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TEACHING HISTORY STUDENTS GERMAN CULTURE: APPLICATION OF PROJECT METHOD

This article deals with using the project method by teaching history students foreign culture. An experiment was conducted where two groups of students study German. The relevance of the project method is determined by its wide spread in different spheres of activity, including foreign language. This method also implements the requirements of the standard of education. The theoretical foundations of the project method and socio-cultural competence are presented and analyzed.

The effectiveness of this method has been demonstrated in the article through teaching history students German culture. The article can be useful in the academic community, in teaching culture and language students of non-linguistic specialties.

The project method is a natural extension of what is already taking place in class. It is an open learning process, the limits and processes of which are not strictly defined [11]. This process progresses in the specific teaching context [9;10].

The project method originates from Pragmatism, the philosophical movement which appeared in the middle of the 19 th century and promotes action and practical application of knowledge in everyday life [11]. Major proponents of Pragmatism were J. Dewey (1935) and W. Kilpatrick (1935) in the USA.

The project method was based on the principles, expressed by many progressive educators. Chrisafidis [9] highlights such principles as promotion of manual activity instead of memorization, active participation in the learning process, and exploitation of facts relating as a source for learning.

This technology is used in various fields of activity, including teaching foreign languages. Socio cultural competence has also been formed through videos, games, discussions, blogs and podcasts. We hypothesize the project method was used in the foreign language classroom with high school students, university students, lawyers. The novelty of our research lies in the fact that the formation of socio-cultural competence of students-historians is considered through the method of projects.

The aim of the study is to check the effectiveness of the method of projects in teaching history students German culture in foreign language lessons. To do this, an experiment was conducted with students. There are no defined results in the literature on how the experiment with historians is carried out by means of the project methodology, the results are not revealed and the research process is not shown. In our study, we tried to prove the effectiveness of the method of projects in teaching students-historians of German culture in foreign language lessons.

The article includes such sections as introduction, literature review, methods, results, discussion and conclusion.

The method of projects is not fundamentally new in the world pedagogy. It originated at the beginning of the 20th century in the United States. It was also called the method of problems. It was based on the ideas of the humanistic direction in philosophy and education, developed by the American philosopher and educator J. Dewey [1], as well as his student W. Kilpatrick [4]. According to Dewey, it is very important that students need to be interested in project activities. This seems to be a problem that needs to be solved by applying knowledge that has already been obtained and which must be acquired.

E.Polat [6] notes that the project method attracted the attention of Russian educators as early as the beginning of the 20th century. Ideas of project training arose in Russia in parallel with the developments of American educators. Under the guidance of the Russian teacher S.Shatsky, in 1935 a small group of teachers was organized, trying to actively use project methods in teaching practice. Shatsky worked on the basis of project activities in school for teenagers' partnership «Settlement». In their book «Child labor and a new path» the teacher stressed the essence of his views on education. Shatsky gives a list of projects of pupils: creation of a compass, a bell, models of houses, products from clay. The objects of activity are chosen accordingly the interests and needs of children, for example: calls boys made in order to establish them in their apartments. [8].

Of course, over time the idea of the project method has undergone some changes. As noted by Polat, at present, it is a fundamental, integrated component of a

structured-built education system. But its essence has not changed. It is important to increase students' interest in certain problems that require certain knowledge, the ability to apply them in future activities.

Later, even under Soviet rule, these ideas began to be widely introduced into the school, but not thoughtfully and consistently. The method of projects was condemned, and since then until recently no serious attempts have been made in Russia to revive this method in school practice.

However, during the Soviet era, in the framework of extra-curricular socially useful activities, activities were sometimes carried out, essentially representing the implementation of projects.

In schools abroad, this method actively developed. In the countries such as the USA, Great Britain, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands and many others, the project method began to be widely applied and extended to different areas of activity [9].

In recent years, project activity has been one of the leading places in didactics, methodology and pedagogy. It is the leading subject of study of such didactics and methodologists as Zimniy [3], Polat [6], Selevko [7] Guzeev [2] and many others.

A detailed classification of project types was given by Polat E. Also Guzeev V. Selevko G. enriched the theoretical base of project types, presented the stages of work on projects, proposed recommendations for the organization of work on projects. Polat E. also managed to structure the theoretical material and present it in the form of tables.

Thus, with the help of the project method, various competencies were formed. Also, the project method was used in the formation of socio-cultural competence.

The concept of socio-cultural competence as a goal has emerged as an independent relatively recently, namely 15-20 years ago. The emergence of this term in the Russian methodological science associated with the works of van Dyck and the Council of Europe cultural cooperation. According to them the term considered as one of the components of communicative competence. It can be defined as «the ability to interact adequately in situations of daily life, establishment and maintenance of social contacts using a foreign language» [5]. Despite this, socio-

cultural competence has become the subject of study of many scientists. With the help of the project method the formation of socio-cultural competence of lawyers, economists, students at school, University students took place. Other forms of organization of training activities were also used in addition to the project method. These are quests, audio and video recordings, game forms. And the novelty of our research is that the method of projects is an effective way of forming socio-cultural competence of students of historians in the classroom in a foreign language.

The method that is described here is called the project method. The project work was carried out with the first year history students of Ulyanovsk state pedagogical University. The project was a research type. It was professionally oriented, that is, it was developed taking into account the specifics of teaching students of the historical Department, studying German as a General subject.

The theme of the project was proposed by students as follows: The era of reformation: Germany and Russia. So we studied the comparison of the two cultures through language using a project method. And accordingly, the hypothesis of our study is that the method of projects is an effective way of forming students-historians socio-cultural competence in the classroom in the German language.

Learning of students took place in two groups. This was done to test our hypothesis. The first group of students (12 people) developed a project on the topic. Learning of the second group (12 people) was conducted on a traditional basis. It was a lecture with elements of conversation. The diagnostic section was carried out in both groups before the beginning of the work. The purpose of the work is to compare the historical context of the time period, namely the era of reformation in Russia and Germany. Introductory session was held with students of the first group. In this lesson, they learned what project work is, what its goals are, the stages of project work. Some recommendations to students on the effective organization of work on the project were also given.

The next step was to collect information on the topic in German, a logical presentation of information. Then the students compared the historical context of the

reformation Era in Germany and Russia. They drew historical and temporal Parallels between the development of the two countries in the era of reformation.

Also, students made tables for comparison, kept a diary of observations. They described in the diary the various stages of work on the project, gave their assessment of the developments of the studied time period. The collection of factual material was completed at this stage. Then the students started to present their results.

Thus, the product of the work was presented by students of the first group as a presentation on the topic and oral report. The presentation was held in the Ulyanovsk regional scientific library named after V. I. Lenin.

Also, students-historians of the second group were present at the presentation of the project. These students did not participate in the project work. The material was presented to them in the traditional form, as described above. The final test was conducted with students of both groups at the end of the work.

The work allowed to get the following results:

- among 81 % of students-historians there is a positive attitude to the project methodology;
- students were involved in project activities willingly;
- students noted that the assimilation of knowledge on the topic is more effective using the project method than using traditional teaching methods.

The final test showed that the level of knowledge of students on the topic increased by 57% (see Table 1).

* **Group 1** Student studied German culture through the project method

Group 2 Students have traditional foreign language lessons

Group	Level of knowledge, %	
	incoming control	final control
Group 1	49	72
Group 2	46	57

Table 1. Knowledge level of student groups

Thus, the project methodology is an effective way of forming socio-cultural competence of history students who study German as a General subject.

One of the main goals of this experiment was to attempt to find a way to predict that the project method is an effective way of teaching history students German culture in the foreign language classroom. While not all of the results were significant, the overall direction of results showed trends that could be helpful to learning about the method of project is a really important means of forming history students socio-cultural competence.

The study showed:

- the level of students knowledge increased by 3 times when using the project method
- among 81% of students, positive dynamics and motivation are observed by learning German culture through the project method.

The project method gives the learning process a personality-oriented and activity-oriented character and fully meets the new learning objectives. The method of projects also allows to master the communicative competence, including socio-cultural competence, which is an integral part of it. Thus there is a practical mastery of the language. The method of projects increases independence among students and allows them to learn to work in a team, forms a team spirit.

There are also other explanations for the results. According to Polat E. the application of the project method at the lessons of a foreign language takes place in the conditions of saving classroom time, increasing motivation for research activities.

Selevko G. explains this by the fact that students carry out conscious and meaningful activities in the project work.

Zimnaya I. dicates a comfortable psychological climate and competent pedagogical conditions of the project work.

One cannot but agree with these explanations. They all prove that the project method is an effective way of teaching history students German culture in the foreign language classroom.

Although the experimental groups consisted of a small number of people, this did not prevent us from identifying the effectiveness of the project method in teaching students German culture

The research experience can be used by teaching geography students. For example, students compare the geographic location and the land resources of Germany and Russia in foreign language lessons. Also, biology students can learn a foreign language through the project method. Students study the flora and fauna of different countries, compare and find similarities and differences.

The article tries to demonstrate the effectiveness of the project method in teaching German culture history students the lessons in foreign language classroom. The study showed the level of knowledge of students significantly increased, motivation to study culture also increased. This method enabled students to work in a group, to show their activity and independence. The method of projects has also shown its effectiveness in implementing the requirements of educational programs.

The article can be useful for foreign language teachers, as well as for the administration. We propose to use the method of projects in other universities, when teaching culture through language in foreign language classroom.

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