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## **TECHNOLOGY OF PROJECT ACTIVITY FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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The article deals the sense and peculiarities of application of project technology as an approach of improving the efficiency of English teaching for university students. The author proves the advantages of its implementation as an effective means of student motivating to study a foreign language, revealing their intellectual and creative potential, developing their language skills. She focuses on the formation of self-creative thinking of students. It will facilitate practical application of acquired knowledge.

**Keywords:** *project technology, professional competence, motivation, learning activities, professional self-development.*

New strategic goals of modern education in Ukraine and desire to meet European standards, led to the need of finding practical approaches to train future specialists of a new type. The state requires highly qualified staff with knowledge of foreign languages, professionals, able to perceive new and progressive thoughts consciously, ready to generate and implement the original ideas. Modern competitive qualified professionals must be able not only to use English in their everyday life, but have a sufficient amount of knowledge, skills and abilities: to understand the material at conferences, round tables and seminars by the ear; work online; maintain a conversation and keep the discussion on professional and business topics; find information in the Internet or other foreign sources; prepare and hold presentations on specific topics. One of the components of an effective implementation of these tasks is using a project technology for English language teaching.

Such educators as J. Dewey, V. Kilpatrick and E. Thorndike began to talk about the application of projects in teaching at the beginning of the last century. They tried to find ways to develop active independent thinking of students to ensure that they were able not only to memorize and reproduce knowledge, but also to use their knowledge in practice. At the present stage of development of methodology native (K. Bahanov, I. Zyazyun, A. Kirshova, J. Lerner, A. Piechota, A. Pometun, T. Kruchinina, I. Shinkarenko etc.) and foreign (O. Barmenkova, O. Bihych, N. Vaydal, V. Huzeyeva, J. Winter, V. Kopylova, N. Pakhomov, T. Pokasayeva, E. Polat, R. Rybe, D. Fried-Booth, S. Heinz, T. Hutchinson, W. Tsar'kova, W. Black etc.), researchers demonstrated the opportunities and potential benefits of the project method as a useful approach of training and education. However, despite the availability of a wide range of publications, most of the researchers pay attention to the application of project technology in the school educational process, leaving wide scope for the researches in the field of higher education. This led us to the chosen topic.

*The aim of the article* is to establish and analyse the benefits, content and peculiarities of application of project technology as an approach of improving the efficiency of English teaching for university students. According to the Bologna Declaration the share of classroom work with the student is reduced, but the use of interactive meth-

ods of training of future specialists under the guidance of the teacher is expanded, so the share of self-employment, self-organization, self-education of university students is gradually increasing. In this context, the importance of using of project technology for English teaching becomes more important because it helps to shift the focus on self-study work, activity and creativity of students and the teacher serves as a counsellor, assistant, observer and facilitator.

E. Polat identifies the project «as an exercise program of an organized, long-term, meaningful for the students, research activity using a foreign language, which is performed as in the classroom and in extracurricular time» [3, p. 73]. Its purpose is to abolish the dependence of the student from the teacher through self-organization and self-learning in the process of creating a specific product or solving of a particular problem, taken from a real life. In the European languages the word “project” is borrowed from Latin: the participle ‘projectus’ means «thrown out forward», «striking one’s eye». With reference to a lesson of foreign language, the project is specially organized by the teacher and independently carried out by students, complex of actions, finished with creation of a creative product.

It is clear that the project technology can’t replace the other techniques and methods of teaching a foreign language, but in modern conditions especially in non-linguistic specialities, it has an advantage because it can be used for teaching students who have different skills, abilities and level of language training. The main idea of this approach of teaching English is doing all sorts of exercises which require active mental activity of students, who have to possess definite linguistic skills.

The project technology allows us to solve this didactic problem and turns English classes into discussion or research club, where really interesting, meaningful and practically available to students problems are solved. In this case, the highest project technology value of individualization of learning through reliance on subjective experience and educational interests of students is realized.

It is important that this teaching technology doesn’t focus on the integration of factual knowledge. Instead it focuses on practical application and getting the new information (often through self-education). We fully agree with Y. Polat that the main task of project activity is «to teach students to think independently, to find and to solve problems by applying this knowledge in different areas, be able to predict the results and consequences of different solutions, be able to find causal relationships» [3, p. 75].

Active involvement of students to create professionally oriented projects on various topics gives them a possibility to learn something new, to develop their skills and to try new ways of human activity in the sociocultural environment. It develops constructive critical thinking, self-presentation and teamwork skills (in case of group or pair project), improves the socialization of each student and encourages language learning.

To form necessary students’ language competences required by the programs and standards we should provide the active oral practice for every student group. Project technology will be very useful for this purpose. Of course, the tasks of the project go beyond classroom training and require further self-study work, but it is self-justified, since it is able to provide:

- activity, even those students who tend to keep silence;
- revealing students’ abilities, which provide them with self-confidence;
- improving communication skills of students;
- develop important students’ skills and abilities (making collaborative decisions, professional creative thinking, activity and autonomy in the process of learning, individual and collective responsibility for work done);

- development of research skills (doing tasks the future professionals have to find and analyze the necessary theoretical sources, select illustrations, make conclusions);

- creating conditions for improving and a more thorough studying not only grammar, but other aspects of language;

- development of critical thinking.

Despite all listed advantages, project activity has several disadvantages because it requires teacher's experience, careful planning and discussion with students. Teacher does play the most important role at the preparatory stage. He/she needs to create a wide range of topics, which allow students to implement their knowledge and use personal experience at work. This approach will enhance the effectiveness of training and motivation and allow students to speak during the defence of their project skilfully and consciously. The teacher participates in discussions to ask an initiating question and to occasionally offer a comment, but almost all the discussion in these classes is by the students themselves. The teacher is also responsible for choosing the type of project (research, creative, game, information, telecommunication, multimedia), teaching methods and approaches, group organization, roles sharing, interpersonal relationships in groups, language basis of the project (lexical and grammatical material, conversational clichés), carrying the final assessment with a discussion of behavioural and linguistic mistakes. On the other hand, students, before taking part in project activity, "should master the creative and communication skills, skills to find and analyse the necessary information to use scientific sources, to express their views, to participate in the conversation etc.» [2, p. 73].

Thus, the project technology is considered as an integrated system of education, possessing which students get knowledge, doing practical tasks (projects) that gradually become more complicated, and involve an organized, long and meaningful for students foreign language research activity. This work can be done both in the classroom and outside of classroom time. Project is always a creative activity. It is based on the idea that reflects the sense of the concept of "project" and its pragmatic focus on the result, which was obtained through the solution of an important practical or theoretical problem. It's very important that this result can be seen, thought and used in practice. Projects challenge students to take initiatives. If they sit back and wait for others to interact with them, they will miss opportunities to develop their English. Some students will be reluctant to step out of their comfort zones. But with some encouragement, practice and good modelling, they will develop the skills and courage to initiate meaningful language interaction.

In our opinion the responsible role of the teacher in charge of the project activity, sometimes weak methodological training, inadequate didactic and teaching materials and tools for professionally oriented projects, unwillingness, fear or reluctance of teachers to create a further difficulties for themselves, causes the situation when teachers avoid projects, despite their obvious effectiveness.

The analysis of scientific literature showed that although the project technology is getting more and more fans, there is, according to Y. Polat [4, p. 3], mixing and even substitution of concepts. In recent years there is a tendency to call a project almost any event and the lack of consistency in the development of the theory and practice of project reduces the effectiveness of foreign language and practical activity.

After investigating the classification of projects, proposed by A. Aliksiychuk and V. Fedorchuk [1, p. 9], we identified the types of projects that can be used in teaching a foreign language of professional focus:

- according to the nature of dominant project activity: search, research, information, creative, game, telecommunication, multimedia, construction, practice-oriented;

- according to the implementation of interdisciplinary connections: monosubject, cross-curriculum;

- depends on the nature of the coordination of the project: direct – rigid or flexible, indirect, hidden – implicit;

- depends on the nature of contacts: group, local, regional, national, international;

- depends on the amount of the participants: individual, collective, pair, group, mass;

- according to the duration of the project: long, medium length – from a week to a month, short.

Despite this wide range, project activity has a very clear structure, which teachers must adhere to for the sake of improving the efficiency of teaching English. Scientists (O. Kirshova, Y. Polat, O. Piechota, A. Pometun, V. Black etc.) consider the following stages of project work:

- the first stage – preparatory: selection and discussion of the project theme, of formulating of the problem, exploring new language material, development of project structure, discussion of result of the project activity and the ways of its presentation;

- the second stage – work management: searching information (reading texts, the preference book, interviews, surveys); discussion the information and the first results in groups;

- the third phase – intermediate control: project design discussion, documenting it (at this stage students are asked to make a poster, brochure, short video or album with small texts, images, photos according to the chosen topic);

- the fourth stage – a presentation: discussion the methods of project presentation in groups, project documenting, project presentation;

- the fifth stage – summarizing: discussion of the project, final assessment.

Clear planning and implementation of project activity into university education allows teachers to turn it not in an entertainment event, but into effective practical learning process of the improvement of language skills. It should be noted that in the process of project activity, teachers should take into account the professional specialization of students, their language skills, level of their training and level of complication of tasks. We cannot offer tasks, which are impossible or too difficult for students. This destroys the main idea of project activity – «a movement from theory to practice, harmoniously combining academic knowledge with pragmatic, following their respective balance at each stage of training» [3, p. 18-20].

Thus, the effectiveness of using the project technology in foreign language teaching is, above all, in developing students' cognitive skills, critical thinking and communication skills, in forming the ability of self-education and choosing information on given topic.

The project technology is an effective approach of training of a competent person, because those students, who participate in project activities, improve their skills in cooperative work, skills to work with information sources, to model and develop the way of solving problems, implement research and practice-focused tasks, get experience of self-employment. Project activity provides a gradual moving from theory to practice and harmonious combination of academic knowledge and pragmatic at each stage of learning.

Thus, mentioned benefits of using technology of professionally oriented project activity in the teaching English is not exhausted. It gives us a wide range of perspectives for further researches. The next work can determine the criteria of the effectiveness of project technology using in teaching English for non-linguistic students.

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#### ТЕХНОЛОГІЯ ПРОЕКТНОЇ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ ПРИ ВИВЧЕННІ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ У ВНЗ

Проаналізовані зміст і особливості застосування технології проектів із метою підвищення ефективності навчання англійської мови студентів ВНЗ. Обґрунтовано переваги її впровадження як ефективного засобу мотивації студентів до вивчення іноземної мови, розкриття їх інтелектуального та творчого потенціалу, розвитку мовленнєвих умінь і навичок. Акцентовано на формуванні самостійного креативного мислення студентів, що сприятиме практичному використанню набутих знань.

**Ключові слова:** *технологія проектів, професійна компетентність, мотивація навчальної діяльності, професійний саморозвиток.*

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#### ТЕХНОЛОГИЯ ПРОЕКТНОЙ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ ПРИ ИЗУЧЕНИИ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА В ВУЗЕ

Проанализированы содержание и особенности применения технологии проектов с целью повышения эффективности обучения английскому языку студентов вузов. Обоснованы преимущества ее внедрения как эффективного средства мотивации студентов к изучению иностранного языка, раскрытие их интеллектуального и творческого потенциала, развития речевых умений и навыков. Акцентировано на формировании самостоятельного креативного мышления студентов, способствовать практическому использованию приобретенных знаний.

**Ключевые слова:** *технология проектов, профессиональная компетентность, мотивация учебной деятельности, профессиональное саморазвитие.*

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