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Մասնագիտություն _____ Անգլերեն _____

Թեմա **Activities** for Enhancing Learners' Autonomy.

Կատարող _____ Ստեփանյան Նարինե Բորիսի _____

Ազգանուն, անուն, հայրանուն

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Introduction

The current research paper consists of Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 2, Conclusion and References

My research paper refers to Activities for Enhancing Learners' Autonomy

Learners' Autonomy has been a popular concept in foreign language education in the past decades, especially in relation to lifelong learning skills.

Learners in formal educational context take their first step towards autonomy when they recognize that they are responsible for their own learning , they exercise that responsibility by being fully involved in all aspects of the learning process – planning, implementation, evaluation, and their autonomy grows as a result of their never- ending effort to understand the why, the what and the how of their learning. Learners' autonomy entails a variety of self – regulatory behaviours that develop through practice as a fully integrated part of the knowledge and skills that are the goal of learning, and tool for reflection

On the basis of this understanding , any attempt to describe what language teachers should do in order to develop the autonomy of their learners must consider how to get learners to accept responsibility for their learning how to ensure that they use the target language to communicate , learn and reflect ,and how to organize the classroom so as to engage them as fully as possible in planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning, It is also necessary to take account of the ways in which information systems , especially computer – mediated communication , can help to develop learners' autonomy, since IT seems destined to play an increasingly central role in education.

As a general pedagogical goal learners' autonomy entails that the learner is fully involved in planning, monitoring and evaluating his or her learning. This reflective engagement necessarily has two focuses: the process and the content of learning. In the second foreign language classroom, the development of the autonomy in language use.

This paper addresses the question. How is the language teacher to promote target language use that will produce language learning. The paper proposes that the answer lies in linguistic and communicative scaffolding techniques, drawing on data from a particular classroom. It focuses on the teacher , learning activities , and the learners themselves as sources of scaffolding . In the literature scaffolding has been defined as follows

In social interaction is knowledgeable participants can create, by means of speech, supportive conditions which the novice can participate in, and can extend skills and knowledge to higher levels of competence.

The concept of scaffolding, has been introduced in the foreign language learning context as well. For a long time the research focus was primarily on teacher, learner interaction. More recently, attention has also turned to processes of scaffolding in learner – learner interactions .

As always the teacher speaks to the learners in English and requires them to use English as much as possible. From the very beginning learners have tried to speak and write in English, with help from their teacher, their peers, and classroom-talk posters with English words and phrases. The classroom notice board gives a first impression of what is like to learn English in this particular class.

Posters describe the project that the learners are currently involved in. Other posters keep track of earlier agreement and decisions made by learners and the teacher about how to facilitate learning. The present projects were planned three weeks ago on the bases of evaluating previous projects, and were inspired by an exhibition of materials presented by the teacher in the classroom. It is in the middle of a project cycle, the learners are working in small groups or pairs, some are reading in pairs, some are talking together, some are writing with the help of dictionaries, some are preparing presentations. The teacher is working with different pairs or groups in two-taking part and /or observing,

Internet technologies, and in particular internet-based telecommunication technologies, have increasingly provided a focus for CALL (computer – assisted language learning) researches and theorists. After initial euphoria over “interactive multimedia”, we have come to understand better the complex interplay between pedagogy and technology that makes CALL a valuable addition to the language classroom. From a pedagogical perspective, the concept of learner autonomy has come to form the bases for the way we conceive of CALL. But it is also true that new technology can fundamentally change the way learners learn a second language by opening up previously unknown resources for language learning. Hence it is important to consider technological as well as pedagogical factors in the implementation of CALL.

One might well ask what role CALL and CMC have in the present of learner autonomy. We will explore three approaches to learner autonomy.

The first approach might be called the individual-cognitive perspective. Only the learner herself can effect changes to the construct system, through careful process of reflection.

In language learning this model has often been related to language and linguistic awareness. Recent researchers in language and linguistic awareness have also underlined the role of the written medium in language learning.

The second perspective on learner autonomy may be called social interactive. The two views are complementary and demonstrate the complex interplay between independence and interdependence that is characteristic of any form of learning. Social interaction thus becomes a tool to increase consciousness, or conscious awareness. This can be achieved through “scaffolding” or corrective feedback. An important consequence of feedback is that by comparing the verbal formulation actually transmitted with the initial meaning intention, a speaker has the opportunity to become more aware of his own thoughts and to modify and develop them. This is even true of writing, where there is greater opportunity for correction and revision.

Thirdly, learner autonomy can be viewed from an exploratory – participatory perspective. In learner autonomy, many theorists emphasize that learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for and control over their learning.

By writing down our ideas we generate a trace in a format which opens up a range of new possibilities. We can then inspect and re-inspect the same ideas, coming at them from many different angles and in many different frames of mind. We can hold the original ideas steady so that we may judge them, and

safely experiment with subtle alterations. We can store them in ways which allow us to compare and combine them with other complexes of ideas in ways which would quickly defeat the un-augmented imagination.

We have seen that all three approaches share a concern for reflection. Through reflective processes, the learner should become more aware of language, language learning and her own relationship to the learning processes and identity in the target language. A vital role for developing reflective processes is played by the medium of writing.

Dam and Legenhausen (1997) have distinguished underlying operational and procedural principles which characterize the autonomous learning environment .

Underlying principles include the assumption that language learning- whether in formal or informal settings –is by and large a “creative construction process”, whose driving forces are authentic communicative interactions between learners and between teacher and learner(s)

The teacher’s central responsibility lies with her role in awareness raising as regards language as a system, communication as a process, and the learning process itself. Thus learners develop a strategic competence for intentional learning. This is seen as a prerequisite for learners not only being willing but also capable of taking responsibility for their own learning. Since there is no predefined language syllabus, some other organizational framework must provide structure to the procedures and support the learners’ feeling of security and control over the whole process of learning.

The cycle starts with a negotiating phase, in which teacher and learners discuss options for classroom activities. They can draw on an ideas bank that has accumulated over the preceding months and is open for new suggestions at all times. For the learners freedom of choice and decision making go hand in hand with accountability. The requirement for them to document learning process and outcomes and make them available to peers, teachers and parents not only guarantees the transparency of the learning/teaching enterprise but is also of relevance from a language acquisition point of view. The necessity to organize and document learning activities provides an authentic writing impetus which leads to more pushed output. The teacher supports the learners’ endeavours by systematically involving them in the evaluation of processes and outcomes at regular intervals. Her essential function is to see to it that this work cycle is carried out with a sustained effort by all learners.

We must also turn our attention to the pivotal role of the teacher in mediating the growth and self-regulation of individual motivation.

This state of affairs contrasts sharply with developmental and experimental learning, where learning is driven by personal goals, needs and interests, and these are directly supported and nurtured by the immediate social environment,

From the teacher's perspective "motivation" is a question not finding strategies and incentives to get learners to do what she wants, but of providing the right kinds of interpersonal support and stimulation so that learners will discover things they want to do for themselves. Equally importantly, engaging learners in collective and individual evaluation of the activities and materials will develop their capacity to make informed choices and decisions .

Above all, where learning a new language is concerned, mediating the growth of motivation "from within" entails bringing learners to relate the development of language skills to their own personal lives and interests outside the classroom, and to express their own meanings in the language they are learning (Ushioda 1996). Otherwise, it seems unlikely that they will want to invest in the pursuit of competence in this domain, since the language will always remain to them somebody else's (the teacher's, the textbook's, the target language speaker's), rather than an integral developing part of their own behavioural repertoire. In this respect, promoting a desire for competence is a crucial factor in the social mediation of individual motivation. The desire for personal competence and mastery is a defining characteristic of motivation that is internally driven (White 1959), as reflected in developmental and experiential learning, as well as the pursuit of favourite activities that are often difficult, challenging yet deeply satisfying and intrinsically motivating to the individual concerned, such as playing a musical instrument, doing cryptic crossword puzzles, or climbing a mountain. It is the personal satisfaction deriving from perceived competence that helps to perpetuate such motivation (Csikszentmihalyi 1978). A significant implication is that learning that is intrinsically motivated must entail the exercise of the competence and skills in question, in order to promote perceptions of growth in mastery and skill development. As Deci puts it, intrinsically motivated learning means "developing one's potential as one experiences it". This motivational argument places a premium on engaging language learners in purposeful target language use in the classroom, in addition to the unquestionable cognitive arguments for such pedagogical practice .

The pursuit of competence that underpins intrinsic motivation is shaped by acyclical process of setting and working towards "optimal challenges" that require the individual to stretch relevant abilities by a small but significant amount each time. Research evidence suggests that learning how to set optimal challenges, working to achieve them, and experiencing growth in

competence and skill development can help to cultivate intrinsic interest and motivation. Furthermore, there is considerable empirical evidence that engaging learners in setting personal learning goals has an instrumental role to play in promoting not only the internal growth of motivation but also its self-regulation

This may be because setting short-term goals promotes and authenticates a sense of personal agency as well as perceptions of competence.

The teacher must be willing to “let go” so that her learners can “take over” This view requires a change in the teacher’s traditional role as well as a change in the organization of her classroom towards an” autonomous” classroom. In order to change, though, she has to know what to change she has to be aware of the differences between a teacher-centered teaching environment and a learning –centered learning environment, and be sure of how to discharge her responsibilities in the latter. An autonomous learner is an active participant in the social processes of learning, but also an active interpreter of new information in terms of what she/he already and uniquely knows.

Introduction

The following experimental lesson serves a good example of successful classes developing learners' autonomy. It develops speaking skills and the use of idiomatic language and uses the students' own experiences and opinions as the basis of all discussions and written work. Below I will present the lesson plan which has helped me to conduct the lesson in the 8th grade.

LESSON PLAN

Grade 8

Topic: English and other languages

Time: 45m.(x2)

Aim: To develop learners' autonomy in speaking on their "spare time"

Objectives:

- To give a short presentation about how the student uses the English language
- To be more aware of endangered languages and the impact of losing them
- To use idioms containing the word 'time' – the most frequently used noun in English
- To write a narrative about what students do in their 'spare time'

Procedure

Warmer (5m.)

- Hand out **Task 1** and ask students to make guesses about the common link between the words in the word cloud. (They are among the 25 most frequently used nouns in English; 'time', 'person' and 'year' being the top three respectively.

See <http://oxforddictionaries.com/words/the-oec-facts-about-the-language>

- Now show the 'English is great' poster and ask the students to discuss why the poster mentions, 'Home to the language and business of technology'.
- Lead on to the question, 'What do people use English for?' and elicit that

English is a global language and is used to communicate much of the world's business and technology.

- If there is internet access, students can form more concise answers to the question by reading: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-faq-the-english-language.htm>

Speaking (10m.)

- Hand out **Task 2**.
- In pairs, the students complete Questions 1 and 2 where they give a short talk before moving on to questions which raise awareness of endangered languages and the reasons for keeping them alive. Monitor and provide content-based feedback if students require it.
- Listen and make notes of common errors.
- As a group, elicit content feedback and promote debate about the importance of protecting endangered languages.
- Feedback any common errors that the teacher noticed during pair discussion.

Vocabulary (10m.)

Hand out **Task 3**.

- Ask students if they can remember which is the most frequently used noun in the English language (Time).
- Tell them they are going to learn some useful idioms that contain this word.

Q1. Definition matching (10m.)

- Ask students to match the idioms with the definition, individually and then in pairs, before feeding back as a group.
- For higher levels, cut up the idioms and definitions and distribute them among the group of students. Students mingle to find their matching pair of idiom and definition.

Q2. Fill the gaps with idioms using 'time' (5m.)

- Tell students to fill the gaps in the text with the 'time' idioms they studied in Q1.

Q3. Writing (15m.)

- Students write about what they do in their spare time and try to incorporate some of the 'time' idioms.
- Encourage students to pair check their work and read their work aloud to their partner.

Students could record themselves reading their work aloud at <http://vocaroo.com/>. This gives them the opportunity to self-correct. They can even send their recordings to you so you can give more detailed feedback.

Cooler – Option 1 - What's your favourite word in English? (10m.)

- Hand out **Task 4**.
- Tell the students to think of their favourite word in English.
- Put the students in small groups and ask them to discuss their words and give reasons why they chose them.
- Gather the words generated by the whole class and make a word cloud at: [tp://www.htw.wordle.net/create](http://www.htw.wordle.net/create)
- Make more word clouds using students' favourite word in Armenian.
- Make sure all word clouds created are displayed prominently.

Cooler – Option 2 - Bingo using a video (15m.)

- Hand out the Bingo cards provided below, enough for one per student.
- Play video:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXozG0RSCo&feature=player_embedded#
- Students watch the video and cross off words on the grid as they see or hear them. Play until one student has crossed off all the words in one line and shouts 'Bingo'. The game continues until one student crosses off all the words

on their grid and shouts 'Bingo' or 'Full House'. This person is the ultimate winner.

- Discuss issues that arise from the film, such as what would happen if languages continue to die out. (cultures would disappear)

Task 1

- What is the common link between all these words?



Look at this poster.

- Why does the poster mention, “Home to the language and business of technology?”



- English is one of the world's global languages. What do people use English for?
Have a look at this link to find the answer:

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-faq-the-english-language.htm>

Task 3

the What's
English your
word language
favourite in

What's the question?

Question:.....

Your answer:

Conclusion

My research paper is about activities for Enhancing Learners' Autonomy

In order to reach our goal, the teacher must have a clear goal. And to achieve the goal she/he must have the tools to make the class accesible, mastered, interesting and easy to understand.

To make the autonomy learning process effective I consider it very important to use didactic materials, such as charts, thematic posters in the classroom. These tools encourage students to get concentrated.

It is easier and faster to memorize words, grammar and structures and motivates students and helps them to have a desire to take part in the lesson process. Displaying one picture works more effectively instead of using thousands of words.

It activates imaginative memory sewing in students with a question around the picture in order to envolve timid, shy pupils.

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Appendix

Task 2

Idioms using *'time'* – the most commonly used noun in the English language.

1. Match the idioms using the word *'time'* to the definitions.

IDIOM	DEFINITION
1. to run out of time	A. over and over again, repeatedly
2. time after time	B. time to relax
3. in the nick of time	C. to have an amazing, enjoyable time.
4. killing time	D. free time, when not working
5. time for a change	E. to enjoy yourself and not notice that time has passed
6. Only time will tell,	F. making the time pass quickly
7. have a whale of a time	G. you need to wait before you can find out
8. spare time	H. to leave work unfinished
9. Time flies when you are having fun!	I. the right moment to do something completely different
10. time off	J. just at the right moment – any later and it would be too late

2. Use the idioms you have just learned to fill in the gaps.

1. The police arrived.....and caught the thief trying to escape through the window.
2. I couldn't believe Jane and I had been talking for 3 hours!
3. I'm by having a coffee as I wait to catch my train home.

I didn't finish the exam as I ran

1. I always when I meet up with my friends. They make me laugh so much.
- 2.
3. if my broken arm heals well. I have to wait at least six weeks before I will know.
4. I've been studying so hard this week. I need a bit of
5. 'I've told you to tidy your bedroom! I am not going to do it for you!' said Mum to George.
6. I've been doing the same job for twenty years. I'm so bored with it now that I've decided it's
.....10. In her, Catherine likes to go to the cinema with her friends.

3. Writing - Write about what you do in your spare time.

- Try to use some of the 'time idioms' you have just learned, in your writing.
- Practise reading your piece of writing aloud to your friend or record yourself speaking at:

List of topics / Հետազոտական աշխատանքի թեմաների ցանկը

- 1. Assessment Methods and Tools in EFL classes. / Անգլերենի դասընթացների գնահատման մեթոդաբանությունը և գործիքակազմը**
- 2. Teaching Communicative Grammar. / Հաղորդակցական քերականության դասավանդում**
- 3. Teaching Topic-based Vocabulary. / Թեմատիկ բառապաշարի դասավանդում**
- 4. Teaching/Learning Challenges in EFL classes. / Դասավանդման/ուսումնառության մարտահրավերները անգլերենի դասընթացներում**
- 5. Activities for Enhancing Learners' Autonomy. / Սովորողի ինքնուրույնության զարգացմանը միտված կրթական գործունեություն**
- 6. Group Work in EFL classes. / Խմբային աշխատանքը անգլերենի դասերին**
- 7. Project-based Teaching/Learning. / Պրոյեկտային ուսուցումը / ուսումնառությունը**
- 8. Instructive Material Design/development. / Ուսուցողական նյութերի մշակում**
- 9. Learning Outcomes in EFL classroom. / Կրթական վերջնարդյունքներն անգլերենի դասընթացներում**
- 10. Continuing Professional Development of EFL teachers. / Անգլերենի ուսուցիչների շարունակական մասնագիտական կատարելագործումը**
- 11. Developing Soft Skills in EFL classes. / «Փափուկ» հմտությունների զարգացումը անգլերենի դասերին**
- 12. Developing Critical Thinking in EFL classes. / Քննադատական մտածողության զարգացումը անգլերենի դասընթացներում**
- 13. Communicative Language Teaching: My Priorities. / Հաղորդակցական ՕԼԴ. սեփական առաջնայնությունները**
- 14. Developing Linguocultural Competence in EFL classes. / Լեզվամշակութային կոմպետենցիայի զարգացումը անգլերենի դասերին**
- 15. Choosing Alternative Teaching /Learning Sources/Materials. / Այլընտրանքային ուսուցողական աղբյուրների/նյութերի ընտրությունը**