



Cap sur l'école inclusive
en Europe



Best practice

The Project Method – An Active Learning Method

Section of the module / E

Contact : AURORA LEFTER

School: C.S.E.I. „Elena Doamna” Focșani Romania



Website : www.cseielenadoamna.ro

1 Context

The idea of learning based on the project was launched by William H. Kilpatrick, through The Project Method (1918). The project is an interactive teaching-learning-evaluation method, which involves a micro-research or a systematic investigation of a subject with interest for students.

The project method is based on the principle of "learning by doing" learning, which gives it the necessary motivation. Opposing verbal instruction, learning through projects is a more comprehensive way of organizing the learning process by which the requirements of a pragmatic education can be met in the spirit of action and independence in thinking.

The project has an extremely important role in intellectual development, and students need to be trained to work longer in the project phase (preparation of activities) than in the active phase. In "Modern Design Pedagogy," the project is understood as a research theme aimed at achieving a well-defined goal to be achieved, as far as possible, by combining theoretical knowledge with practical work. For this, students choose or receive a relatively comprehensive theme, which they perform in various forms of study, investigation and practical activity, either individually or through teamwork. Thus, the project becomes concurrently a research action and practical action, subordinated to the fulfillment of concrete tasks of instruction and education. The student thus learns to learn both from research and practical work to acquire both the processuality of science and its content, referring directly to practical activity.

One way of giving openness and life to our work is also that of interdisciplinary exercise by using the project as a complementary or alternative assessment method. It gives students the opportunity to demonstrate what they know but, above all, what they can do, that is to say, to highlight certain capacities.

Thus, in the 4th grade of the Secondary School of Gugesti, where two students are integrated with SEN., the teacher of the class frequently uses the project method, because he has found a series of benefits for the entire group of students.

2 Objectives.

The objectives of this good practice are:

- encouraging active queries and higher level thinking;
- increasing self-confidence and improve attitudes towards learning;
- engaging in projects and taking responsibility for their own studies, compared to traditional teaching-learning-evaluation activities;
- developing complex skills such as higher level thinking skills, problem solving, collaboration and communication;
- involving all students in the team and valorize each of them.

3/ Development of the " Best practice".

The project method started with stages ranging from preparation to evaluation:

a) Project preparation stage

Together with the students, they established:

- what is the theme of the project;
- where the activities / actions of the project will be carried out;
- what are the resources they need to accomplish the project;
- how the groups will be organized;
- what is the schedule of activities in the project;
- what are the final products of the project;
- how the evaluation will be carried out, what are the evaluation criteria (discussion, criteria-based analysis, questionnaires, oral presentation, portfolio, etc.).

b) The stage of project realization

- the pupils carried out their activities according to the assumed responsibilities;
- the didactic framework monitored the work of each group, the involvement of each student, especially those with S.E.N., provided support if necessary so that all groups could complete the project;
- the didactic framework found out how the group works, how the pupils collaborate and cooperate, intervening to regulate the malfunctions identified in the communication and relationship plan.

c) Evaluation stage

- the final products presented by pupils were evaluated, taking into account the criteria established from the stage of the project organization (assessment by students through inter-evaluation, assessment by the didactic framework);
- evaluation of the project realization, focusing on the relationship between the students and the involvement of those with S.E.N. throughout the project (evaluation made by students through individual self-evaluation and self-evaluation of the group of pupils, evaluation by the didactic framework).

The interdisciplinary evaluation project "Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt" was conducted with the students of the fourth grade, during the Romanian Language and Literature classes. The project was elaborated from the following supporting materials / activities:

- The legends in prose "Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt și Vrâncioaia" by Al. Vlahuta and "The Oak from Borzești" by E. Camilar
- the legends in the verses "Daniel Sihastru" and "The Mother of Stephen the Great" by D. Bolintineanu
- the poem "At Stephen's Burial" by St Joseph
- popular song "Stephen, The Lord!"
- the trip to Suceava (the Throne Hall, (Putna Monastery - the tomb of Stephen the Great)
- a visit to the school library (consultation of the volumes of the topic)

- collective drawings (illustrating readings from the given data, comics)
- components of students.

We have determined from the outset that final product evaluation will be done through oral presentation, free of charge by each group. There were four groups with 6 pupils, with group leaders and with themes for each group.

Working time: 3 weeks

The themes of the groups:

Group I - "Stephen the Great in the History of Romanians"

Group II - "Stephen's physical and moral portrait"

Group III - "The Figure of Stephen the Great in Romanian Literature"

Group IV - "In the footsteps of the great Stephen"

The general objective was to recapitulate, to deepen and to evaluate the significant knowledge of Ștefan cel Mare's life and work, in the light of the readings studied and the preparation of a portfolio "Stephen the Great and the Holy." For the evaluation we set the working time of 2 hours, the pupils being seated in groups arranged so that everyone can look forward to everyone else; have business cards on the table and the final product map.

The class was appropriately arranged, exposing some of the suggestive materials - created by the students: plan with the evaluation project plan, posters with views, diagrams with significant data or literary expressions, collective drawings representing studied reading, comics, compositions, trip reports, posters. Students were advised to ask other groups questions during the project evaluation to supplement with other information. For each group, a descriptive observation file was completed, such as:

- speak in correct sentences;
- read correctly, expressively;
- solve the given tasks;

The final products for each group were:

Group I: "Ștefan cel Mare" painting, "Stephen the Great in History" album, poster - years, important struggles, founders, place of birth, fragments of historical readings taken from the interior, t (each student had his contribution to the exhibition), the song "Ștefan, Ștefan Domn!"

Group II: Prose - the physical and moral portrait of the ruler by the chroniclers of the time, poster - expressions from the studied reading that argue Ștefan's physical and moral features from the studied lessons: drawings by pupils, individually and collectively, representing the portrait of Stephen (child and ruler), compositions.

Group III: poster - titles of literary reading depicting the great ruler, drama "Daniel Sihuștru", comics, illustrated fragments, changed reading finishes, illustrated stories, book presentation with each presentation, song "La Ștefan's funeral" - verses of St. O. Iosif

Group IV: reports, travel notes, itinerary for possible excursions under the given generic, pupils created by students. "Who knows win" competition - possible questions.

4.Evaluation

The final evaluation was based on performance descriptors and the individual argumentation of each grade, leaving the students to express their opinion. It has thus been proved that the project as an alternative method of interdisciplinary evaluation has a real formative potential superior to the other evaluation methods.

All the materials were presented individually or in groups by the students with great courage, with the coordination of the group leader, putting the students in the position to reasonably substantiate any

statement, give explanations, ask questions, and not in last but not least, to make valuable judgments. Each student was given the opportunity to carefully observe the work of colleagues, to self-evaluate and to contribute to the preparation of the final portrait "Stefan cel Mare si Sfant".

It was noted that, using this interdisciplinary assessment method, I asked the student to seek, synthesize, associate, compare, and last but not least, get out of the "boxes" of their minds, no matter what discipline they were acquired. The groups have solved the very ingenious proposed theme, using a variety of informational sources, with well-developed arguments and support. Working in a team, students with SEN were supported throughout their activity, valorized, increasing the cohesion of the student group. Students with SEN felt more strongly that they belong to a group, that they can solve tasks together, communicate best with their peers, and learn from each other. Self-esteem has increased, which has led to an improvement in learning.

5/Limits

The thematic project supports the individualization of the educational act, giving the student multiple and varied possibilities to capitalize on his / her acquired knowledge, the way in which he / she possesses the mode of exposure. The final products obtained contribute to the pupil's school success, to their soul contentment, to the teaching staff and to the parents.

The pupil must learn to act after having thought in advance and come to the conclusion that a planned activity takes place more quickly, and mistakes can be avoided to a greater extent from the beginning if the previous effort of thinking was greater and longer. The analysis of some students' works (eg "drafts" to solve problems) allows for countless attempts, retouches, reps, mistakes, etc. in which a great deal of work and time has been invested, precisely because it was not focused on a "plan" of prior action.

Focusing on research and collecting a rich set of information can lead to the loss of sight of the goal or the inability to process and synthesize information that is too diverse; Also, the costs of running a project may sometimes be much higher in relation to the benefits provided.

6/Perspectives.

The reality of our professional practice teaches that it can not be applied either permanently or everywhere, but its use gives beauty and life to school learning, being both possible and necessary. Thus, the project method was also used in other disciplines, the students valorizing the previous experience.



