



PBL as a tool for promoting situated learning

Project-based learning (PBL) is fast becoming a “buzz term” in the realm of education and in language teaching. Although the exact timing and duration of project-based language projects vary, a project is generally considered to be “a long-term (several weeks) activity” (Beckett, 2002: 54) which is integrated into the language teaching in such a way to “promote the simultaneous acquisition of language, content, and skills” (Beckett and Slater, 2005: 108).

[...]One of the main goals (and justifications) for PBL in language learning is the opportunity it provides for ‘situated learning’. The idea behind situated learning is that in order for learners to come to know and understand something requires tasks that are embedded in the target context and incite thinking that is similar to what would be done in real life. This is a move away from language instruction based on pre-defined goals (without taking into account either the learners or the situation) and which attempts to reinforce the chosen language content through decontextualized practice. In contrast, through situated language learning contexts -as occurs in PBL- teachers can bridge the gap between language learning and the need to create authentic use of the target language, thereby constructing an understanding of language as it would be used in realistic, outside-the-classroom contexts.

Sources: (text) Dooly, Melinda, & Masats, Dolors (2008). *Russian dolls: Using projects to learn about projects*. *GRETA Journal*, 16(1-2), 27-35.; (picture) Gomáriz, Maribel (2019). Co-teaching. In Dolors Masats, Maria Mont & Nathaly Gonzalez-Acevedo (Eds.), *Joint efforts for innovation: Working together to improve foreign language teaching in the 21st century* (pp. 67-75). Rothersthorpe: Paragon Publishing. DOI:10.5281/zenodo.3064130

Texts cited:

Beckett, Gulbahar (2002) Teacher and student evaluations of project-based instruction. *TESL Canada Journal* 19(2), 52 -66.

Beckett, Gulbahar & Slater, Tammy (2005). The project framework: A tool for language, content, and skills integration. *ELT Journal*, 59 (2), 108-116.

INSPIRING IDEAS * INSPIRING IDEAS * INSPIRING IDEAS * INSPIRING IDEAS

The country of the year is a year-round cross-disciplinary project that offers students the possibility to gain historical, geographical and cultural knowledge of English-speaking countries around the world. During academic year 201-2018 the project centred on the UK. First we dealt with cultural aspects common to all parts of UK (the weather, the teatime ritual, traditional food), then we divided the project into three smaller projects.

First term: We discovered Scotland and learn to bake shortbread cookies by following the recipe a very famous British chef had recorded on video. We took our cookies home as a Christmas present.

Second term: We learnt about Wales and the story of its patron Saint David. Some of the youngest kids in the school prepared a short performance in class to retell it.

Third term: We focused on England’s famous landmarks and we became familiar with the works of English artist David Hockney and songwriter Ed Sheeran. Children engaged in an arts project and also created a collective video clip of Sheeran’s song ‘Perfect’.



Source: (picture & text): Piccola, Ingrid & Quintanilla, Judith (2019). The country of the year. In Dolors Masats, Maria Mont & Nathaly Gonzalez-Acevedo (Eds.), *Joint efforts for innovation: Working together to improve foreign language teaching in the 21st century* (pp. 177-184). Rothersthorpe: Paragon Publishing. DOI:10.5281/zenodo.3064130

A+ Project has a new team



We are back!!!

Once again, **A+ Project team** sets in motion new tasks and plans. The start of a new academic year is always a time for changes. A few former members set sail for new lands, while new faces come on board.

Today **A+ Project team** is composed of 11 members (from left to right): Esther Serramià, Yolanda Álvarez, Berta Solé, Maribel Gomáriz, Dolors Masats (co-leader), Elisabet Guitart, Cristina Rodríguez, Carol Barriuso (co-leader), Ingrid Picola, David López and Romina Argüello.

This new academic year we take the challenge of creating a website to share with other teachers our ideas, materials and reflections upon the ins and outs of applying the premises of the project-based learning approach to teach young children English. You will also be able to meet us at next APAC ELT Conference.

Follow us at

<http://blogs.uab.cat/equipice-a-project/>

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