

PECULIARITIES OF PROJECT –BASED LEARNING AS A MEANS OF DEVELOPING STUDENTS’ LIFE SKILLS METHODOLOGY

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Methods used in the research included empirical methods such as observation, comparison, experiment, survey.

The main object of the experiment: using PBL in developing and forming students’ develop life skills. The experiment was designed in one academic year. It was an elective course. The participants of the experiment were the second grade University students of the specialty “Foreign language: two foreign languages”. 12 students took part in the experiment. The experiment lasted from autumn term for 15 weeks, from September till December 2023. The work program of the specialty “Foreign language: two foreign languages” provides five academic hours of Development of Oral skills per week. There was one group with intermediate language level. The age was mostly 17-19 years old. PBL was shown during the practical lesson on the board, main steps were explained. The topics for PBL were chosen according to the syllabus. Using different resources were also possible (Internet, magazines, books and other).

Discussion

There is no doubt that any notion or projects always have pros and cons. Regarding to this, we offer to look at positive sides of the given method.

Topics for projects were taken from the book “Opportunities”, including Student’s book and Work book and had been used by the students at the lessons.

Taking into account the interests of students, we have created projects with various forms of participation: individual, pair, group.

Before preparing the project, we discussed with the students the progress of the project and the distribution of responsibilities.

Distribution of responsibilities (roles):

Role/duty 1: Divide into groups, come up with the name of the group.

Role/responsibility 2: Stage of active discussion – to identify the problem/ subject/object of research, discuss the causes and further course of action.

Role/Responsibility 3: Select the most relevant information from search sources.

Role/responsibility 4: To work out possible ways to solve problems, to present them clearly. Think over the content of the final product.

Role /responsibility 5: Distribute the responsibilities for the design of the project among themselves.

Role/Responsibility 6: Prepare for the presentation.

Role/responsibility 7: To make a presentation of the final product, to suggest possible options for further research.

Stages of project development:

motivational; planning and preparatory; information and operational; reflexive evaluative.

Stage 1 — motivational

Here it is important for the teacher to create a positive motivational attitude in students. The problem that students solve should be relevant and interesting for them. At this stage, the topic is formulated and the result, the product is determined.

Stage 2 — planning and preparatory

The design and plan of the project were developed, the topic is being selected, the task was set, the organization and content of the upcoming project were discussed; tasks, an action plan were formulated, ways of joint activities were agreed upon and students were divided into groups.

Stage 3 — information and operational

There was an implementation of the project, the search for sources of information, the collection of material. The material was collected, all information was processed and sorted. The role of the teacher at that stage was to coordinate, observe, make recommendations, conduct consultations.

Stage 4 — reflexive evaluation

The 4th stage included project presentation, collective discussion of the result, self-assessment of the activity. That stage was very important, it solved several tasks: the development of scientific speech, the opportunity to demonstrate their achievements, the replenishment of knowledge, understanding the progress and result of work. The number of stages depends on the degree of complexity of the project activity.

Table 2- Stages and terms of preparation and presentation of the project

Stages	Actions
Stage 1. <i>Motivational</i>	Formulation of the topic and the result, determination of the product.
Stage 2. <i>Planning and preparatory</i>	Development of the design and plan of the project, selection of the topic, setting the task, discussion of the organization and content of the upcoming project. Group distribution, naming the group, distribution of responsibilities.
Stage 3. <i>Information and operational</i>	Independent activity of students: Search for information, collection of material. Identifying the necessary information and working on the project.
Stage 4. <i>Reflexive evaluation</i>	Presentation of the final product. Collective discussion of the result. Self-assessment of the activity.

Thus, 8 projects were created, which are shown in the Table 3. As part of our activities, students had the opportunity to practice all the skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening, vocabulary and grammatical skills necessary for mastering within the framework of the work program, with the help of visual samples of answers.

The students were introduced a project activity and we started explaining them what project work is, what kinds of projects there are, how we use them in our lessons and we gave them instructions on how to present information.

Project №1.

As it was mentioned before, for the project work on the lessons, we determined to connect projects with the theme of the lesson. The first project implemented in the framework of the study was the mini-project work called “4 stories”. This is a creative mini-project, where students do not have to do a lot of research and planning. First, we discussed the stages of the project and roles of the students. Learners divided in two groups of three students, one group of four students. They chose the members and the leader of each group themselves. It was important for the students to be in group with someone they like to work.

Table 4-Project №1 description.

Project № 1. «4 stories»

Theme of the lesson	Module 1. Legend or truth
Aims	To develop creativity, imagination and let students to practice on how to present in front of an audience.

Objectives	Put their thoughts in order and use written language to communicate ideas in a variety of ways
Project type	Creative project
Form of work	In groups of 2-3 students
Source of information	A book “Opportunities” Module 1, p.5.
Time of fulfillment	1 lesson (20 minutes)
The result and the form of the presentation	A speech (can be accompanied by a demonstration of drawings, pictures, etc.)
Evaluation criteria	1. An engaging and easily understood story, with a beginning, middle, and end. 2. Appropriate length of story. (3-5 minutes) 3. Engagement and vigor (holding audience’s attention). 4. Responsiveness to audience’s questions. 5. Fluency (complete sentences). 6. Voice control (pitch, loudness, speed, clear enunciation). 7. Did all team members appear to contribute to the presentation?

Results of the 1st project:

Group 1: The group called “Adventurers” decided to read their story one by one. The story was indeed interesting, the structure of the story is full, the sentences were completed and formulated grammatically correct and they had appropriate length of the story according to the criteria.

Group 2: “F.R.I.E.N.D.S.” started with reading their story, showed some pictures from internet, to make the presentation more interesting. The story was interesting too, but the structure was quite not complete.

Group 3 The group “Fantastic Four” decided to come up with side that is more creative and they played a scene of the story. It was very engaging to see the students to turn up this task into something they enjoyed. The purpose of this mini-project work was to develop creativity, imagination and let students to practice on how to present in front of an audience.

Results

Considering the results, we can clearly see that the group developed various life skills such as collaboration, creativity, time management (because *experimental group* had limited amount of time), communication, leadership, work in groups, which will be needed in the future.

Based on the survey of students, the following results were obtained, which are presented in Table 5.

Table 5- Results of the survey on identifying students’ attitude to PBL

Survey question	Answers	
1. Did you enjoy working in a group or in pair?	in groups 66%	in pairs 34%
2. Which task did you like the most? (EG)	project work “My hobby” 83%	Problem solving/Decision making project. “Ecological situation in the modern world” poster, booklet or presentation. 17%
2. Which task did you like the most? (CG)	Speaking exercises, discussions 72%	Essays 15% Grammar exercises 13%

3. What did you remember most about the lesson?	among the answers to this question were: exercises for developing life skills; interviews; creating a poster; grammar rules.	
4. What was the easiest and most difficult?	(EG) among the answers to this question were: presenting the project (hard); making a presentation (easy); everything was easy. (CG) among the answers to this question were: essays (hard); speaking (hard); exercises (easy).	
5. Would you like to continue to carry out various projects in English lessons?	Yes 94% (EG) Yes 90% (CG)	No 6% No 10%

Based on the results, it was noted that mostly students are happy to participate in project activities and the best results of activities are obtained precisely when using the project method.

Conclusion

It has been proved that PBL is an effective and appropriate pedagogical technology. The project methodology allows students to develop a lot of life skills, needed in future.

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