методике формирования коммуникативной компетентности на уроках русского языка и литературы с государственным языком обучения.

Ключевые слова: коммуникативная компетентность, уроки русского языка, задания.

1 Введение

Русский язык в общеобразовательной подготовке подрастающего поколения имеет стратегическое значение: от уровня владения языком зависят успехи в учёбе не только по данной дисциплине, но и по всем остальным предметам; уровень владения языком в значительной мере определяет социальное лицо человека, его культурные и интеллектуальные показатели, его общественную активность, стремление к самообразованию своего духовного начала. Необходимость формирования речевых компетенций определена образовательным стандартом по русскому языку, который в речевую (коммуникативную) компетентность включает овладение всеми видами речевой деятельности и основами культуры устной и письменной речи, базовыми умениями и навыками использования языка в жизненно важных для данного возраста сфер и ситуациях общения. Потому свою задачу, как учитель, вижу в создании условий, развивающей среды, в которой становится возможным выработка каждым