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PROJECT WORK IN TEACHING ENGLISH

The article highlights the importance of project work in teaching English, describes its main peculiarities and types; uncovering how project work influences on the student's education and English learning.

Key words: Project method, multi-skills activity, creativity, research project, survey project, production projects, organizational projects, poster format, final outcome.

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ПРОЕКТНАЯ РАБОТА В ОБУЧЕНИИ АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ

В статье рассматривается важность метода проекта в обучении английскому языку и описание основных особенностей и типов, изучение их влияния на студентов во время обучающегося процесса и их помощь в изучении языка.

Ключевые слова: Метод проекта, многосторонняя деятельность, творчество, исследовательский проект, проект опроса, производительный проект, организационный проект, плакатный формат, последний результат

Project method is one of the modern method of teaching in which, the students point of view is given importance is designing the curricular and content of studies. In this strategy pupils perform constructive activities in natural condition. A project is a list of real life that has been imparted into the school. It demands work from the students. It involves multi skilling 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. M. Legutke utters that the main idea of project work is considered to be based on teaching students through research activities and stimulating their personal interest [5].
Project work involves multi-skill activities which focus on a theme of interest rather than specific language tasks. In project work, students work together to achieve a common purpose, a concrete outcome (e.g., a brochure, a written report, a bulletin board display, a video, an article for a school newspaper, etc). Haines identifies four types of projects:
1. Information and research projects which include such kinds of work as reports, displays, etc.
2. Survey projects which may also include displays, but more interviews, summaries, findings, etc.
3. Production projects which foresee the work with radio, television, video, wall newspapers, etc.
4. Performance/Organizational projects which are connected with parties, plays, drama, concerts, etc [3].
What these different types of projects have in common is their emphasis on student involvement, collaboration, and responsibility. In this respect, project work is similar to the cooperative learning and task-oriented activities that are widely endorsed by educators interested in building communicative competence and purposeful language learning [4].
One of the great benefits of project work is its adaptability. We can do projects on almost any

topic. They can be factual or fantastic. Projects can, thus, help to develop the full range of the learners' capabilities. Projects are often done in poster format, but students can also use their imagination to experiment with the form. It encourages a focus on fluency.

Each project is the result of a lot of hard work. The authors of the projects have found information about their topic, collected or drawn pictures, written down their ideas, and then put all the parts together to form a coherent presentation. In Brumfit's opinion the projects are very creative in terms of both content and language. Each project is a unique piece of communication, created by the project writers themselves [1]. This element of creativity makes project work a very personal experience. The students are writing about aspects of their own lives, and so they invest a lot of themselves in their project.

Project work is a highly adaptable methodology. It can be used at every level from absolute beginner to advance. There is a wide range of possible project activities, and the range of possible topics is limitless.

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 analyze the information, present the final product and finally evaluate the project [2]. Project work demands a lot of hard work from the teacher and the students; nevertheless, the final outcome is worth the effort.

Although recommendations as to the best way to develop projects in the classroom vary, most are consistent with the eight fundamental steps. Though the focus is upon the collaborative task, the various steps offer opportunities to build on the students' heightened awareness of the utility of the language by working directly on language in class.

Step I: Defining a theme.

In collaboration with students, we identify a theme that will amplify the students' understanding of an aspect of their future work and provide relevant language practice. In the process, teachers will also build interest and commitment. By pooling information, ideas, and experiences through discussion, questioning, and negotiation, the students will achieve consensus on the task ahead.

Step II: Determining the final outcome.

We define the final outcome of the project (e.g., written report, brochure, debate, and video) and its presentation (e.g., collective or individual). We agree on objectives for both content and language.

Step III: Structuring the project.

Collectively we determine the steps that the students must take to reach the final outcome and agree upon a time frame. Specifically, we identify the information that they will need and the steps they must take to obtain it (e.g., library research, letters, interviews, faxes). We consider the authentic materials that the students can consult to enhance the project (e.g., advertisements from English magazines, travel brochures, menus in English, videos, etc.). Decide on each student's role and put the students into working groups. If they are not used to working together, they may need help in adapting to unsupervised collaboration. They may also be a little reluctant to speak English outside the classroom with strangers.

Step IV: Identifying language skills and strategies.

There are times, during project work, when students are especially receptive to language skills and strategy practice. We consider students' skills and strategy needs and integrate lessons into the curriculum that best prepare students for the language demands associated with Steps V, VI, and VII.

1. We identify the language skills which students will need to gather information for their project (Step V) and strategies for gathering information. If students will secure information from aural input, we show them how to create a grid for systematic data collection to facilitate retrieval for comparison and analysis.

2. We determine the skills and strategies that students will need to compile information that

may have been gathered from several sources and/or by several student groups (Step VI).

3. We identify the skills and strategies that students will need to present the final project to their peers, other classes, or the headmaster (Step VII). As they prepare their presentations, they may need to work on the language (written or spoken) of formal reporting [6].

Step V: Gathering information.

After students design instruments for data collection, we have them gather information inside and outside the classroom, individually, in pairs, or in groups. It is important that students 'regard the tracking down and collecting of resources as an integral part of their involvement' in the project.

Step VI: Compiling and analyzing information.

Working in groups or as a whole class, students should compile information they have gathered, compare their findings, and decide how to organize them for efficient presentation. During this step, students may proofread each other's work, cross-reference or verify it, and negotiate with each other for meaning.

Step VII: Presenting final product.

Students will present the outcome of their project work as a culminating activity. The manner of presentation will largely depend on the final form of the product. It may involve the screening of a video; the staging of a debate; the submission of an article to the school newspaper or a written report to the headmaster; or the presentation of a brochure to a local tourist agency or hotel.

Step VIII: Evaluating the project.

In this final phase of project work, students and the teacher reflect on the steps taken to accomplish their objectives and the language, communicative skills, and information they have acquired in the process. They can discuss the value of their experience and its relationship to future vocational needs. They can also identify aspects of the project which could be improved and/or enhanced in future attempts at project work [6].

Conclusion: Finally, we should do a lot of planning. Although the project approach requires student input and decision-making in the initial phase of project definition, the teacher's understanding of the outcome and the steps needed to achieve project objectives is crucial. Therefore, before introducing the project, the teacher should identify topics of possible interest, the educational value of the outcome, corresponding activities, and the students' material or cognitive needs in conducting the project.

Project work can only be effective when teachers relax control of their students temporarily and assume the role of guide or facilitator. The teacher can play an important role by diligently overseeing the multiple steps of project work, establishing guidelines, helping students make decisions, and providing instruction in the language when it is needed. Giving students freedom to immerse themselves in the project can lead to motivated and independent learners, but it requires a certain flexibility on the part of the instructor if students are to benefit maximally.

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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