

THE ROLE OF A TEACHER IN THE PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

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Abstract

The present article aims at underlining the effectiveness of project-based learning in organizing students' independent work and the teacher's role in the implementation of this method. Project-based learning, which involves the independent solution of cognitive and creative tasks through critical rethinking and augmentation of knowledge and skills, has gained its huge popularity in teaching. The paper has importance to concern the role of a teacher organizing students' independent work with the help of project method, and to identify how students can improve their foreign language accuracy through carrying out project works.

Keywords: project method, foreign language teaching, independent work, mutual assistance, monitor, facilitator.

INTRODUCTION

Education should give a person not only the amount of basic knowledge in a particular subject, as well as in a foreign language, but also the ability to perceive and master new knowledge independently. In the modern world, the informatisation of society and the processes associated with expansion of scientific, economic, cultural, tourism ties set new tasks for education. Teachers have the need not only for the formation of basic competencies in students, knowledge and skills. They also need to teach students to apply the material covered in practice, in the process of communication with native speakers of a foreign language. To accomplish these tasks, it is necessary to improve technologies and methods of teaching. Educational projects are one of the effective teaching methods that allow achieve the intended goals.

Combining the project method and the usual classroom-lesson systems are rather difficult issues for a teacher. An integral condition for the effective organization of independent work of students is the presence of control over its results. It is also



necessary to note the requirements for the content and form of assignments for independent work.

The effectiveness of independent work in the learning process largely depends on the conditions of its organization, content and nature of tasks, the sequence of their construction, the source of knowledge, the relationship of existing and new knowledge in the assignments, the quality of results achieved, and so on. Teachers have great impact on implementing them, and are given the role of a leader, mentor, and organizer.

The relation of the teacher with his or her students is considered to be much closer in project method than in the ordinary class teaching. The teacher acts like a friend, an elder brother working together with the students and helping them to gain sufficient experiences. Teachers act like the head of the group and give all types of necessary directions. The followings are more detailed analysis of teacher's role in project method.

First, the teacher must identify whether the topic to be investigated is appropriate for students and subject, or not [3]. Teachers are required to prepare tasks that can form the competencies of students, have a problematic nature, and take into account individual capabilities, interests of students. Tasks are recommended to be not stereotyped, but interesting for students, so that to prompt them to take action to solve the problem. Projects are productive and enlightening if the topic under investigation is interesting to most of the students. To achieve this, the teacher can benefit greatly from listening to students' spontaneous discussions, observing their activities that often reveal their interests, and probing their thoughts. In addition, the teacher should make sure that many aspects of the topic are directly observable by the students.

As soon as the teacher identifies a topic of particular interest to the students, he or she can engage the students in creating a topic web or list of related sub-topics. This process helps them become aware of a wide range of options that could be included in the investigation of a topic—field trips, visiting experts, and so forth. The teacher facilitates the forming of small groups of learners to investigate particular sub-topics that interest them. Forming small groups requires careful thinking by the teacher; the students must work well together and the group should include a range of abilities.



As the investigation proceeds, the teacher monitors the progress of each group and the whole class. The teacher can also remind the student of their earlier discussions concerning the progress of the project, and encourage the small groups to share their findings with the entire class judging their progress to be of potential interest to their classmates. In many cases the teacher meets with the small group before their presentation to the whole class to rehearse with them best ways to present the work to their classmates [3].

One more important aspect of project work is creating representations of related topics and objects, such as observational drawings, sculptures, etc., depending on the ages of the students. The teacher has a key role in suggesting possible objects to represent and making available appropriate materials for the students to use.

The teacher is also essential to building a classroom culture of mutual assistance among the students. He or she may suggest to a student who is having some difficulties creating a cardboard construction representation that a particular classmate might be able to help because he or she has done similar things recently.

The teacher also helps determine when it is time to complete the project, and plan a culminating event. Even the youngest students will eventually feel that they have “had enough” of the topic. If, after watching and listening carefully to the students, the teacher feels they have reached this point, he or she might indicate at a group meeting that the topic may have been explored fully enough. Afterwards, they plan a culminating event and prepare some final documentation to help others appreciate what they have accomplished. Usually a culminating event is focused on reporting to the student’s parents what they have accomplished. Depending upon the ages and levels of the students, the teacher can offer detailed assistance on how to present their work at a special meeting for their parents. In addition, the teacher can involve the student in preparing a written report or summary of their work, as well as engage the students in completing the documentation of the project.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, teachers should motivate the students in such a manner that there is whole hearted cooperation of students in the process. Furthermore, teacher helps the students in proper planning of the project and discusses with them all the pros and cons of the project. The teacher is required to correctly direct the creative potential of students, to promote successful search work by modeling certain situations and



conditions, to stimulate research work, analytical and search activities in the process of solving the problem.

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