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ABOUT PLM USING IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE WRITING TEACHING PRACTICE IN HIGHER AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Abstract. This article regards different aspects of project method applying in teaching foreign languages practice both in higher and in secondary schools. Special attention is paid to describing advantages and problem zones of so called collaborative (team) foreign language writing teaching on the base of an experimental scientific-research group. In this connection the authors offer a brief review of practical results obtained on the base of middle and senior scholars' free speech activity analysis in the frame of their participation in a joint country specific linguistic contest.

Key words: project method, interactive environment, multi-stage experiment, scientific-research group, academic writing, collaborative (team) work, key linguistic-cultural competences, skills development, scholar process intensifying, systematic problems solution, free speech activity, material selection.

As it is universally known, the theoretical concept of project (learning) method (PLM) originated in the very beginning of the 20-th century in the frame of generally existing education constructivist philosophy [1]. Its initial name «problematic» [2] can be easily explained by the fact that it really supposes solving of any possible problems occurring by means of necessary material selection and thorough, deep analysis. At present the PLM broad spreading and multi-level using in various educational establishments on a global scale is greatly owing to continuous implementing of ultra-modern interactive environment enhanced teaching technologies with possible students' moving in the very centre of the learning process as its main actors. In most Russian and foreign secondary and higher schools, it is widely applied together with case-methods, brain attacks, business and role-plays, forums, discussions, etc.

The theoretical foundation of active learning as a phenomenon was built primarily in the 1990-s in connection with the massive introduction of computer-based technology in education, in particular through the worldwide web (www), e-mail, and forums [3]. The emergence of multiple mobile and ubiquitous technologies in the 2000s gave a new impulse to theories of digital learning favoring learning-in-context scenarios [4, 5]. Worldwide, international frameworks are recently being developed for the acquisition of digital competences, including the Educational Technology Standards and the Framework for 21st Century Learning, which «set a standard of excellence and best practices in learning, teaching and leading with technology in education» [6, p. 134]. In this connection a particular importance is now attributed to practically tended (inter)active technology enhanced PLM-s as optimal ones being primarily aimed at the key professional competences forming, gaining visible and valuable results what is in the actual context of Life – long learning (LLL) globally acknowledged conception [9].

PLM using in foreign languages learning practice, for example in scientific groups, research circles and societies is stipulated by an actual necessity of gaining sufficient competences and adequate skills in the sphere of independent research, such as collecting and treating of special material to be used in further oral and written speech activity. It goes without saying that in the process of projects (collective, individual, pair ones, etc.) fulfilling students are supposed to attain so much needed habits of creative thinking, new information independent analyzing, taking adequate decisions in non – standard situations frequently emerging in our life context. At the same time, they can also estimate fully enough the proper results of their own personal activity, using at most scholar, scientific, methodological and reference literature.

It's quite evident that PLM use in foreign language classes supposes the necessity of practical material considerable and preliminary working out, since students usually are not keen on its presenting by themselves.

Just for this reason such learning in rather small or average groups should be preferably started with short-term, mono-thematic projects [8, 9]. As far as inter-disciplinary research projects of longer term are concerned, they should be better used in a form of tests just at the final stage of learning cycle. One of such creative endeavors on active, technology-assisted project learning was implemented within 2014–2015 academic year in our practice of senior students' s teaching English writing and composition in an experimental scientific research group «School of Young Linguists», which has been successfully existing for several years already in the Institute of foreign languages, Petrozavodsk State University (named earlier «The faculty of foreign languages» of Karelian State Pedagogical Institute).

As it is universally known, any kind of academic writing, foreign language writing practice including, is traditionally considered to be taught as a complex, heavily structured activity done quite alone (individually) over many hours of rigorous work, with minimal use of technical devices [2, 3]. Thus, starting teaching it on a project base, collaboratively, interactively and on top of that with the use of state-of-art technology, must be going against all ingrained expectations. One more obstacle probably encountered when teaching foreign (English) composition in a transparent interactive environment can concern the mental processes involved in writing [4]. This can be best demonstrated on a writing sample, undoubtedly not typical, taken from a senior pupil's mini-essay on the topic «Smiling in Russian and western communicative context»:

«Many people in the United States and other Western countries believe smile as distinct culture, it is essential in everyday activities. In Russia the habit of smiling is not fixed or stereotype. I believe that to smile is always possible and sometimes necessary. Smile hides all the bad emotions and gives people pleasure. People think that this man is all well and they themselves will be better from this. But the main thing is not to overstate this, but it may think that you are not all right in the head and you will be shunned. Smile always disposes a man to himself and helps to find a common language. If people often smiled at each other the world would be much better».

Of course, this citation (errors are marked in red) clearly shows some gaps in the pupil's knowledge that can be fairly easily filled in by referring to clear and specific rules in writing. Any possible teacher's comments on it can't be specific and clear enough for one reason: one is not sure what is going on here. The writer's mental processes become to us quite opaque. Since we don't know what made the student come up with this sentence, we can't be thus sure how to lead him through the process of revising, let alone organize this process in such a manner that it is active, collaborative and technology-effective. Just for these reasons, even before we started the project implementing several strategies were developed to teach writing in an active, student-centered environment. First, we tried to make special assignments, which were conductive to active learning. In this connection, we asked our senior pupils to select topics that were relatable to them, preferably based on their previous knowledge and experience; besides, most of these assignments required fieldwork. Second, we started giving our schoolchildren frequent feedback on their multiple drafts (or, more commonly, sample paragraphs). Over two or three months of using these two strategies in our experimental group, we saw a significant increase in the quality of written papers, which was an indication that they could really work.

As far as collaborative writing itself is concerned as a project model, it surely has some «pluses» and «minuses» [7]. From one hand, using it can save much time and effort; so instead of commenting on for example ten papers, we have to deal only with four or even fewer. However, the trouble is that our pupils more than once expressed their dislike towards collaboration in class or in a group, primarily because of so called «team loafers» and thus having to pick up their shares in order to get a decent grade. Another problem consisted in our pupils' usual overcharge with studies hindering much our meetings in extra school time. Besides all of them had undoubtedly quite different writing styles that could hardly be adapted to each other. So in the very beginning of our experiment the pupils were given enough time for adapting to a collective style of essays composing by diving the whole work into several parts, for example, introduction, one or two paragraphs, etc., each of them being successively checked and commented upon. In such a way they were getting used to a so called «collaborative (team) writing».

At last, a serious challenge is the «state-of-art» technology itself, i.e. special type interactive boards and medias cape. To tell the truth, the Microsoft Office with its built-in tools of dictionary, thesaurus, bibliography, and so on fits the purpose of writing, revising, and editing better than the ultra-modern equipment that we have got in our school classrooms. So, during our project experiment we did our best trying to find a way to use these devices in a manner, engaging for the students. In particular, we have just tried to guide them through specially prepared materials or asked them to explore the web on their own with the help of personal digital devices having access to the internet. For example, during our discussion on the modern art we asked them to log into the home page of Moscow Art Museum and navigate through its collection, directing them to particular pieces for discussion. Alternatively, we asked them to find certain information on the web using

sets of key words. In this way all instructions given became at once student-centered (active) and technology-enhanced. While working at the project we have also discovered that our instructions and guiding actions alone turn out to be not sufficient; one should also pay attention to the psychological factor, that is considering the students' personal character, temperament features. It's quite necessary in order to eliminate arguing, conflicts, quarrels, possibly emerging in such a context. In this connection we tried to use the so called Leadership Compass[1] – a special guide elaborated for collaborative work on the base of North American Indians' practice of keeping healthy relations in a tribe [8, 9]. So, just at the first project studies the pupils were to guess what personal type they can relate themselves to: the northern type – a warrior, the southern type – a quack, the western type – a teacher or the eastern type – a prophet. After that we lead a discussion on the point: what features of this or that personal type should be taken into consideration while working in a team. All over the period of project learning the students were also offered to fulfill the following tasks: to estimate their own contribution into the whole work, to express their wishes towards other group members and to analyze the results of collaborative efforts. At the final stage of our project activity we could see quite clearly a considerable increase of students' linguistic culture and speech habits level, in particular, a great improving of their writing and composing skills. This can be proved rather obviously by their successful participation in a linguistic quiz for senior students «Discovery» elaborated and carried out by the staff of our institution within the past two academic years (2014–2016). The first places in the final rating were taken by the members of our experimental research group students, having gained maximal points in the second contest tour devoted to free composition. Of course, it shows once more a high effectiveness of PLM, presenting a so called «starting ground» for applying various teaching technologies. This is provided primarily by its basic person – tended approach, making a student an active subject of learning process.

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С. Р. НЕДБАЙЛИК, Є. І. ЦИПКІН
ПРО ВИКОРИСТАННЯ ПРОЕКТНОГО МЕТОДУ В ШКІЛЬНІЙ І ВУЗІВСЬКІЙ ПРАКТИЦІ НАВЧАННЯ ІНШОМОВНОМУ ПИСЬМУ
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Анотація. У даній статті розглядаються різні аспекти використання проектного методу при навчанні іноземним мовам у вузівській і шкільній практиці. Особливу увагу приділяється опису як переваг, так і проблемних зон так званого колективного навчання іншомовному письму на базі експериментальної

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[1] For the first time we learned about Leadership Compass from the materials of a scientific – research conference On Course (On Course National Conference), Long Beach, California, 2012. The description and recommendations for using this Compass are widely accessible in the Internet, for example, Leadership compass: Appreciating Diverse Work Styles http://bonnernetwork.pbworks.com/f/BonCurLeadershipCompass.pdf.

науково-дослідницько групи. У цьому зв'язку автори пропонують загальний огляд практичних результатів, які були отримані на основі аналізу самостійної мовної діяльності школярів середніх та старших класів, які брали участь в сумісному лінгвокраєзнавчому конкурсі.

Ключові слова: проектний метод, інтерактивне оточення, багатоетапний експеримент, науково-дослідницька група, академічне письмо, колективна (групова) робота, ключові лінгво-культурні компетенції, розвиток навиків, інтенсифікація навчального процесу, систематичне вирішення проблем, самостійна мовна діяльність, відбір матеріалу.

С. Р. НЕДБАЙЛИК, Э. И. ЦЫПКИН
ОБ ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИИ ПРОЕКТНОГО МЕТОДА В ШКОЛЬНОЙ И ВУЗОВСКОЙ ПРАКТИКЕ ОБУЧЕНИЯ ИНОЯЗЫЧНОМУ ПИСЬМУ
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Аннотация. В данной статье рассматриваются различные аспекты применения проектного метода при обучении иностранным языкам в вузовской и школьной практике. Особое внимание уделяется описанию как преимуществ, так и проблемных зон так называемого коллективного обучения иноязычному письму на базе экспериментальной научно-исследовательской группы. В этой связи авторы предлагают общий обзор практических результатов, полученных на основе анализа самостоятельной речевой деятельности школьников средних и старших классов, участвовавших в совместном лингвострановедческом конкурсе.

Ключевые слова: проектный метод, интерактивное окружение, многоэтапный эксперимент, научно-исследовательская группа, академическое письмо, коллективная (групповая) работа, ключевые лингво-культурные компетенции, развитие навыков, интенсификация учебного процесса, систематическое решение проблем, самостоятельная речевая деятельность, отбор материала.

Недбайлик Сабина Рудольфовна – кандидат филологических наук, доцент кафедры немецкого и французского языков Института иностранных языков ФГБОУ ВО «Петрозаводский государственный университет». Научные интересы: теория лингвистики, лингвокультурология, методика преподавания иностранных языков в высшей школе. Участие в разработке совместных международных проектов по обучению иноязычному письму и композиции в интерактивной среде.

Цыпкин Эрнест Иосифович – доцент кафедры немецкого и французского языков Института иностранных языков ФГБОУ ВО «Петрозаводский государственный университет». Научные интересы: методика преподавания иностранных языков в высшей школе, лингвокультурология.

Недбайлик Сабіна Рудольфівна – кандидат філологічних наук, доцент кафедри німецької і французької мов Інституту іноземних мов ФДБОУ ВО «Петрозаводський державний університет». Наукові інтереси: теорія лінгвістики, лінгвокультурологія, методика викладання іноземних мов у вищій школі. Участь у розробці сумісних міжнародних проектів з навчання іншомовному письму і композиції в інтерактивному оточенні.

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