

TEACHING ENGLISH THROUGH PROJECTS: EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

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Abstract:

This paper focuses on Project-based Learning (PBL) with one of the most influential models in teaching which was proposed by David Kolb, the Experiential Learning Theory (ELT). It is still seen as one of the most widely used learning styles model. It can be tried out in English Language Learning (ELL) too.

Key words: PBL, Experiential Learning, Writing, Speaking, Critical Thinking, Technology

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Introduction

ELT involves learning from practical experience. According to Kolb, experiential learning can be defined as a learning process where knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming an experience.

Kolb's experiential learning cycle concept divides the learning process into a cycle of four basic theoretical components: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation.

Applying Kolb's learning theory has benefits for students, educators and employers. Hence, this theory is taken up by the Author and Presenter of this paper who has implemented the above theory as “English Project: Experiential Learning” involving Grade 11 students of Yangibazar School No:1 (Maktab 1), Khorezm region, which functions under the Ministry of Public Education in Uzbekistan. This Project can be taken up further by any school, college or university in the country or other foreign countries too.

Explanation

The term “learning style” is commonly used in education. This popular theory teaches that people learn better when taught in a way that matches their learning style.

The following are the Kolb's four learning styles:

- Diverging (feeling and watching)
- Assimilating (watching and thinking)
- Converging (doing and thinking)
- Accommodating (doing and feeling)

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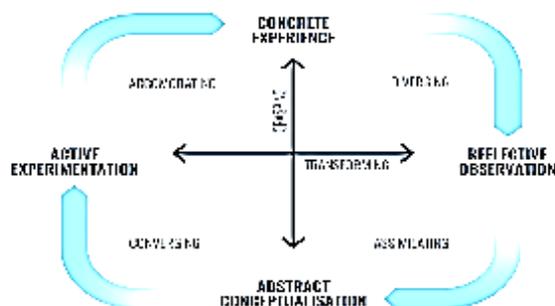


Figure 1: Learning Styles
Source: ELT, David Kolb (1984)

World Economic Forum, in the recent publication, mentioned that there are some skills which are in high demand. These skills can be integrated into English Language curriculum also.

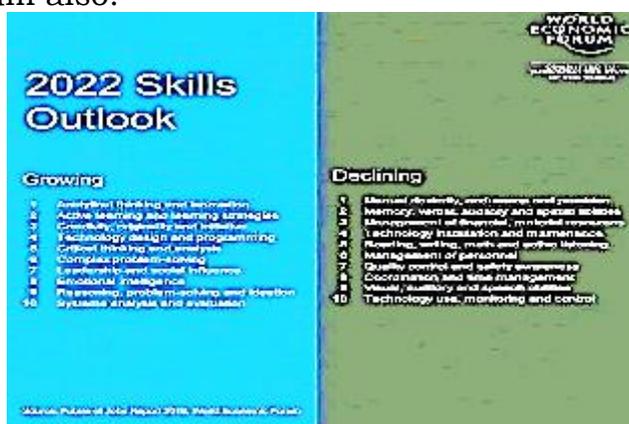


Fig 2: Future of Jobs Report 2019
Source: World Economic Forum

Based on the above Skills set the Project-based Teaching covers more than 70% of the skills that are globally recognized and demanded.

English Project- Experiential Learning

This Project can be both online and face-to-face while implementing at an institution. The Author/ Presenter involved 43 students of Grade 11 who are presently studying at School No:1, Yangibazaar, Khorezm region, Ministry of Public Education, Uzbekistan. The Author/ Presenter is presently working there as an International English Teacher.

Objectives of the Project

- To improve Speaking and Writing in English
- To engage students in experiential learning
- To enable them to use head, heart and hand
- To practice collaborative learning
- To equip them with active learning
- To apply technology using social media in language learning
- To improve interpersonal skills
- To practice working in teams
- To inform the local and global audience

What are the benefits of experiential learning?

- Students can better grasp concepts.
- Students have the opportunity to be more creative.

- Students have the opportunity to reflect.
- Students' mistakes become valuable experiences.
- Teachers often observe improved attitudes towards learning.

Types of learning experiences include the following:

- Group experiences either in-person or online/distance learning,
- Individual experiences with self-study products
- Blended experiences - elements of both group and individual learning experiences.

Stages of the Project

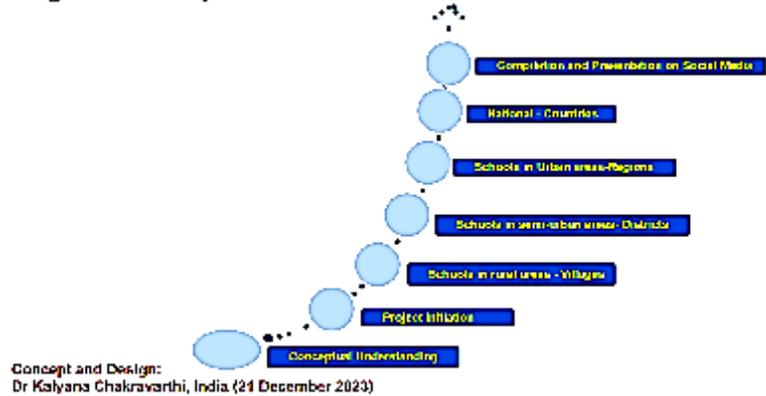


Fig 3: Project Development

Source: Author's own design

Structure of the Project

Size- Student Groups of 5 members

Level- Grades 10 and 11

Type- Group work, Experiential and Collaborative Learning and Presentation in the class (Text, Pictures, Audio, Video)

Evaluation

Weightage- 20 marks, Time- 2 Weeks,

Requirements

Mobile camera – audio, video recording

Computer – Typing text, PPT, Editing and Internet for Uploading,

Notebooks, pens

Paper for printing/ Writing

Activity and Tasks for Students

- Visit a nearby market- village, town, city etc
- Choose 1 specific field of study per each group
- Take pictures, videos, interviews of the concerned
- Write about each picture, video, interview Q & A
- Speak about each picture, video, how and whose interview you conducted
- Prepare a presentation with pics, videos after editing
- Record your own video while presenting your group work
- Submit your Group Project – printed or hand-written format with pictures and text
- Submit an edited video – Title, working stills, names with your pics, class, school, district, city, country
- Prepare a video with a brief explanation about the Project and your Experience

The below shown picture reflects the output of the Project after 2 weeks of the announcement in the classes. These are the posters hand-written by the students of Grade 11 (A & B)

Sample Projects (Hand Written), School 1, Yangibazar, Khorezm region, Uzbekistan
Guidance: Dr. Kalyan and English Teachers of the School

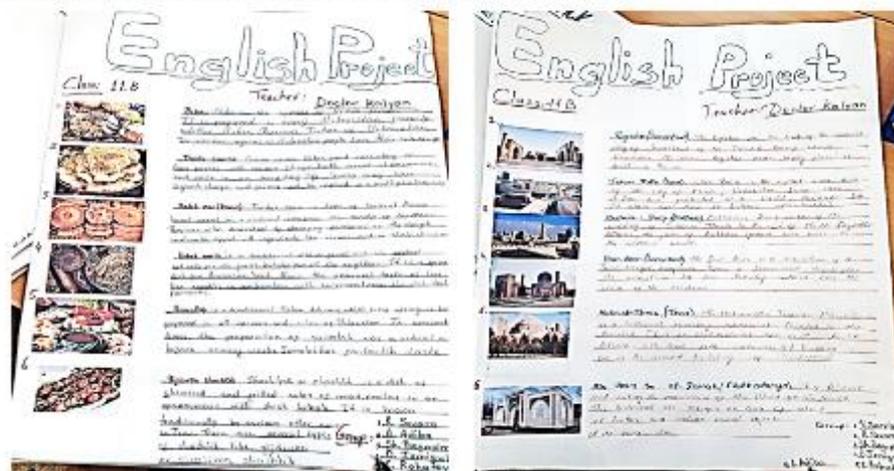


Fig 4: Project Development
Source: Author's own design

The following are the screen shots of Audio and Video versions of the Project which will be played for the audience in the International Scientific and Practical Conference on “Exploring Global Perspectives in Language Teaching and Learning”, 21 February 2024, Samarkand, jointly organized by Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages (IFL) and Uzbekistan Teachers of English Association (UZTEA) for the benefit of all the Participants.

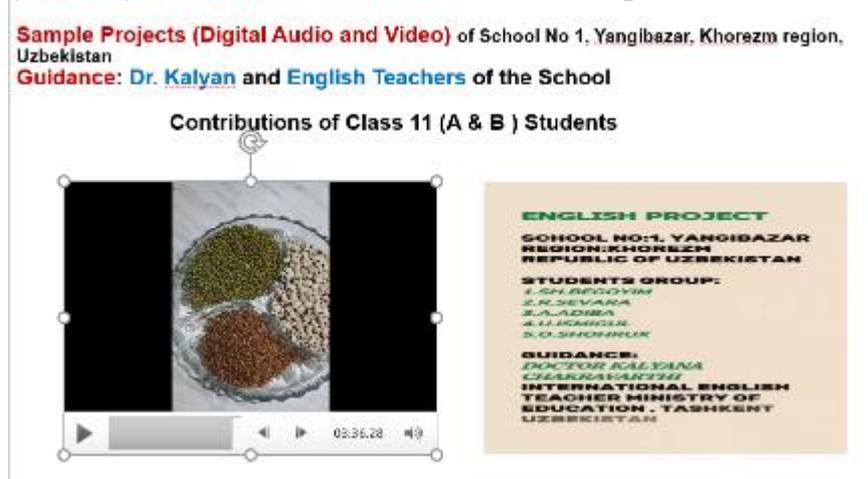


Fig 5: Project Development
Source: Author's own design

Activities for Teachers

- Maintain a record of the students names and progress
- Monitor their work throughout the Project
- Keep reminding their work
- Check progress by visiting their working area
- Collect printed Projects and Evaluate
- Collect edited videos of their Presentations

Important

- Prepare a video with your own details, brief explanation about the Project, Outcome and your Observations
- Add your Introduction video to Students videos
- Upload on YouTube and other Social Media (optional)

- Share the video link on FB, LinkedIn (optional)

Conclusion

Many Projects can be taken up by the Teachers at Schools, Colleges and Faculties at various Universities in Uzbekistan and other countries. There can be inter-regional and international Projects too. For further details and collaboration, the Author/ Presenter can be contacted through E-mail, Telegram and mobile phone as well.

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