

Lecture №8

Internet-based project technologies in FLT

Plan

1. Internet-based project work
2. Basic projects.
3. Internet-based simulations.
4. Webquests.

There are many compelling reasons for using Internet-based projects in the classroom:

They are a structured way for teachers to begin to incorporate the Internet into the language classroom, on both a short-term and a long-term basis. No specialist technical knowledge is needed either to produce or to use Internet-based projects. However, it is certainly true that they will take time to plan and design, so it is well worth looking around on the Internet to see if something appropriate already exists before sitting down to create your own project.

More often than not, they are group activities and, as a result, lend themselves to communication and the sharing of knowledge, two principal goals of language teaching itself. The use of projects encourages cooperative learning, and therefore stimulates interaction.

They can be used simply for language learning purposes, but can also be interdisciplinary, allowing for cross-over into other departments and subject areas. This can often give them a more 'real-world' look and feel, and provide greater motivation for the learner.

They encourage critical thinking skills. Learners are not required to simply regurgitate information they find, but have to transform that information in order to achieve a given task.

In the context of doing project work, the Internet can be thought of as an enormous encyclopedia because it gives our learners quick access to a wealth of information which they can use to carry out their project tasks. A good example of such a source is Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org), a collaborative encyclopedia produced by and for the Internet community. Wikipedia has thousands of articles on many different subjects, and is an ideal place to start when doing project work that requires factual information about people and places.

Project work online can range from a simple low-level project like making a poster presentation about a famous person to high-level investigative work where learners research a subject and present polemical views and opinions in a report or debate. In order to prepare for Internet-based project work, you will need to do the following:

- Choose the project topic. Will your learners be researching famous people, an event or an issue? Make the task clear. What information will they need to find - biographical, factual, views and opinions?

- Find the resources. Which websites will your learners need to visit? Do these websites contain the information they need and are they at the right level? Refer back to Chapter 3 for more ideas on selecting and evaluating websites.

- Decide on the outcome. What is the final purpose of the project? For example, will your learners be making a poster, a presentation or holding a debate?

Problematic questions:

1. The use of Internet-based project work and cooperative techniques
2. Basic projects at the elementary level
3. Steps to organise Internet-based simulations.
4. What webquests have you used?
5. How Internet can be used as an access point to real-world knowledge?

6.

Literature

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Corio, R. & Meloni, C. (2015). The Guidelines Net Project. Computer Assisted English Language Learning.