

Importance of Project Work in Teaching Uzbek Language in Higher Education

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Abstract: The problem of using project work in teaching Uzbek is of great importance. Project work is characterized as one of the most effective methods of teaching and learning the 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.

Keywords: motivation, plans, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility, collaboration, research, reports, displays.

Introduction

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 Uzbek 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. [1,40]

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. [1,38]

Methodology

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.

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, 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.[3,65]

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. However, it differs from such approaches, it typically requires students to work together over several days or weeks, both inside and outside the classroom, often in collaboration with speakers of the target language who are not normally part of the educational process.

Results and discussion

Students in tourism, for example, might decide to generate a formal report comparing modes of transportation; those in hotel/restaurant management might develop travel itineraries. In both projects, students might create survey questionnaires, conduct interviews, compile, sort, analyze, and summarize survey data and prepare oral presentations or written reports to present their final product. In the process, they would use the target language in a variety of ways: they would talk to each other, read about the focal point of their project, write survey questionnaires, and listen carefully to those whom they interview. As a result, all of the skills they are trying to master would come into play in a natural way.

Let us consider, for example, the production of a travel brochure. To do this task, tourism students would first have to identify a destination, in their own country or abroad, and then contact tourist agencies for information about the location, including transportation, accommodations in all price ranges, museums and other points of interest, and maps of the region. They would then design their brochure by designating the intended audience, deciding on an appropriate length for their suggested itinerary, reviewing brochures for comparable sites, selecting illustrations, etc. Once the drafting begins, they can exchange material, evaluate it, and gradually improve it in the light of criteria they establish. Finally, they will put the brochure into production, and the outcome will be a finished

product, an actual brochure in a promotional style. Projects allow students to use their imagination and the information they contain does not always have to be factual. [1,80]

Conclusion

In conclusion, the objectives of the paper were to highlight the importance of the project work in teaching Uzbek, to discover how it influences the students during the educational process and if this type of work in the classroom helps to learn the language. 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. Moreover, project work is effective, interesting, entertaining and should be used at the lesson.

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