

## HOW WE CAN USE PROJECT WORK IN THE CLASSROOM

Bozorova Fazilat Abdullayevna

*Uzbekistan Republic, Surkhandarya region, Kumkurgan district, English teacher of School №18*

[fazilatbozorova677@gmail.com](mailto:fazilatbozorova677@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** *In this article is giving information about how we can use project-based learning in the classroom and also it is directed to discuss about advantages of using project work. Moreover, this research is given some examples how to use it during the lessons.*

**Key words:** *ELT classroom, four skills, autonomous learning, interpersonal relations, space, material, resources.*

Project work is becoming an increasingly popular feature within the ELT classroom. Common projects are class magazines, group wall displays about students' countries and designs for cities of the future.

A project involves teenagers in deciding together what they want to do to complete a project whilst the teacher plays a more supporting role.

Some advantages of project work are:

- **Increased motivation** - learners become personally involved in the project.
- **All four skills**, reading, writing, listening and speaking are integrated.
- **Autonomous learning** is promoted as pupils 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.
- **Interpersonal relations** are developed through working as a group.
- **Content and methodology** can be decided between the students and the teacher and within the group themselves so it is more learner centred.
- **Teenagers often get help from parents** for project work thus involving the parent more in the child's learning. If the project is also displayed parents can see it at open days or when they pick the child up from the school.
- **A break from routine** and the chance to do something different.
- **A context is established** which balances the need for fluency and accuracy.

Planning the project

- Opening

To give learners an idea of what projects are and what they should be aiming to produce, it is good to have examples of past projects: a photocopy of a previous group newspaper or a photograph of a wall display.

- Proposing

After explaining the idea behind the project we ask learners to propose a scheme of work:



- What they want to include in the project
- What form it will take
- Who will be responsible for what
- An idea of the time it will take to produce each part of the project
- Any material or resources they might need

We would then sit down with each group for 10 minutes to discuss their proposals. At this point the evaluation procedures would also be explained.

- Time

Allocate an agreed amount of time for the project. For a summer 60 hour course of 3 hours a day we can dedicate 5 hours to project work so approx. 6 sessions of 45 minutes each with a round up session at the end. We would also have the sessions on the same day each week - Wednesday, and Friday, for example, so learners know to bring materials to class on that day.

- Space

Show the learners the space they will have for the project, it could be wall space or a corner of the classroom, so they have some idea how much material they should produce and can plan the layout.

- Material and resources;

Provide the learners with materials they might need: card, scissors glue, paper etc. It is fairly common now for learners to want to use the Internet to find information for their projects. Encourage a keen student with Internet to do this at home! If there is time and Internet available in the school make sure the students have informed you of exactly what they're looking for - photos- or that they have prepared a list of information they want to find. Simply giving the learners time on the computers can lead to them aimlessly surfing the net. If the facility is available learners often like to write finished drafts of their work on the computer.

- Presentation

Projects need to be seen, read and admired so schedule the last project session as a presentation. Ask the group to prepare a task for the others in the class to do connected to the project: it could be a quiz with questions for a wall display, a crossword using vocabulary for the project or comprehension questions for a video that learners have made.

- Evaluation

As with any piece of work a project needs to be acknowledged and evaluated. It's not enough to just say 'that's great' after all the work learners have put in. I use a simple project evaluation report, which comments on aspects of the project such as content, design, language work and also evaluates the oral presentation stage of the project.

Some possible drawbacks to project work

- Learners using their own language;

If the class are monolingual they may use their L1 a lot so you should decide whether the benefits of doing project work outweigh this factor.



- Some students doing nothing

By giving more freedom to the students you may also be giving them the freedom to do nothing! If the project is planned carefully and roles decided at the proposal stage this is less likely to happen.

- Groups working at different speeds;

One group may have 'finished' the project after a couple of hours and say they have nothing to do. Remind them it is their responsibility to fill the time allocated to project work and discuss ways they could extend the work they have already completed.

Come to the conclusion, project-based learning is the most encouraging way to the learners and also it is so effective method for teachers. There are also many other ideas but In my opinion, these shows the variety of work which can be used.

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