

Shlyakhtina O. S.

Senior Lecturer of the Department of Modern Languages, Humanitarian Faculty of
National University of Shipbuilding after Admiral Makarov (Ukraine, Mykolaiv),

adastra7@ukr.net

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROJECT WORK IN TEACHING ESP TO ENGINEERING STUDENTS

Project-based learning is one of the most important constituent necessary for successful teaching of English for specific purposes. This article is the study of different ESP tutors' and researches' experience and understanding the benefits of project work in ESP classrooms with engineering students in particular. There have been defined types of project work and its steps in ESP course for engineers.

Key words: *English for Specific Purposes (ESP), project work, method, communication, multi-skill activities, problem solving, content, teamwork.*

The problem of using project work in teaching English for special purpose is of great importance. In the context of engineering education project work is characterized as one of the most effective methods of teaching and learning a foreign language through research and communication, different types of this method allow us to use it in all the spheres of the educational process. It involves multi-skill activities which focus on a theme of interest rather than of specific language tasks and helps the students to develop their imagination and creativity.

From a content perspective, «design projects offer opportunities to approximate professional practice, with its concerns for social implications; integrate and synthesize knowledge; and develop skills of persistence, creativity, and teamwork» [5; 58]. Design projects, thus, cover training in the skills areas that engineers need to possess: collaboration, communication and continuous learning. From a linguistic perspective, projects represent an authentic scenario where students need to communicate on planning, organization, methods, problem solving, and content, progress monitoring and reporting. These and many other communicative events and situations offer

learners a field for experimentation with different language forms and functions so that language becomes an integrated and essential factor for completing a concrete task. Furthermore, Wong and Nunan [6; 155] have noted that effective learners endorse an instrumental view of «language as a tool for communicating», which they find epitomized in project-based learning. Besides communication skills, Musa, Mufti, Latiff, and Amin [4; 194] have mentioned students' exposure to team work, conflict management and decision making in project-based learning.

The project's global goals for language learning are the improvement of technical communication skills, writing skills and research strategies. Its language learning objectives are searching for and working with literature on a scientific topic; recognizing and implementing features and conventions of technical-scientific writing; adopting appropriate language, register, and style for technical-scientific writing; expanding subject-specific vocabulary in context; following a given template for writing technical-scientific texts; reporting results according to a given structure; and peer-reviewing and editing technical texts.

According to the purposes we have defined the following tasks to analyze:

- identifying the types of projects and analyzing their benefits and peculiarities for engineering students, studying the difference between the types of project work and their effectiveness;
- analyzing the project work organizing procedure to be used in ESP classroom;
- identifying different project work skills engineering students should acquire in connection with their professional needs.

The fundamental researches in the given field were carried out by such prominent scientists and methodologists as Legutke M., Thomas H., Heines S., Brumfit C., Hutchinson T., Fried-Booth D. and others.

Legutke and Thomas in their book «Process and Experience in the Language Classroom» suggest and analyse three types of projects: encounter projects, which enable students to make contact with native speakers; text projects which encourage students to use English language texts, either a range of them to research a topic or one text more intensively, for example, a play to read, discuss, dramatize, and rehearse [3; 47].

Haines in «Projects for the EFL Classroom» identifies four types of projects: informational and research projects, survey projects, production projects, and performance and organizational projects [1, 65].

What these different types of projects have in common is their emphasis on student involvement, collaboration, and responsibility. In this respect, project work is similar to the cooperative learning and task-oriented activities that are widely endorsed by educators interested in developing communicative competence and purposeful language learning. However, it differs from such approaches, it typically requires students to work together over several days or weeks, both inside and outside the classroom.

Although recommendations as to the best way to develop projects in the classroom vary, most are consistent with the eight fundamental steps.

Step 1: The students and the teacher agree on a theme for the project.

This stage includes choosing the project topic, generating interest and helping students develop a sense of commitment, responsibility and ownership towards the project. Topic is chosen after a conversation and negotiation between the teacher and the students.

Step 2: The students and the teacher determine the final outcome of the project.

The students and the teacher determine a) the final outcome of the project and b) the audience for the project.

Step 3: The students and the teacher structure the project.

The students and the teacher agree on information that needs to be gathered, student roles, and timing for the project.

Step 4: The teacher identifies language skills and strategies.

Step 5: The students gather information.

Step 6: The students compile and analyse the information.

The students work in groups and compile information they have gathered, compare their findings, and decide how to organize them for efficient presentation. During this step, students may read each other's work and negotiate with each other for meaning.

Step 7: The students present the final outcome.

The students present the final project outcome, on the basis of what has been decided in step 2. The manner of presentation will largely depend on the final form of the product. It may involve the screening of a video; the staging of a debate; a written report; or the presentation of a brochure.

Step 8: The students evaluate the project.

In this final phase of project work, students and the teacher reflect on the steps taken to accomplish their objectives and the language, communicative skills, and information they have acquired in the process. They can discuss the value of their experience and its relationship to future vocational needs. They can also identify aspects of the project which could be improved and/or enhanced in future attempts at project work [2,105].

Project work can only be effective when teachers relax control of their students temporarily and assume the role of guide or facilitator. The teacher can play an important role by diligently overseeing the multiple steps of project work, establishing guidelines, helping students make decisions, and providing instruction in the language when it is needed.

There are also drawbacks of educational projects, though. Larson, Birge and Huang [2; 174], for instance, observed tensions for educators. Another limitation of educational projects is that they remain educational and merely simulate the solution of an engineering task. As Sheppard, Macatangay, Colby, and Sullivan [5; 17] have argued: «In experiencing a simplified approximation to engineering practice, the novice nonetheless gets a sense of the breadth of engineering's dimensions». In linguistic terms, this limitation is almost negligible because the language needed for talking about and describing the project will be very close to expressions and terminology found in the actual content area. Projects are also time-consuming and the students use their mother tongue too much, the weaker students are lost and not able to cope with the task and the assessment of projects is very difficult. However, every type of project can be held without any difficulties and so with every advantage possible.

As it can be seen from above project work is a very good choice among the activities that proved to be effective and can be included into the development of English course for professional purposes.

In conclusion, it needs to be pointed out that the collaborative production of knowledge through project work under conditions of controlled choice is thematically adaptable to any context, which turns it into a flexible and versatile educational concept. This is particularly important for teaching because learners and groups require individual and tailored approaches to best cater for their educational needs. In this study there have been analyzed the importance of the project work in teaching English and showed how it influences engineering students during the educational process and if this type of work helps to learn the language. On the basis of the literary sources studied it should be noted that project work has advantages like the increased motivation when learners become personally involved in the project; all four skills, reading, writing, listening and speaking, are integrated; autonomous learning is promoted as learners become more responsible for their own learning; there are learning outcomes – learners have an end product; interpersonal relations are developed through working as a group. So it is obvious that project work has more positive sides than negative and is effective during the educational process.

References

1. Haines S. Projects for the EFL Classroom: Resource materials for teachers. Walton-on-Thames: Nelson, 1991. 108 p.
2. Larson J. Directed research groups as a means of training students to become technical communication researchers. *Technical Communication*. 2009. P. 172-177.
3. Legutke M. Process and Experience in the Language Classroom. Harlow: Longman, 1991. 200p.
4. Musa F. Project-based learning: Promoting meaningful language learning for workplace skills. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 2012. P. 187-195.
5. Sheppard K. *Educating engineers: Designing for the future of the field*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. 2009. 474 p.
6. Wong L. The learning styles and strategies of effective language learners. *System*. 2011. P. 144-163.

Шляхтіна О. С., старший викладач кафедри сучасних мов, Гуманітарний факультет Національного університету кораблебудування імені адмірала Макарова (Україна, Миколаїв), adastra7@ukr.net

Роль проектної роботи у викладанні англійської мови для спеціальних цілей студентам технічних спеціальностей

Метод проектів є однією з найбільш важливих складових, необхідних для успішного викладання англійської мови для спеціальних цілей. У статті проведено аналіз практичного досвіду викладачів та дослідників у галузі англійської мови для спеціальних цілей. Розглянуто певні види проектних робіт та їх етапи при вивченні англійської для спеціальних цілей студентами технічних спеціальностей. Окреслено позитивний ефект та переваги проектної роботи для студентів технічних спеціальностей.

Ключові слова: англійська мова для спеціальних цілей, проектна робота, метод, діяльність, спрямована на розвиток різноманітних навичок, вирішення проблем, зміст, робота в команді.

Шляхтина Е. С., старший преподаватель кафедры современных языков, Гуманитарный факультет Национального университета кораблестроения имени адмирала Макарова (Украина, Николаев), adastra7@ukr.net

Роль проектной работы в преподавании английского языка для специальных целей студентам технических специальностей

Метод проектов является одной из наиболее важных составляющих, необходимых для успешного преподавания английского языка для специальных целей. В статье проведен анализ практического опыта преподавателей и исследователей в области английского языка для специальных целей. Рассмотрены виды проектных работ и их этапы при изучении английского языка для специальных целей студентами технических специальностей.

Ключевые слова: английский язык для специальных целей, проектная работа, метод, деятельность, направленная на развитие разносторонних навыков, решение проблем, содержание, работа в команде.

