Project-based Learning: Principles and Practices for the Language Classroom

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### Overview of the Week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session Title</th>
<th>Audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Feb 13</td>
<td>pm</td>
<td>Project-based Learning: Principles and Practices for the Language Classroom</td>
<td>elementary, secondary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Feb 14</td>
<td>am</td>
<td>Fostering Language Authenticity and Awareness in the Young Learners’ Classroom</td>
<td>elementary</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pm</td>
<td>Designing Authentic Assessments for the EFL Classroom</td>
<td>elementary, secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Feb 15</td>
<td>am</td>
<td>Effective Classroom Management for Language Teachers</td>
<td>elementary, secondary</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pm</td>
<td>Fostering Language Awareness in the Secondary EFL Classroom</td>
<td>secondary</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Plans for Today

- Quick introductions
- Essential competencies for 21st century learning
  - The 4 C’s
    - Communication
    - Collaboration
    - Critical thinking
    - Creativity
- Principles of language learning
- Design of Project-based learning
- Examples from the classroom
Project-based Learning

PBL is an individual or group activity that goes on over a period of time, resulting in a **product, presentation, or performance**. It typically has a **timeline, milestones**, and other aspects of **formative evaluation** as the project proceeds.

- **Projects should**
  - be **open-ended** and allow for **student choice**
  - require students to **apply/reconstruct their knowledge** in new contexts
- **Students work collaboratively** to accomplish a **common goal**
- **Language is used in authentic ways**
- **Emphasize the process**, rather than the product
- **Carefully structure the steps** of the project and **provide appropriate support** throughout the process
Demands for 21st Century Education

• Global society
• New careers
• Preparation in content, but also in skills to develop mastery in new areas, overcome challenges, and take advantage of new opportunities
• 21st century skills can be applied
  • in all academic areas (interdisciplinary by nature)
  • in educational, career and civic settings
  • throughout a student’s life
• Has become the basis for educational reform in the U.S. and worldwide
# Views of Language Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual view</th>
<th>Social view</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Language acquisition as a cognitive and individual phenomenon</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Language is a collection of forms and an object of analysis apart from contexts</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Language is a carrier or conduit of knowledge</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Emphasis on acquisition of grammar rules and vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Language acquisition as a social phenomenon that is shaped by our interactions and experiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Language is a social practice (not something we have, but something we do)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• The sociocultural context is the source of mental development</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Emphasis on how people use language in particular situations</td>
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</table>
# Classroom Environments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional classrooms</th>
<th>Socio-constructivist classrooms</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Curriculum is presented part to whole, with emphasis on basic skills</td>
<td>• Curriculum is presented whole to part with emphasis on big concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strict adherence to <strong>fixed curriculum</strong> is highly valued</td>
<td>• Pursuit of <strong>student interests</strong> is highly valued</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Activities rely heavily on <strong>textbooks and worksheets</strong></td>
<td>• Activities rely mostly on <strong>authentic materials, physical action, multimodalities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Learners are “empty vessels”</td>
<td>• Learners are perceived as <strong>active builders</strong> of their own knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers transmit skills or knowledge</td>
<td>• Teachers facilitate experiences for learning that take place <strong>between</strong> individuals</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Classroom Environments, cont.

**Traditional classrooms**
- **Teacher-centered classes**
- Teachers correct answers to validate student learning
- Assessment of learning is viewed as separate from teaching
- Students primarily work alone

**Socio-constructivist classrooms**
- **Student-centered classes**
- Teachers seek to understand students’ experiences and background knowledge to create relevant lessons
- On-going assessment while teaching
- Students primarily work in groups
Language Teaching and the Four C’s

**What are 21st century skills? These 4 C’s:**

**C**

**COMMUNICATION**
Sharing thoughts, questions, ideas & solutions

**C**

**COLLABORATION**
Working together to reach a goal. Putting talent, expertise, and smarts to work

**C**

**CRITICAL THINKING**
Looking at problems in a new way and linking learning across subjects & disciplines

**C**

**CREATIVITY**
Trying new approaches to get things done equals innovation & invention
How do the 4 C's relate to Socio-constructivist views of language learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Four Cs</th>
<th>Language learning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
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Four Zones of Teaching and Learning
(Gibbons, 2015)

High Challenge

<table>
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<tr>
<th>High Support</th>
<th>Low Support</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning/</strong></td>
<td><strong>Frustration/Anxiety Zone</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>“Construction zone”</td>
<td>“Zone of proximal development”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Comfort Zone</strong></td>
<td><strong>Boredom Zone</strong></td>
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Low Challenge
Scaffolding

Temporary support to help learners complete a task until they can perform independently

- Take into consideration students’ …
  - interests and background experiences
  - content knowledge
  - language proficiency levels
- Hands-on activities and cooperative learning
  - Teacher-centered presentations interspersed with small group tasks
  - Preview/review
  - Learning centers, drama/role play
- Visuals, gestures and linguistic supports
  - Graphic organizers, pictures, sketches
  - Sentence frames, starters, transition words
  - Primary language support and biliteracy development
  - Monitor, assess, and adjust
- Carefully structured lessons and units
  - Gradual release of responsibility
Communication

- Articulating thoughts and ideas effectively using oral, written, and nonverbal communication skills in a **variety of forms and contexts**
- Listening effectively to **decipher meaning**, including knowledge, values, attitudes, and intentions
- Using communication for a **range of purposes** (e.g. to inform, instruct, motivate, and persuade)
- Using multiple **media and technologies** effectively
- Communicating in **diverse environments** (including multilingual and multicultural)
Collaboration

• Demonstrating ability to work **effectively and respectfully** with diverse teams
• Exercising **flexibility** and willingness to make necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal
• Assuming **shared responsibility** for collaborative work, and value the individual contributions made by each team member
• Collaboration is not simply “group work”
Communication

- Language instruction should provide extensive input, and it should also give students opportunities for output and interaction.
- Emphasis on social view of language.

Collaboration

- Collaborative learning activities:
  - learners support each other to outperform their competence
  - members of groups negotiate individual roles
  - encourage group consensus but teach respect for individual diversity and multiple perspectives
Principles of Cooperative Learning (Kagan, 1995):

- Positive interdependence
- Individual accountability
- Equal participation
- Simultaneous interaction
Increasing Verbal Interaction

Interview Grids

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Exercise</th>
<th>Diet</th>
<th>Leisure Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Julia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Toshiko</td>
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Role plays and Debates

Information Gap
Increasing Verbal Interaction

**Chunk-n-Chew**

- **Chunk...**
  - Teacher will present the lesson in 11-17 minute chunks
  - Teacher will use different modalities during delivery

- **Chew...**
  - Students are given time to process the information: 5-15 minutes
    - Intrapersonal/Self: Time to write or draw in a journal, reflect, or silently read notes
    - Partner: Re-teach the information to a “learning buddy”
    - Whole class activity or discussion
Turn and talk…

How do you foster *communication and collaboration* in your classroom?

What are some examples of *activities and strategies* you use?
Critical Thinking

**Reason Effectively**
- Use various types of reasoning (inductive, deductive, etc.) as appropriate to the situation

**Make Judgments and Decisions**
- Evaluate evidence, arguments, claims, and beliefs
- Analyze major alternative points of view
- Synthesize and make connections between information
- Interpret information and draw conclusions based on analysis
- Reflect critically on learning experiences and processes

**Solve Problems**
- Identify and ask significant questions that clarify various points of view and lead to better solutions
Creativity

Think Creatively
- Use a wide range of idea creation techniques (such as brainstorming)
- Elaborate and refine original ideas to improve and maximize creative efforts

Work Creatively with Others
- Develop, implement, and communicate new ideas to others effectively
- Be open to new and diverse perspectives; incorporate feedback

View failure as an opportunity to learn
- Accept small successes and frequent mistakes
• Learning is a complex, dynamic and situated process
• *Languaging* “the use of speaking and writing to mediate cognitively complex activities” (Swain & Deters, 2007, p. 822).

Students develop higher-order thinking abilities based on the teacher and students co-constructing knowledge and understanding
Activating Background Knowledge

**Carousel Brainstorming**

**Anticipation Charts**

```
Rank these forms of transportation in order from slowest to fastest. Write number 1 next to the one you think is the slowest, up to number 10 next to the one you think is the fastest. When you finish numbering, write down a speed for each one.

Motorcycle
Train
Skateboard
Race car
Tractor
Bicycle
Inline skates
Rowboat
Jet plane
Ship
```
Activating Background Knowledge

Observation Charts

KWL Charts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do I know?</th>
<th>What do I want to know?</th>
<th>What have I learned?</th>
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Modeling critical thinking skills

“Show your thinking”
Using Multimodalities To Build Robust Understandings

Manipulatives, Physical action, Music

Games, Art projects, Drama

Multimedia
Turn and talk...

How do you foster critical thinking and creativity in your classroom?

What are some examples of activities and strategies you use?
Designing Project-based Learning

(Buck Institute for Education, 2015)

Key Knowledge, Understanding & Success
• Teaches specific skills derived from curriculum
• Objectives are taught and assessed

Challenging Problem or Question
• Narrow focus
• Results in a product, presentation, or performance

Sustained Inquiry
• Inquiry is sustained over time
• Student-generated questions

Authenticity
• Real-world tasks

http://www.bie.org/for/teachers
Designing Project-based Learning

(Buck Institute for Education, 2015)

**Student Voice & Choice**
- Encourages responsibility and independence

**Reflection**
- Both during the project and after its culmination,

**Critique & Revision**
- Regular, structured opportunities to give and receive feedback

**Public Product**
- Student work is made public by presenting or offering it to people beyond the classroom
High School Digital Storytelling Projects: A Significant Life Event

- Students produced a digital story combining image, sound and video with text. Their projects were uploaded to YouTube and shared in a presentation for parents and other students/teachers.

- Engaged in creative pre-writing activities
- Watched digital stories available online for inspiration (mentor texts)
- Wrote their own essays and poems
- Shared drafts of their writing
- Discussed ideas for images and sounds
- Presented their projects in class and provided feedback to each other
- Shared projects in a formal presentation at their schools
First grade classroom

Thematic unit focusing on a fundraiser for Heifer International in an African country

Reading activities: Beatrice’s Goat book

Group activity – Create a timeline of the story (ordering pictures and retelling the story)

Grammar focus: descriptions (adjectives) and cause/effect

Students kept track of their donations on a weekly basis

They wrote a class letter to send along with their collected donation

https://www.heifer.org/
Most students are not used to socio-constructivist classrooms, so it is important to train them to be successful.

- Make objectives transparent.
- Carefully explain the **purpose** of the project and each task leading to the project.
- The steps must be **taught, modeled, and practiced**.
- Help students use the **language** they need to complete the task.
- Show them **how to help each other**.
Sharing and Discussion