
Improving the project competency development process for English language teachers

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Annotation *The article discusses the "project method," which describes a form of work where students are actively involved in organizing their activities. This method unfolds through several stages, beginning with immersion in a topic and defining benchmarks, and progressing to planning the actual work. For general education, mini-projects and micro-research are highlighted as particularly effective. In these formats, the entire inquiry cycle - from asking a question, gathering data, to concluding - can be completed within a few lessons. The article suggests that even young children, specifically those aged 7–10, are capable of planning, assigning roles among themselves, independently finding sources, and critically evaluating information. Modern applications of this method intentionally connect the project to fundamental curriculum concepts, providing an exhibition of proverbs, which presumably links to language arts or cultural studies. So, the arguments presented highlight the project method as a pedagogical approach that can foster comprehensive learning, leverage the capabilities of young students, and align with broader curricular goals - making it a potentially powerful tool for general education systems.*

Keywords *Mini-projects, micro-research, project competency, planning steps, distributing roles, testing hypotheses*

Ingliz tili o'qituvchilari uchun loyiha malakasini rivojlantirish jarayonini takomillashtirish

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Annotatsiya *Maqolada talabalar o'z faoliyatini tashkil etishda faol ishtirok etadigan ish shaklini tavsiflovchi "loyiha usuli" muhokama qilinadi. Ushbu usul bir necha bosqichlardan o'tadi, mavzuga kirish va mezonlarni aniqlashdan boshlab va haqiqiy ishni rejalashtirishgacha davom etadi. Umumiy ta'lim uchun mini-loyihalar va mikro-tadqiqotlar ayniqsa samarali ekanligi ta'kidlangan. Ushbu formatlarda savol berish, ma'lumot to'plash va xulosa qilishgacha bo'lgan barcha so'rov sikli bir necha darslar ichida yakunlanishi mumkin. Maqolada aytilishicha, hatto yosh bolalar, xususan, 7-10 yoshdagi bolalar ham rejalashtirish, o'zaro rollarni taqsimlash, manbalarni mustaqil ravishda topish va axborotni tanqidiy baholash qobiliyatiga ega. Ushbu uslubning zamonaviy qo'llanilishi loyihani asosiy o'quv rejasi tushunchalari bilan ataylab bog'laydi va til san'ati yoki madaniyatshunoslik bilan bog'liq bo'lgan maqollar ko'rgazmasini taqdim etadi. Shunday qilib, taqdim etilgan dalillar loyiha usulini keng qamrovli o'rganishga yordam beradigan, yosh talabalarning imkoniyatlaridan foydalanadigan va kengroq o'quv maqsadlariga mos keladigan pedagogik yondashuv sifatida ta'kidlaydi va uni umumiy ta'lim tizimlari uchun potentsial kuchli vositaga aylantiradi.*

Kalit so'zlar *Mini-loyihalar, mikro-tadqiqotlar, loyiha malakasi, rejalashtirish bosqichlari, rollarni taqsimlash, gipotezalarini tekshirish*

Совершенствование процесса развития проектных компетенций учителей английского языка

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Аннотация *В статье рассматривается «метод проектов» – термин при которой учащиеся активно участвуют в организации своей деятельности. Этот метод включает несколько этапов, начиная с погружения в тему и определения ориентиров и заканчивая планированием самой работы. В общеобразовательных учреждениях особенно эффективными считаются мини-проекты и микроисследования. В этих форматах весь цикл исследования – от постановки вопроса, сбора данных до выводов – может быть завершен за несколько уроков. В статье предполагается, что даже маленькие дети, особенно в возрасте 7–10 лет, способны планировать, распределять роли между собой, самостоятельно находить источники и критически оценивать информацию. Современное применение этого метода намеренно связывает проект с основополагающими концепциями учебной программы, предлагая выставку пословиц, предположительно связанную с изучением языка и культуры. Таким образом, представленные аргументы подчеркивают, что метод проектов является педагогическим подходом, который может способствовать всестороннему обучению, использовать возможности молодых учащихся и согласовываться с более широкими учебными целями, что делает его потенциально мощным инструментом для систем общего образования.*

Ключевые слова *Мини-проекты, микроисследования, проектные компетенции, этапы планирования, распределение ролей, проверка гипотез*

Introduction

Project-based activities in education have a history of more than a century and are closely linked to the evolution of ideas about what constitutes a learning outcome and how to achieve it. In this logic, J. Dewey's ideas about "learning through activity" combined the educational and cognitive aspects of school practice: the child does not passively assimilate ready-made truths, but acts, explores, creates products, discusses them, and thereby builds his own experience.

W. Kilpatrick proposed the term "project method" to designate a form of work where the educational task takes on the character of a holistic, socially and personally significant enterprise with a real product and public presentation of the result (Kilpatrick, 1926). At the same time, the very method of organizing the activity – choosing a topic, planning steps, distributing roles, testing hypotheses, and formulating conclusions – became the content of the training, and the teacher played the role of mentor and organizer of the environment.

The ideas of project-based learning developed in different national pedagogical traditions, but were similarly based on the principle of connecting education with life, the social nature of knowledge, and the need for an active position of the student. In English-language pedagogy of the early and mid-20th century, approaches to collective creative activity, forms of student self-government, production teams, and socialized tasks are consonant with this. In parallel, a cultural-historical perspective was formed, in which development is viewed as the appropriation of cultural modes of action in interaction with adults and peers. The project, by its very nature, establishes such interactions and provides a "zone of proximal development" where teacher support and group collaboration enable students to perform actions that are not yet possible on their own.

In the second half of the 20th century, interest in project-based learning experienced alternating ups and downs. On the one hand, research-based and problem-based approaches in science and engineering education, school laboratories, workshops, and clubs continued the project-based approach. On the other hand, increased standardization and a focus on testing led to further waves of simplification of educational practices. The return to project-based and inquiry-based learning in the late 20th and early 21st centuries is associated with the establishment of a competency-based paradigm: education begins to be described through the ability to act in new situations, and this requires formats where the student not only knows, but also does (Зимняя, 2020). In parallel, the theory of experience is developing (cycles of experiential learning, where the stages of concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation form a spiral), substantiating the place of projects as a special type of learning situation in which knowledge is formed and tested in action (Kolb, 1984).

Modern models of project-based learning in schools are usually described as

Project-Based Learning. They share several key characteristics. First, the presence of a significant problem or "leading question" that does not have a trivial answer requires information retrieval, discussion, and the selection of solutions, leading to the creation of a tangible or digital product that is needed by someone other than the student and teacher. Secondly, the duration and structure of the process: the project unfolds in a series of stages – from immersion in the topic and defining benchmarks to planning and assigning roles, from searching for and analyzing sources to constructing the product and its public defense, necessarily with intermediate points of feedback and adjustments to plans. Thirdly, the collaborative nature of the activity: the success of a project is determined by communication, the ability to listen, persuade, negotiate, and take responsibility. Fourth, it is linked to formative assessment: the teacher and students use criteria and rubrics to track progress, correct work, and bring the product to a quality worthy of publication or presentation. Fifth, the reflective circuit: not only knowledge and skills are recorded, but also methods of action, difficulties encountered, solutions found, and questions that arise, which ensures the transfer of experience to future situations (Larmer, 2015).

Alongside project-based learning, inquiry-based learning models also been developed. While the project focuses on product creation and socially significant implementation, the research model focuses on a cognitive question, to which students formulate hypotheses, collect data, analyze, draw conclusions, and correlate them with the original statement. In real school practice, these models often overlap: a project includes an element of research, and the research work culminates in the creation of a product and its public presentation. For general education systems, mini-projects and micro-research are particularly productive, in which the inquiry cycle - from question to data to conclusion - is completed over several lessons and culminates

in a simple but meaningful product: a poster, a mini-book, an audio story, an oral mini-conference, or a board game with rules created by the students.

A key challenge in implementing PBL and IBL in general education organizations concerns the age-related readiness of young learners to engage in independent learning activities. In particular, questions arise as to the extent to which children aged 7–10 are prepared to plan tasks, distribute roles, independently search for relevant sources, and critically evaluate information. In this regard, the gradual development of learner autonomy under sustained pedagogical guidance can be considered an effective methodological solution. Foreign experiences in the use of mediatechnologies in English language teaching also emphasize the importance of adapting technology-enhanced learning activities to learners' developmental characteristics and providing appropriate teacher support throughout the learning process (Khikmatullaevna, 2025). Therefore, rather than expecting full independence from young learners, PBL and IBL should be implemented through a gradual increase in autonomy, beginning with clearly structured teacher guidance and progressively transferring responsibility for planning, information search, collaboration, and evaluation to learners (Khikmatullaevna, 2025). The teacher designs the environment, breaks down large tasks into sequential steps, offers frameworks and templates (project passport, checklists, sample questions, presentation plan), models methods for searching and understanding information, sets formats for interim reports, and teaches collaboration techniques (rules for working in pairs and groups, role-playing cards, time management signals). This "scripted support" allows students to act as a research and project team, while the basic learning activities – reading, writing, listening, speaking – remain core and are constantly practiced in authentic situations.

The history of the development of project activities is also the history of clarifying the relationship between subject content and meta-subject results. In early versions of the project, there was sometimes a bias toward "spectacular" external activity with weak assimilation of subject knowledge: a beautiful poster or model compensated for the lack of a deep understanding of the topic. Modern models intentionally "anchor" the project in the basic concepts of the curriculum: the question asks about key linguistic phenomena, and the product quality criteria include subject indicators (for example, correct spelling and punctuation, accurate vocabulary, coherence and logic of the text, compliance with genre characteristics). In the introductory English language course, this means that project topics and product formats are selected so that students can purposefully practice reading, writing, speaking, and analyzing language material.

The evolution of the project concept in the general education organization also involved strengthening interdisciplinary approaches. While classic projects often relied on natural science and labor, today interdisciplinary mini-projects are becoming a means of integrating English language with literary reading, the world around us, music, and the visual arts. It is natural for schoolchildren to work with holistic meanings: Write and design a book about your hometown, prepare a schoolyard guide, record an audio tour of a local museum, conduct a survey of families about their language traditions and present the results in diagrams and mini-essays, create a dictionary of "living words" from your yard or mahalla, or prepare an exhibition of proverbs in two languages with explanations. In such tasks, English is not a shell, but a tool for thinking and communication: the child reads and selects information, plans the structure of the text, selects words and statements, dictates and edits, speaks orally, and expresses attitudes.

The development of digital technologies has added new forms and tools to project activities, but at the same time has required strict methodological control. Shared online whiteboards, simple presentation editors, audio recordings, photos, and basic video are all available to students, provided that ethical and safety guidelines are followed, public and private areas are distinguished, and parental and school permissions are obtained. The digital environment has made it easier to document the process (working drafts, intermediate versions of the product, fragments of discussions), and therefore to increase reflection and formative assessment. At the same time, projects in general education institutions always retain an offline core: handwritten drafts, word cards, wall anchor charts, models, and handmade books remain crucial carriers of meaning and motivation.

Methodological thought has gradually developed a language for describing high-quality projects, which helps teachers design and evaluate their own solutions. Characteristics reflecting the "gold standard" of design have become typical: the presence of a meaningful, research-based question; a clear connection to key concepts in the curriculum; authenticity of the product and the intended audience; sustained research, not a one-time collection of facts; The child's "voice and choice" in defining individual aspects of the product; cycles of criticism and improvement based on criteria; mandatory public presentation; built-in reflection loops.

For a general education organization, this translates into practical approaches: choose topics that resonate with the child's life; reduce assignments to clear steps; discuss in advance "what a good product should be"; use clear scales and peak samples; and teach how to give friendly and specific feedback. Historically, project-based learning has been the subject of debate about its labor costs and its relationship to "traditional" lessons. Critics have rightly pointed out the risks of "dessert projects," where seemingly attractive activities are not

aligned with educational goals, and the risk of overburdening teachers with planning and reviewing disparate products. Modern methodology responds to these challenges with several solutions. The first is a reasonable dosage: in general education settings, mini-projects lasting 3-6 lessons or micro-projects lasting one or two lessons predominate, while larger quarterly projects are undertaken no more than once and presented publicly.

Second, modularity and templates: project passports, checklists, sample rubrics, and discussion scenarios relieve some of the teacher's burden and create repeatable formats. Third, criteria-based and distributed assessment: formative assessment with an emphasis on several key criteria, self-assessment and peer assessment using clear scales, and progress recording in e-folders significantly reduce manual assessment. Fourth, integration with the program: the project replaces some of the traditional exercises, rather than being added on top of them; it becomes the basis for practicing the same spelling, punctuation, and speech skills, but in an authentic situation.

The specificity of the evolution of the project idea for the introductory English language course also lies in the fact that here the project must work on early literacy: sound-letter analysis, syllabic reading, a gradual transition to fluent, meaningful reading, the development of spelling vigilance, and basic textual competence. At the early stage, the products include small books with the author's sentences and illustrations, wall dictionaries, card games, audio stories with simple editing, and mini-class reports. In these, the child reads and writes as much as they can, but does so for a clear purpose. At the next stage, genres become more complex: memos, instructions, interview questions and questionnaires, short informational texts, mini-essays, and oral presentations based on a plan appear; elements of analysis and comparison are incorporated into the product. At a more advanced stage, interdisciplinary connections

are included: children explore proverbs and set expressions, compare sounds and meanings in two languages, create mini-dictionaries of thematic vocabulary, and compile guidebooks and exhibitions. Here, the means of coherence of the text are purposefully formed, and work with proof and argument is carried out at a child's level.

It is essential to note that the development of project-based activities in general education systems has coincided with the clarification of the teacher's role. From being a "work supervisor" and "checker," the teacher gradually moves to the roles of task and environment designer, facilitator of research discussions, mentor in working with sources, and editor of student texts. This requires new professional competencies: the ability to select topics, organize stages, set criteria, adapt tasks for groups of different levels, maintain motivation, manage group dynamics, ensure safe collaboration in a digital environment, organize public presentations, and work with reflection. Essentially, the evolution of the project idea has highlighted that a teacher's subject knowledge must be linked to methodological, managerial, and communicative knowledge, as well as digital knowledge – those that allow for the selection and combination of tools based on the principle of "first pedagogy, then technology".

Projects and research in general education institutions inevitably face the issue of sources and evidence. Projects and research in general education institutions inevitably face the issue of sources and evidence. The combination of primary sources, adapted informational texts, illustrations, objects of material culture, oral stories of adults, observations, and simple measurements forms the basis of a research culture in the child: He learns to ask clarifying questions, record observations, compare data, draw conclusions, and discuss them. In a language project, this takes the form of working with examples and counterexamples, searching for patterns, explaining the choice of spelling, selecting and

systematizing vocabulary, and constructing arguments to defend one's version of a title or the order of parts of a text.

The next important aspect in the evolution of project work is evaluation. Initially, projects were evaluated primarily based on the product and external characteristics: accuracy, originality, and scope. Over time, it became clear that it was necessary to evaluate not only "what happened," but also "how we got there," that is, the process, each person's contribution, the use of criteria, and the ability to refine the work. Formative assessment with pre-defined criteria rubrics, step checklists, "rehearsals" of presentations with feedback, "revision laboratories" between the draft and the final version, supportive and growth-oriented. For general education groups, the headings are constructed in clear language with a small number of criteria and gradations, often accompanied by pictograms and examples, and self-assessment and peer assessment are conducted in a friendly format of short "compliments and advice".

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Secondly, the project's excessive scope is inappropriate for the child's age, leading to a loss of focus, momentum, and motivation. Thirdly, the lack of clarity about the criteria and expected results leads to conflict and frustration among children. Fourth, a failure to differentiate: some children are overwhelmed, while others are inactive. Fifth, a failure to observe digital security when publishing work and using online tools.

The modern methodology offers a set of preventative measures: a small and clearly defined volume, linking to key learning goals, staged mini-tests and mandatory feedback sessions, role assignments and consideration of children's strengths, a communication plan

with parents, and agreed-upon rules of digital hygiene.

The shift from individual to collective projects deserves special attention, as it is through collective work that communicative and social competencies, critical for future civic and professional life, are developed. In general education systems, a collective project is built on small groups of 3 – 4 people, with clear roles and the possibility of their rotation: reader and “fact hunter,” artist-designer, text writer and editor, speaker and moderator of the presentation. The teacher observes interactions, incorporates elements of teamwork skills training into lessons (active listening rules, short meeting techniques, linguistic formulas for polite sentences, and clarifications), and teaches how to negotiate and resolve conflicts.

As students mature, their roles become more complex, adding the roles of coordinator, quality curator, resource manager, and safety officer.

The evolution of the project concept was accompanied by a growing focus on equity and inclusion.

A good project gives every child the chance to shine and make a contribution: tasks are multi-level, products are multimodal, there is a choice of format, and there is support for children with special educational needs, for those who are just learning the language of instruction, and for gifted students.

Visualization techniques, scaffolding, collaborative dictionary creation, paired reading and writing, audio prompts, “talking” albums, and photo instructions ensure accessibility.

This is especially important in a multicultural and multilingual environment: the project becomes a space for mutual respect and recognition of the cultural identity of families and communities, in which English is adopted as a means of dialogue and cooperation.

Finally, in the evolution of project activities, there has been a shift towards communities of practice and networked forms of teacher support. The development of high-quality tasks and criteria benefits from the collective development and exchange of materials, from the joint analysis of video recordings of lessons and reflective seminars, and from interaction with primary schools and external partners (museums, libraries, cultural centers, children’s technology parks). This not only reduces the workload for individual teachers but also creates a culture of sustainable practice improvement. For future teachers, participation in such communities during their teaching internship and early years is especially valuable: it helps transform the project-based method from a “one-off success story” into a daily pedagogy.

Conclusion

To summarize, we can say that the evolution of the idea of project-based activities from classical approaches to modern PBL and IBL models is a movement from episodic activity to a technology systemically integrated into the curriculum, with transferable methods of action.

For a general education organization, particularly for teaching English in a multi-ethnic and multilingual environment, this requires fine-tuning: the project must be feasible, subject-rich, interdisciplinary, culturally sensitive, digitally secure, and based on formative assessment. For a general education organization, particularly for teaching English in a multi-ethnic and multilingual environment, this requires fine-tuning: the project must be feasible, subject-rich, interdisciplinary, culturally sensitive, digitally secure, and based on formative assessment. These competencies form the subject of the next section and will subsequently be operationalized through indicators and levels of development.

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