

Advantages of Introducing the Project Method in Foreign Language Lessons

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Abstract

This scientific article presents a retrospective analysis of the project method in the educational education system. In the process of analysis, the concept of the “project” method, its essence, and advantages are revealed. As a result of the generalizations carried out, the advantages of the project methodology were identified as the basis for the implementation of a personal-activity approach to teaching a foreign language.

Keywords: project method, foreign language teaching.

The purpose of this article is to reveal the essence of the project method and its advantages based on a retrospective analysis of the studied theoretical material.

The relevance of the study is determined by the need to constantly improve the system and practice of education, and the social changes taking place in society. Issues of improving the quality of education and the level of development of the student’s personality have been and remain priorities in modern methods of teaching a foreign language.

Among the various technologies, the purpose of which is not only the transmission of knowledge, but the identification, development, growth of the creative interests and abilities of each child, and the stimulation of his independent productive educational activities, the project methodology deserves special attention. The project method originated in the 1920s. in the USA in connection with the idea of a labor school developing more and more widely there. Project-based learning was aimed at finding ways to develop a child’s active independent thinking in order to teach him not only to remember and reproduce the knowledge that school gives, but also to be able to apply it in practice. It was also called the method of problems and was associated with the ideas of the humanistic trend in philosophy and education, developed by the American philosopher, teacher, and psychologist J. Dewey. J. Dewey proposed building learning on an active basis, through the expedient activity of the student, in accordance with his personal interest in this knowledge [5, 42]. Hence, it was extremely important to show children their personal interest in the acquired knowledge, which can and should be useful to them in life. This requires a problem taken from real life, familiar and significant for the child, to solve which he needs to apply acquired knowledge, new knowledge that has yet to be acquired.

The teacher can suggest sources of information, or can simply direct the students’ thoughts in the right direction for independent search. But as a result, students must independently and in joint efforts solve the problem, applying the necessary knowledge, sometimes from different areas, to obtain a real and tangible result.

John Dewey criticized the school system for its isolation from life, the abstract, scholastic nature of all education, based on the acquisition and assimilation of knowledge. J. Dewey proposed a reform of school education, according to which knowledge was to be extracted from practical initiative and personal experience of the child. John and Evelyn Dewey's Schools of the Future are described as essentially project-based learning schools, which, however, were already significantly different and had technical, practical, social and artistic options.

J. Dewey noted: "... knowledge that can be called knowledge, mental education leading to some goal, is given only in the process of close and real participation in the activities of social life" [5, 42].

J. Dewey [5, 46] puts forward a slogan that is one of the main theses of the modern understanding of project-based learning: "Learning by doing." At the same time, J. Dewey identifies a number of requirements for successful learning: problematization of educational material; child activity; connection between learning and the child's life, play, and work. Thus, J. Dewey argues that the child learns material not simply by listening or perceiving with the senses, but as a result of his need for knowledge, and, therefore, is an active subject of his learning.

The project method also received detailed coverage in the works of V.Kh. Kilpatrick and E. Collings (USA). According to W. Kilpartick, the project method is "a method of planning expedient (purposeful) activities in connection with the resolution of any educational and school task in a real life situation" [7, 69]. A somewhat unconventional and emotional definition is offered by the American teacher W. Kilpatrick: "A project is any impact, individual or group, carried out with all the heart" [7, p. 79].

The general principle, therefore, on which the project method was based, was to establish a direct connection between educational material and the life experience of students, in their active cognitive and creative joint activity in practical tasks while solving one common problem.

The project method attracted the attention of Russian teachers at the beginning of the 20th century. The ideas of project-based learning arose in Russia almost in parallel with the developments of American teachers. However, the project method was undeservedly forgotten, because did not give positive results. There were several reasons: the theoretical problem had not been sufficiently studied, which resulted in an ambiguous understanding of the essence of school projects, their typology, and organizational forms of work; the idea imposed from above was not perceived by teachers as something necessary, reasonable, and important for the education of students. As a result, the idea of a design methodology was not developed and research in this direction ceased.

At the same time, he developed actively and very successfully at a foreign school. In the USA, Great Britain, Belgium, Israel, Finland, Germany, Italy, Brazil and many other countries, the ideas of J. Dewey's humanistic approach to education and his project method have found widespread use.

In the 20th century, design, i.e. "the process of creating a project" has become one of the most common types of intellectual activity, and the term project has lost its "originally technical" interpretation. By the project method, M. L. Zueva means "the technology of organizing educational situations in which the student poses and solves his own problems, and the technology of supporting students' independent activities" [6, p. 65].

At the present stage of development of the methodology, domestic and foreign researchers have shown the possibilities and advantages of this method in achieving a qualitatively new level of training and education (O.S. Vinogradova, A.P. Kuznetsova, E.S. Polat, D.L. Fried-Booth, S. Haines); the possibilities of using the project method in teaching computer science were explored (N. Yu. Pakhomova, L.B. Khegai); creating new courses with the introduction of educational projects into the educational process of higher

education (O.S. Vinogradova, I.Yu. Solovyova); using the potential of the project method in teaching foreign languages (E.S. Polat, E.V. Burtseva), etc. Almost all of the listed studies mainly concerned university education or the senior stage of schooling. It should be noted that the project method can and should be used at different levels and stages of training. Of course, the effectiveness of using this method largely depends on its detailed, technological elaboration for a certain stage of training, the study of a whole set of tasks related to the specifics of the subject area, level of training, and standard of education. “The project method involves a certain set of educational and cognitive techniques and actions of students, which allow solving a particular problem as a result of independent cognitive actions with the obligatory presentation of these results” [11, 67].

According to N.V. Matyash, the project method is a teaching system, a flexible model for organizing the educational process, focusing on the self-realization of the student’s personality through the development of his intellectual and physical capabilities, strong-willed qualities and creative abilities in the process of creating, under the control of the teacher, new products that have subjective or objective novelty and have practical significance [10, 31].

From the point of view of I.D. Chechel, the project method is a pedagogical technology focused not on the integration of factual knowledge, but on its application and acquisition of new ones (sometimes through self-education). The active involvement of the student in the creation of certain projects gives him the opportunity to master new ways of human activity in the sociocultural environment [16, 51].

The basis of the modern understanding of design methodology, as noted by E.S. Polat, lies “the use of a wide range of problematic, research, search methods, focused clearly on a real practical result that is significant for the student, on the one hand, and on the other, developing the problem holistically, taking into account various factors and conditions for its solution and implementation of the results” [13, 4].

E.S. Polat considers the project methodology as a set of search, problem-based methods, creative in their very essence, representing a didactic means of activating cognitive activity, developing creativity and at the same time forming certain personal qualities of students in the process of creating a specific product. Thus, the project methodology is an educational pedagogical technology focused not on the integration of factual knowledge, but on its application and acquisition of new ones through self-organization, the systematic organization of problem-oriented search and self-education.

The project method is a means of comprehensively exercising the mind and developing thinking, creativity, independence and preparing schoolchildren for an independent working life. This is a way of implementing innovative activities, which involves containing a formalized set of innovative ideas, strategies for their implementation, as well as descriptions of specific mechanisms and stages of project implementation. The project method is the activity of one student or a group in which they are independent and active throughout the entire cycle: they independently plan and think through the work, carry out assigned tasks and put the results of the work in an explicit and significant form.

What benefits does using the project method provide when teaching a foreign language? The project methodology allows students to be included in real communication, the most saturated with foreign language contacts, based on research activities, on joint work, on seeing the real, and not just the results of their work obtained during the game. The project method is based on the development of students’ cognitive skills, the ability to independently construct their knowledge, the ability to navigate the information space, and the development of critical and creative thinking. The project method is always focused on independent activities of students - individual, pair, group, which students carry out over a certain period of time. This method is organically combined with group (collaborative or cooperative

learning) methods. The project method always involves solving some problem. The solution to the problem involves, on the one hand, the use of a combination of various methods and teaching aids, and on the other hand, it presupposes the need to integrate knowledge, the ability to apply knowledge from various fields of science, engineering, technology, creative, regional studies areas. The results of completed projects must be, as they say, “tangible”, i.e., if it is a theoretical problem, then a specific solution to it, if it is a practical problem, then a specific result, ready for use (in the classroom, at school, in real life). If we talk about the project method as a pedagogical technology, then this technology involves a set of research, search, problem methods, creative in their very essence.

The project method is popular in teaching a foreign language, as it allows students to unleash their creative potential, demonstrate their research abilities, expand their horizons and the boundaries of language proficiency, and gain experience in its practical use.

When using the project method in the educational process, important didactic tasks are solved:

- classes are not limited to the acquisition by students of certain knowledge, skills and abilities, but go to the practical actions of students, affecting their emotional sphere, due to which the motivation of students increases;
- students get the opportunity to carry out creative work within the framework of a given topic, independently obtaining the necessary information not only from textbooks, but also from other sources. At the same time, schoolchildren learn to think independently, find and solve problems, using knowledge from different fields for this purpose, predict the results and possible consequences of different solution options, learn to establish cause-and-effect relationships;
- the project successfully implements various forms of organizing educational activities, during which students interact with each other and with the teacher, whose role changes: instead of a controller, he becomes an equal partner and consultant;
- in project work, the entire process is focused on the student: here, first of all, his interests, life experience and individual abilities are taken into account;
- the individual and collective responsibility of students for specific work within the project is enhanced, since each student, working individually or in a microgroup, must present the results of his activities to the whole group;
- joint work within the framework of a project teaches students to complete a task; they must document the results of their work, namely: write an article for a newspaper, a message, collect and process statistical data, make audio and video recordings, design an album, collage, wall newspaper, etc. .d.

Thus, the project methodology is based on a personal-active approach, which means a reorientation of the entire educational process towards the formulation and solution of cognitive, communicative and research tasks by schoolchildren themselves. This allows us to consider project-based learning as one of the most productive and intensive methods, which contributes to the achievement of high results of training and education of the individual.

The project method has found wide application in educational systems in many countries of the world, mainly because it allows limited integration of students’ knowledge from different fields when solving one problem, and makes it possible to apply the acquired knowledge in practice, while generating new ideas. The main thesis of the modern understanding of project methodology comes down to the following: “Everything I learn, I know, why I need it and where, and how I can apply this knowledge” - and currently attracts many educational systems seeking to find a reasonable balance between academic knowledge and pragmatic skills.

Summarizing the data obtained during the analysis, we present the following conclusions. The project method, being a person-oriented technology of the 21st century, is becoming increasingly in demand in the education system, including due to its pronounced creative, humanistic and social, intercultural orientation.

Project activities have a clearly defined structure and distinctive features, including compliance with the personal needs of students, independence in work, creative direction, focus on practical results, etc.

The use of the project method in teaching a foreign language is to a certain extent determined by the specifics of the academic subject and is characterized by a communicative orientation, situational conditionality, integration of knowledge from different fields, the need to select language material for work, etc.

The role of project methodology in teaching is difficult to overestimate. It allows you to implement the principles of problem-based and activity-based learning and helps to form the basic competencies of students. Working on educational projects contributes to the development of constructive critical thinking in schoolchildren, as well as increasing motivation to learn. This pedagogical technology develops self-presentation skills and the ability to communicate, and therefore works to socialize the student's personality.

The project methodology within the framework of retrospective analysis is based on a personal-activity approach, which means a reorientation of the entire educational process towards the formulation and solution of cognitive, communicative and research tasks by schoolchildren themselves. This allows us to consider project-based learning as one of the most productive and intensive methods, which contributes to the achievement of high results of training and education of the individual.

The leading provisions of the project methodology are based on taking into account the personality characteristics of students; connection between the project idea and real life; on changing the basic pattern of interaction between teacher and students, which presupposes subject-subject, equal-partner educational cooperation between teacher and students; on a significant increase in the level of autonomy of students when solving personally significant problems in the process of active cognitive mental activity; on a significant increase in the level of internal motivation of students to better master a foreign language.

Project methodology is an alternative approach in the modern education system, a new pedagogical technology, which is a set of search, problem-based methods as a didactic means of activating the cognitive activity of students, developing their creativity and at the same time forming certain personal qualities; productive learning, which is based on independent planning, forecasting, decision-making, detailed development of a personally significant problem, scientific research.

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