THE INTEGRATION OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING INTO TEACHING ENGLISH AT SCHOOL

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Abstract. The thesis examines the theoretical foundations and practical possibilities of integrating project-based learning (PBL) into English lessons at school. It shows how project work develops learners' communicative competence, autonomy and 21st-century skills.

Key words*:* project-based learning, English language teaching, communicative competence, learner autonomy, collaboration, school education.

Modern language education aims not only at teaching grammar and vocabulary but also at forming learners who can use English to solve real problems. Traditional teacher-centred lessons often fail to give pupils enough meaningful speaking and writing practice. Project-based learning offers an alternative: pupils work over an extended period on a question or task, cooperate with classmates and present a final product to a real audience [1, p. 4; 2, p. 35]. The roots of the approach go back to the ideas of J. Dewey and W. Kilpatrick, who stressed learning by doing and the role of purposeful activity in education.

Research shows that PBL suits language teaching well because it integrates all four skills in a natural way. While planning, pupils read and listen to authentic sources; while discussing, they speak and negotiate meaning; while preparing the product, they write and edit; and during the presentation they use English for a genuine communicative purpose [3, p. 107]. Moreover, projects increase motivation, since pupils choose topics close to their interests, such as *My Healthy Lifestyle*, *Our City Guide* or *A School Magazine*.

Integration of PBL into a school English course should follow clear stages: (1) choosing a topic and a driving question; (2) planning the work and distributing roles; (3) collecting and processing information; (4) creating the product (a poster, video, brochure, presentation or class magazine); (5) presenting the results; and (6) reflection and assessment. The teacher's role changes from a source of knowledge to a facilitator who guides, supports and monitors pupils without taking over their decisions.

At the same time, teachers face several difficulties: limited lesson time, large classes, pupils' different proficiency levels, the tendency to use the mother tongue during group work and the lack of ready-made assessment criteria. These problems can be reduced by short mini-projects, mixed-ability groups, clear rubrics and regular language support from the teacher.

In conclusion, the integration of project-based learning makes English lessons more learner-centred, communicative and meaningful. It contributes not only to language proficiency but also to creativity, critical thinking, teamwork and responsibility, which are essential for modern school graduates.

References

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