

FOSTERING LEARNERS' ENGAGEMENT AS WELL AS LINGUISTIC AND SOCIAL COMPETENCES BY ADOPTING THE PROJECT-BASED LEARNING APPROACH IN ESP

Raluca Ștefania PELIN¹

e-mail: ralucapelein@uaiasi.ro

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of using the project-based learning approach on students' linguistic acquisitions and on the development of lifelong competences such as personal engagement and social interaction skills. The students enrolled in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) at the Faculty of Food and Animal Sciences and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine were assigned specific projects in line with their specializations and with the requirements of their future careers. The tasks derived from topics approached during the courses and seminars and were designed so as to engage learners either in exploratory or creative tasks, or in presenting case studies from their practical training. The impact of the project-based approach on students' learning and development of social skills was evaluated by means of a self-assessment questionnaire. The responses revealed that working on projects has prompted students to enrich their English vocabulary with specialized terms, select relevant information and organize it in a coherent presentation, cooperate with their fellow students, improve their presentation skills, offer relevant feedback, and develop personal and social competences such as managing one's own emotions, adapting their discourse to the situations, and adopting the right attitudes in interactions with other people.

Key words: project-based learning, linguistic acquisitions, engagement, social competences, self-assessment questionnaire