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## TEACHING RUSSIAN-ENGLISH FALSE FRIENDS THROUGH PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

**Аннотация.** Исследования по методу проектов были проведены в изобилии в различных областях преподавания иностранного языка, в то время как исследования по применению метода проектов в преодолении языковой интерференции очень редки. Таким образом, целью данного исследования было изучение эффективности использования метода проектов в обучении русско-английским ложным друзьям переводчика студентам в возрасте 17-19 лет на кафедре иностранных языков университета имени Сулеймана Демиреля, Казахстан. Исследование показало, что применение метода проектов в обучении ложных друзей переводчика было достаточно эффективным в сравнении с традиционными методами. Тем не менее, участники отметили, что метод проектов тоже имел свои недостатки также как и преимущества, которые противоречат популярному мнению об эффективности метода проектов над традиционными методами. Среди преимуществ метода проектов участники выделили творчество, лучшее запоминание лексики, более эффективную работу в группах и сотрудничество, в то время как недостатки включали двусмысленные и неясные инструкции, недостаточное время для завершения проектов сложные или неподходящие задачи.

**Ключевые слова:** ложные друзья переводчика, метод проектов, языковая интерференция.

Project-based learning is commonly defined as student-centered, inquiry-based education, which utilizes formative assessment and presents students with real-world challenges (Markham, 2011; Larmer, 2014; Hickey, 2014). Advantages of PBL are many, among which are: efficient collaborative work in teams, independent work of different-level students at their own pace, motivation for gifted students, integration of knowledge and practice, student-centered environment, and so on. However, to make PBL work effectively researchers suggest several fundamental criteria when implementing it. For instance, Larmer and Mergendoller (2010) suggest the following seven essentials:

- 1) A need to know
- 2) A driving question
- 3) Student voice and choice
- 4) 21<sup>st</sup> century skills
- 5) Inquiry and innovation
- 6) Feedback and revision
- 7) A publicly presented product.

In line with Larmer, Markham (2011) proposes the following stages of PBL:

- 1) Identify the challenge
- 2) Craft the driving question
- 3) Build the assessment (establish evaluation criteria at the beginning)
- 4) Enroll and engage (student voice and choice)
- 5) Facilitate the teams (coach teams how to work more efficiently)
- 6) Keep the end in mind (presentation of the project to audience).

Similarly, Hickey (2014) emphasizes two major objectives for a successful PBL project. Primarily a project must fulfill an education purpose or standard. Secondly, it is important that students are aware of the relevance of the project and they have to be genuinely interested in completing it.

With this in mind, we designed and conducted a research, using PBL in teaching false friends, as they tend to occur rather frequently in the speech of Russian-speaking learners of English. This is a descriptive, experimental qualitative study, which means it is an attempt to explore the phenomenon in depth and show its complexity. According to Myers (2002), "A major strength of the qualitative approach is the depth to which explorations are conducted and descriptions are written, usually resulting in sufficient details for the reader to grasp the idiosyncrasies of the situation." Myers adds that "The ultimate aim of qualitative research is to offer a perspective of a situation and provide well-written research reports that reflect the researcher's ability to illustrate or describe the corresponding phenomenon. One of the greatest strengths of the qualitative approach is the richness and depth of explorations and descriptions."

In order to achieve reliable and valid results multiple measurements were employed in the study to triangulate research findings. Apart from the *experiment, observation, survey* and *in-depth semi-structured interviews* were applied to obtain rich information, which supplemented the statistical findings. Interviewing the participants enabled the researchers to verify students' responses in the survey, and shed light on ambiguous answers, that were given in error, hurry or incorrect interpretation.

*The aim* of this study was to study the effectiveness of Project-Based learning in preventing lexical interference, namely Russian-English false friends, in the speech of Kazakh speaking learners of English in comparison with Traditional Methods.

In order to achieve the research goals the following *objectives* were set:

1. To observe the participants and collect data of their lexical mistakes, specifically false friends interferences; create a database of Russian-English false friends errors for the experiment;
2. To develop a model for teaching Russian-English false friends through Project-Based Learning;
3. Conduct an experiment at the B1 level to study the effectiveness of PBL in avoiding lexical interference in comparison with traditional methods.

*Research questions* in the study were as follows:

1. Is Project-based learning a more effective technique in teaching Russian-English *false friends* than traditional methods?
2. What is the students' attitude towards PBL when learning Russian-English false friends?

*The hypothesis* in this research was as follows:

Lexical interference can be prevented more effectively, *if* EFL teachers apply Project-Based Learning instead of other traditional methods in teaching English.

The study was carried out with a population of 94 Intermediate (B1) level students in Foreign Languages Department at Suleyman Demirel University. Four groups of first-year students were selected. Demographics for the participants were classified as 68 female and 26 male Kazakh students between ages of 17 and 19.

One of the main sources of collecting the data was non-participant observation. Participant observation was not opted for as we believed that the presence of the researcher in the classroom and taking an active part in the activities might have affected the participants' behavior, which would vary from natural situations. For this reason we reduced our presence in the classroom to minimum. We analyzed written work of the participants such as homework, essays, written reports, essays, and reading logs for occurrence of Russian-English false friends, which we recorded. All lexical interference errors were noted down for the future use and analysis. Selection of the items was done according to the frequency of their appearance. In other words, only the most common false friends were carefully handpicked and double-checked. As a result, 50 Russian-English and English-Russian false friends were selected for conducting the research. Additionally, notes from senior students' oral presentations, such as

diploma pre-defense and defense, pedagogical practicum reports, practicum defense, and public speaking presentations were taken.

Before engaging into the experiment both experimental and control groups were given a pre-test. The subjects took several different tests such as Vocabulary Level test by Nation, a First Certificate Exam by Cambridge University Press, listening and speaking test. The questions were of various types such as multiple-choice, True / False, and open ended. The participants were given these pre-tests so that we could obtain more reliable data of the participants' proficiency level via test-retest method. As a result, we succeeded in forming two homogeneous groups with a very similar level of proficiency in English. The vast majority of the participants were at B1 level with a few exceptions of B2. Results of the pre-tests were thoroughly analyzed and compared. Objectivity of evaluation was reached through applying several evaluators at a time, especially when measuring speaking level of the participants. The answers of the participants were recorded this time as they were warned before. The recorded material was evaluated by several independent experienced teachers. The average was calculated and taken as the final grade for speaking exam.

In the experimental part of the research the participants from the experimental group had to select and complete four different project work assignments on Russian-English False Friends during a semester, while the control group was given explicit instruction every week by the instructor where they were taught the meaning of Russian-English False Friends and given drill exercises. The project work assignments in the experiment were as follows:

- 1) Find the origin of Russian-English false friends.
- 2) Make a poster of Russian-English false friends.
- 3) Draw / web-search / take pictures of Russian-English false friends.
- 4) Write a song or a poem using Russian-English false friends.
- 5) Record a podcast which teaches Russian-English false friends.
- 6) Record a podcast which teaches Russian-English false friends.
- 7) Shoot a video lesson which teaches Russian-English false friends.
- 8) Compile a booklet/dictionary of Russian-English false friends.
- 9) Compile flashcards of Russian-English false friends (paperback or electronic);
- 10) Construct Russian-English false friends exercises;
- 11) Interview native speakers or experts about Russian-English false friends.

After completion of each project the participants demonstrated their work to their peers in class. The students compared their works, gave feedback and evaluated their peers' assignments. By doing so we believe that we taught the participants to take responsibility and, thus, the learners learnt an authentic skill needed in a real life.

Following the experiment both the experimental and control groups were given a post-test, in which they had to translate 50 sentences from Russian/Kazakh into English. The students were deliberately told to pay special attention to grammar. By saying so we made an attempt to have the participants translate the sentences in a more spontaneous and natural way, and thus, elicit *false friends* interferences.

Both Kazakh and Russian equivalents were typed in the worksheet so that the students had no language issues when translating. Another purpose of such a technique was to find out if the participants used several languages (Russian and Kazakh) while translating or employed Russian only. In addition, the test consisted of both true and false friends so as students would not figure out the purpose of the post-test and, thus, affect the results negatively. A sample of the post-test is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Excerpt from translation post-test on false friends.

#	Russian	Kazakh	English
1	Она получила компенсацию за сломанную руку.	Ол сынған қолы үшін өтемақы алды.	
2	Марат - очень аккуратный	Марат өте жинақы студент.	

	студент.		
3	В этом году семестр закончился рано.	Осы жылы семестр ерте бітті.	
4	Назгуль - студентка 3-го курса.	Назгуль үшінші курс студенті.	
5	Я никогда не забуду этот фрагмент фильма.	Мен фильмдегі мына үзіндіні ешқашан ұмытпаймын.	

After conducting post-test and analyzing the results, we believed that it was necessary to conduct a delayed post-test to verify our findings and prove them statistically. The delayed post-test was conducted two months later after conducting the post-test. By doing so we aimed at finding out a more effective technique in terms of vocabulary retention.

The delayed post-test was of a *True/False* type. The participants had to identify if the underlined true friends and false friends were used correctly. If the word was used correctly students had to check *True* in the box. In case the word was used in the incorrect context, students had to tick *False*. It should be noted here that true friends were also used in the delayed post-test purposefully. The idea was to make sure that students were unaware of the fact that they were taking a false friend delayed post-test, because test-wise learners could easily realize that fact. True friends and false friends were mixed in order. In total, there were 50 false friends and 20 true friends in the test. An excerpt from the delayed post-test is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Excerpt from the delayed post-test on false friends

#	Statements	Correct	Incorrect
1	Nazgul is a 3 <sup>rd</sup> <u>course</u> student.		
2	I will never forget the <u>fragment</u> of the film when Robert kisses Jane's eyes.		
3	Marat is a very <u>accurate</u> student. He always keeps his desk in order.		
4	I will send the answer via <u>mail</u> . Is your mail <i>john25@gmail.com</i> ?		
5	'John walks in his sleep.' – 'Oh, really? I didn't know he was a <u>lunatic</u> .'		

The results of post-test and delayed post-test showed that both groups displayed very similar results in the post-test, which means both methods, PBL and Traditional, are comparably effective in terms of short-memory vocabulary retention. However, the delayed post-test, which was conducted two months later, demonstrated relatively different results. The participants in the experimental group outperformed their peers in the control group by 13%, to be precise 74% and 61% respectively. Thus, the post-test provided us with more significant and reliable data in terms of long-term vocabulary retention and efficiency of PBL over Traditional methods, such as explicit explanation of new words by translation, using them in the context and doing drill exercises. The detailed results of the tests are displayed in Table 3 below.

Table 3 – Results of the tests

#	Participants	Pre-test	Post-test	Delayed post-test
1	Control group	61%	79%	61%
2	Experimental group	63%	81%	74%

In order to find out the participants' opinion of PBL assignments they performed, we conducted a survey and a semi-structured interview among the experimental group. The results suggest that two third (64.7%) of the population had positive experience about learning vocabulary through PBL, while almost one fifth (18.5%) truly enjoyed the assignments. Only 16.8% of the participants liked the assignments to certain extent, which still means that they were not negative about it. None of the population was unenthusiastic about the assignments.

The reasons why the students liked the assignments were many. The main one was the participants' enthusiasm for shooting a video lesson and recording an audio lesson, which was quite amusing and entertaining. The students noticed that they had to shoot the same sequence several times because they could not help laughing. In addition, it was unusual for students to see themselves on the screen when presenting the videos.

Another reason of positive attitude of the participants towards PBL was the nature of the tasks, which was *"something new"*, *"unusual"*, *"fun"*, *"interesting"*, *"creative"*, and *"easy to remember"*. The assignments, according to the participants, enabled them to think creatively and out of the box. Moreover, the students had an opportunity to implement their own ideas, which, reportedly, resulted in better memorization of new words. According to the participants, creating Power Point slides, shooting videos, recording audio files, writing a script for a short video scene, and drawing pictures were more motivating to complete and more effective in terms of memorization of vocabulary than ordinary rote-learning:

*"I have to say, that it was not a bad idea, sort of an additional work for enriching students' horizons. Honestly, I have learned many words that I have never heard of. Moreover, I liked the idea that students could use their imagination."*

Group work and collaboration was also mentioned by the participants as a positive experience. For example, a few participants noticed that working in groups was more interesting than working individually. In addition, these students worked with their friends and peers from other departments, and they too memorized those Russian-English false friends. This kind of collaboration, according to the survey responses, will result in fewer, if at all, lexical interference mistakes in the future.

A number of respondents stated that before the experiment they had difficulty with confusing the words and used false friends in their speech very often. Several respondents admitted that they had no idea about false friends before the project started and had used them quite often in their speech without knowing that they had been making mistakes. Numerous participants also confirmed that they enjoyed exploring differences in meaning of the words which sounded or looked alike in two different languages. Another respondent cleverly noticed:

*"We are a bilingual nation, who speak Russian as well as Kazakh, and tend to make mistakes in English as we think that some Russian words have the same meaning in English just because they look or sound alike. When I faced them I really confused their meanings, and this project will enable learners avoid mistakes in English by ignoring its Russian alternative. I think it's a very good idea."*

The last but not least, a number of students reported that they can employ the projects that they were assigned and the ideas from them in their future work when they get a degree:

*"Actually I like it, because through the experiment I learnt that I can also memorize words with the help of the photos which I took by myself, and it can be a good idea for me to use this technique in my future job."*

To sum up, we can conclude that PBL was more efficient than traditional methods in terms of teaching Russian-English false friends. Moreover, the vast majority of the participants enjoyed the projects and had positive attitude towards them after the experiment, as everybody benefitted from contribution in many different ways.

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### **SINGLE-SEX SCHOOLS ARE EFFECTIVE FOR GIRLS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS. HAVE WE GOT THE RIGHT END OF THE STICK?**

**Аннотация.** С приближением возраста детей к школе, родители начинают серьезно задумываться о выборе среднего учебного заведения. Можно слышать много различных возражений по поводу раздельного обучения детей. Например, то, что мальчики не научатся взаимодействовать с девочками, тем самым не обретут навыка, необходимого для будущего любого общества. Так ли это на самом деле и каковы основные плюсы и минусы будут рассмотрены в данной статье, целью которого является критический анализ влияния раздельного обучения на успеваемость студентов как мальчиков так и девочек.

**Ключевые слова:** раздельное обучение, перспективы, успеваемость студентов, методы.

The separation of gender in educational environment has been practiced for a long period of time in many nations worldwide. Single-sex schooling can be described as the separation of male and female students within their own sex in educational environment [1]. There has been a substantial amount of debates around the question of whether academic involvement is fostered or not in single-sex classrooms [2; 3; 4;]. However the question of single-sex schooling is still contested and this report will consider the studies which have been conducted with the aim to understand the nature of 'single-sex schooling', its effectiveness on students' academic achievements, the role of peer quality, social along with educational environment. Gender composition in classroom environment, for the purpose of this report, is taken to refer to overall learning atmosphere with different factors having impact on it.

The choice of the articles is based on several reasons. Firstly, all of the three empirical research articles are from peer reviewed journals, secondly, the examination of each of the article allows comparing different methodological approaches and the results they led to in current researching area, finally the choice is justified due to robustness and complexity of the implemented methodology.

The essay will shortly delineate the overlapping formulation and significance of research questions and hypotheses in each empirical research studies. After that, the application of data collection will be evaluated, together with sampling, used instruments, primarily used design, procedures as well as techniques employed for data analysis. Finally,