

Project Work and Creative Thinking Skills in the EFL Classroom

Bachir Sahed¹, Leila Djouima², *

¹ Mohamed Boudiaf University/ M'Sila (Algeria), bachir.sahed@univ-msila.dz

² Higher Education College For Teachers Assia Djebbar/Constantine (Algeria), liladjouima@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT:

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Current trends to English language teaching and learning advocate the use of the project work as a pedagogical task to foster the 21st century learner's creativity. The present study scrutinizes the role of the project work in enhancing learner's creative thinking skills in the Algerian EFL classroom. A project work analysis is used as a tool to examine learners' creative thinking skills. Project work analysis comprises of the observation and the analysis of first year *Tarek Ibn Ziad* secondary school-Constantine learners' projects using an observation grid. The findings reveal that the learners were highly creative in processing information and generating ideas and solutions.

* Djoumia Leila

Introduction

In recent years, a new approach has emerged in the field of education that marked the shift from teacher centeredness to learner centeredness which is commonly known as the Competency Based Approach (CBA) of teaching and learning. Teaching is designed to equip the learner with essential assets for success in tomorrow's world. One important feature of the CBA, then, is the project work. The latter is viewed not as a replacement for other teaching methods but rather as an approach to learning which complements mainstream methods and which can be used with almost all levels, ages, and abilities of students (Haines, 1989). Hence, the project work represents a cognitivist and socio-cognitivist teaching and learning which functions as a bridge between "classroom" and "real life". That is, it brings learners to use various learning strategies and reinvest their acquired knowledge in situations related to everyday life. Learners, thus, learn to share, exchange knowledge, cooperate and develop mental and intellectual abilities especially critical and creative thinking abilities.

In recent years, researchers proved that learners' thinking skills and abilities usually stop at the levels of knowledge, comprehension and application, that is, lower-order thinking skills (LOTS), without developing higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) of criticality and especially creativity. Current research provides that if learners are taught how to learn, then they would not be at loss in real life situations as they would be armed with strategies to deal with everyday problem solving situations. As it is expressed in the following saying, "give a man fish, he eats it one day; teach him how to fish and he will never go hungry". In other words, involving students in the learning process through project work helps them to develop their creativity inside and outside the classroom. The project work helps learners to create and generate new original ideas with the knowledge they acquired. So, it is only through the realization of project work that learners' HOTS (creative thinking skills) are developed and enhanced. This raises the following question: How can the project work enhance creativity of Algerian first year secondary school learners of English as a foreign language?

Theoretical Background

Competency-based education (CBE) emerged in the 1970^s in the US. It referred to an educational movement that advocated defining educational goals in terms of precise measurable description of the knowledge, skills, and behaviours students should possess at the end of a course of study (Guskey, 2005). Competency-based Language Teaching (CBLT) was an application of the

principles of CBE to language teaching. Language programs that were work-related and survival-oriented adopted such an approach in the end of 1970^s.

The Competency-based Approach (CBA) is a teaching/learning approach which focuses on the outcomes of language learning. CBA emphasises what learners are expected to achieve with the target language. In other words, the approach focuses on outputs rather than on the learning process. This means, starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organizing curriculum, instruction, and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens.

Docking (1994) summarized what CBLT is: “CBLT is designed not around the notion of subject knowledge but around the notion of competency. The focus moves from what students know about language to what they can do with it. The focus on competencies or learning outcomes underpins the curriculum framework and syllabus specification, teaching strategies, assessment and reporting. Instead of norm-referencing assessment, criterion-based assessment procedures are used in which learners are assessed according to how well they can perform on specific learning tasks (p.16).”

One of the main units of CBLT is the project work. Good (1973) identifies the project work as : *“a significant, practical unit of activity having educational value and aimed at one or more definite goals of understanding; it involves investigation and solution of a problem... planned and carried to completion by the pupil and teacher in a natural real-life manner”* (Cited in Beaumont & Williams, 1983, p.01).

Fried-Booth (2003, p. 03) defines the project work as: *“a powerful methodology involving students in an authentic learning experience with language used for genuine communication purposes. It is student-cantered and it results in a tangible end-product”*. He points out that project work offers learners an opportunity to take a certain responsibility for their own learning, encouraging them to set their own objectives in terms of what they want and need to learn. The project work is student-cantered and driven by the need to create an end-product. However, it is the route to achieving this end-product that makes project work so worthwhile. The route to the end product brings opportunities for students to develop their confidence and independence and to work together in a real-world environment by collaborating on a task which they have defined for themselves and which has not been externally imposed (Fried-Booth, 2003, p.06).

The project work is thus a creative way for learners to apply the language they have learned in class. In the project, learners choose what they want to do

and how to do it. They show their capacities when demonstrating that they have mastered the objectives assigned. Project pedagogy makes new needs emerge continuously. It implies disciplinary and extra-disciplinary types of knowledge (Louznadji, 2010).

All in all, the process of developing a project work can be summarized in seven steps: Agree on a theme for the project, Determine the final outcome, Structure the project, Prepare students for the language demands, Gather information, Compile and analyze information, Present final product, Evaluate the project (Stoller, L. cited in Richards, C. & Renandya, A. 2002, p. 112).

Creative thinking involves creating something new or original. It involves the skills of flexibility, originality, fluency, elaboration, brainstorming, modification, imagery, associative thinking, attribute listing, metaphorical thinking, and forced relationships. The aim of creative thinking is to stimulate curiosity and promote divergence. While critical thinking can be thought of as more left-brain and creative thinking more right brain, they both involve “thinking”. Considering HOTS “higher-order thinking skills”, the focus is on the top three levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Creative thinking means using basic thinking processes to develop or invent novel, aesthetic, constructive ideas, or products, related to precepts as well as concepts, and stressing the intuitive aspects of thinking as much as the rational (Jacobs, G. M., Lee, C, & Ng, M. 1997). Torrance (1966) further defines creativity as the capacity of an individual to produce compositions, products or ideas related to particular tasks which are essentially new or novel, previously known or unknown to the producer, where the freedom of the individual is the basis of expression. Moreover, creativity is the process of making connections and, sometimes, is about productivity, and making something new from those connections (Gardner, 1993). Creativity is also about problem solving, an essential life skill which can be explored in the Secondary English classroom (Howell, 2008).

Creativity, thus, is the ability to bring something new with a positive value. It is the most appreciated quality of successful projects. Processes suppressed in conventional teaching are applied through creative work: "imagination, fantasy, intuition." It is also possible to acquire at least certain elements of creativity: "sensitivity - ability to find out problems, flexibility - change of a point of view, fluency - proposal of more solutions, originality and elaboration - sense for details (Vlasta, 2008). A project is a creative way for learners to apply and personalize the language, skills and structures that they have learned in class. They can choose

what they do and how they do it. They demonstrate that they have mastered the objectives of the unit. This is an important part of motivating learners and helping them see that they can use English to express things that are important or interesting for them. The projects are very creative in terms of both content and language. Each project is a unique piece of communication, created by the project writers themselves (Hunchinson, 1991).

Methodology

Participants

The sample population of this study was a group (N20) of first year learners of English as a foreign language at “*Tarek Ibn Ziad*” secondary school-Constantine. It is a case study of a class of twenty pupils of first year scientific stream (1AS). 08 pupils were males and 12 were females. Throughout the study, learners prepared, reported and presented their projects. The English teacher at the school also contributed to the conduct of this research.

Data Collection Instrument

The instruments used to investigate the efficiency of the project work in enhancing learners’ creative thinking abilities can be summarized in a project analysis. The latter includes description of the textbook, description and observation of unit three “Our Findings Show” and finally observation and analysis of learners’ project productions through an observation grid and finally analysing the data.

The Textbook *At the Crossroads*

At the Crossroads demonstrates the new English syllabus for the First Year of Secondary Education as set down by the Algerian Ministry of Education in January 2005 and it has been renewed in 2008. The overall aim of *At the Crossroads* is to consolidate and extend the competencies acquired at Middle School level.

The textbook is called *At the Crossroads* for two main reasons. First, it is intended for learners who have come at a crossroads in their educational career as they, at the end of SE1, will choose to specialise in different streams. Second, the course places the learners at a crossroads of disciplines (school subjects) and cultures in that it seeks to establish cross-curricular and cross-cultural linkages.

The book consists of five units: *Getting Through*, *Once upon a Time*, *Our Findings Show*, *Eureka!* and *Back to Nature* respectively. Within each unit there are four sequences which are: Listening and Speaking, Reading and Writing, Developing Skills, and Consolidation and Extension. In addition to that, there are three sections: Stop and Consider, The Project Workshop and Check your

Progress. Each sequence follows a definite pattern to facilitate its use in the classroom. At the end of the textbook, there are Listening Scripts, List of Irregular verbs and finally Acknowledgements (*At the Crossroads*, 2008, p.08).

Unit Three of the Textbook

“Our Findings Show” is the third unit in *At the Crossroads*. It turns around a broad topic selected for its general interest and for the functional language it generates, journalism (reporting). It occupies the pages 76-107 in the revised edition. The page 76 contains two pictures in relation to the content of the unit demonstrating a secretary taking notes at the office and a reporter. The next page is a preview in which the communicative and the linguistic objectives of each sequence are stated. Like any other unit, it comprises four sequences and three sections.

The first sequence, Listening and Speaking, is subdivided into four sub-sections. The ANTICIPATE rubric, p. 78, is the warp-up of the sequence in which learners are introduced to the unfamiliar vocabulary as serious and sensational newspapers; and the topic of the sequence which is newspapers. On the next page the second rubric LISTEN AND CHECK. It contains a listening material (p. 171) and same tasks to check learners understanding. On page 80, the third sub-section, SAY IT CLEAR, focuses on stress patterns. Finally, the IT’S YOUR TURN rubric (p. 80), it represents the culminating point in the building of the speaking skill by offering free-speaking to learners.

Reading and Writing, the second sequence, also consists of four rubrics. The ANTICIPATE rubric (p. 82) aims at brainstorming the sequence and brushing up vocabulary. The second section, READ AND CHECK (p. 83), tackles reading comprehension of a reading material in the form of a report. In DISCOVER THE LANGUAGE (p. 84) as a third section, learners are supposed to act out an interview and a dialogue. At last, the WRITE IT RIGHT rubric (p. 85) where in learners are required to write a report putting into practice what they have learners.

As a third sequence, Developing Skills (p. 86-96), is mainly concerned with the integration of the four skills. Learners are encouraged to apply the basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing together with the functions and language forms they have learned in the previous sequences as the reported speech in various situations like conducting a survey.

The STOP AND CONSIDER section (p. 92-95) constitutes a grammar review. The learners stop to consider aspects of language; with which they have come across in the previous sequences. In unit three, those language forms are: reported speech, adverbs of manner, and adjectives ending in “-ful” and “-less”.

It includes Reminders which supply learners with rules and invite them apply those rules in various tasks.

The last sequence, Consolidation and Extension, is subdivided into two rubrics WRITE IT OUT (p. 96-98) and WORK IT OUT (p. 99). The aim of the former is to expand on and consolidate all four skills and particularly the writing skill. For instance, pupils are asked to write a report and a paragraph describing a graph. The latter places the learners in problem situations related to learning English as identifying silent letters and pronounce final “-s” and “-es” in different words.

The PROJECT WORKSHOP (p. 100) is the most important section. It is placed nearly at the end of the unit to dovetail the groundwork studied in the previous sequences and section. This section assigns the learners the project which they have to carry out. In unit three, learners are required to conduct a survey about one of the following: people’s newspaper reading habits, TV viewers and TV programmers, or the different uses of the computer. It offers the opportunity to carry out the interview, the data collection, interpretation of results and the writing of the report.

The Project Work “*Our Findings Show*”

The unit under study “Our Findings Show” culminates with a project workshop. The latter assigns pupils to conduct a survey about people’s newspaper reading habits, TV viewers and TV programmes, or the different uses of the computer. It states the different tasks and stages learners go through to carry out this project (*At the Crossroads*, 2008 p. 100). Learners are expected to follow the procedure outlined below:

Conducting a survey about

- People’s newspaper reading habits,
- TV viewers and TV programs,
- Or the different uses of the computer...

Designing the Questionnaire

• Decide which aspects of newspapers and their readers you would like to investigate.

- Decide who will be your informants (age group, sex, etc.).
- Fix a reasonable number of informants (20 is a good number to aim for).
- Write a first draft of your questionnaire and distribute it to your informants.

Conducting the Interview

- Prepare your interview and rehearse it with group members.
- Start interviewing your informants once you are ready.

Collecting data and interpreting the results

- Ask yourselves questions such as: Do your informants like reading newspapers? If yes, why?

- Give statistics using different types of graphic displays.

Writing the report

Your report should include the following: Introduction, Method, Results, Analysis of the results, Conclusion.

Project round-up

- Put the different parts of your survey together (questionnaire, interviews, graphs, report, etc.) in the form of a booklet.

- Correct your project and submit it to the other class groups for further error checking.

- Present your booklet to the rest of the class.

Classroom Observation

The teacher introduces the unit by asking his learners so many questions about reading newspapers in general. After introducing the unit, the next step is launching the project work. Here exactly learners are given choice to decide about the topic to deal with. They agree to investigate “violence in sports”. Groups are formed and each one is assigned to do a particular task. For instance, one group is asked to collect pictures and videos on violence in sports. Another group is asked to download pictures and videos on fair-play. A third group is assigned the design of a questionnaire about “how sporty are our teenagers?”

The teacher adapts the textbook’s project work. He makes his own adjustments and modifications to meet his learners’ needs, interests, and preferences. The following is the teacher’s outline of the project work:

CONDUCT A SURVEY ABOUT:

“HOW SPORTY ARE OUR TEENAGERS?”

Design the questionnaire

- Decide which aspects to investigate
- Write a questionnaire (fix the number of questions and informants)

Conduct the interview

- Prepare the interview with the group members.
- Start interviewing the informants.

Write the report

- Write an introduction.
- Write an analysis of the results.
- Write a conclusion with a suggestion / a recommendation.

Presentation of the findings

- Learners are expected to present their projects' findings to the class.

Listening and Speaking

•**Anticipate:** After introducing the unit and launching the project, the teacher starts with sequence one: *listening and speaking*. He begins with a presentation of anticipate. Here learners are asked to look at the picture on page 78, which shows a collection of magazines and newspapers. Learners, then, are asked to describe it.

•**Listen and Check:** the teacher exposes learners to an interview about people's reading habits. The interviewee expresses different reasons why he reads newspapers. The teacher refers to the project work which would be conducting a survey about violence in sports.

•**Say it clear:** this rubric is about stress in compound words and stress shift (noun / adjective). The teacher, nevertheless, prefers to integrate this part in other tasks through self-correction.

•**It is your Turn:** in this rubric, the teacher introduces learners to a newspaper horoscope page. Learners use the information in the page to construct a dialogue and act it out before their classmates. Learners, besides, employ degree adverbs as: quite, absolutely, totally...

Reading and Writing

•**Read and Check:** Learners read a report which represents details about computer use. Learners, then, have to interpret survey result using reporting questions and summarising verbs (reported speech). In this class, the teacher reminds learners of using these skills, functions and language form later on in the project work about violence in sports.

•**Discover the Language:** this session gives learners practice of the previous addressed skills about conducting an interview. During the session, the teacher asks learners to make an interview. Learners, then, take turns and interview each other.

•**Write it Right:** Teacher and learners discuss the Sports Questionnaire Results on page 85. The questionnaire states 8 questions with their respective results. In this task, learners practice the skill of interpreting survey results. Afterwards, the teacher asks learners to report the questionnaire results. Hence, what is remarkable is that learners wrote reports about "How Sporty are our Teenagers?" following these three steps: identifying the informants and clarifying the purpose, reporting and interpreting the results, and finally drawing a conclusion.

Developing Skills

In this sequence, the teacher decides to introduce learners to Tactics Summary for Doing Survey. This summary will be used in the realization of the project work. The teacher, thus, was selective as far as this sequence is concerned.

Data Analysis and the Findings

All the project work phases are filmed and analysed. The following is the analysis of the process of realizing the project work observed and filmed. As far as the project work is concerned, the teacher stressed the importance of being creative and imaginative. Thus, teachers must never be the slaves of the textbook. The textbook original project is about: people's newspaper reading habits, TV viewers, and TV programmes, or the different uses of the computer. Yet the teacher prefers to be open to the pupils' interests and preferences. The learners, thus, chose to deal with violence in sports along with the Olympic Games. The teacher adapts the textbook project framework to the needs, interests and preferences of his learners. At this stage, therefore, the teacher makes a constant discussion and brainstorming activities to enrich the learners' knowledge about the topic. All in all, the project should never be assigned at the end of the unit. Rather, it must be assigned at the very beginning.

After launching the project, the teacher and the learners work on the different tasks assigned along with the different activities developed in the unit. Since the overall objective of the unit is reporting, the teacher injects language of reports and incorporates it to the project work.

The teacher groups learners according to specific tasks. He, then, asks them to surf the net and download pictures and videos about the Olympic Games as well as violence in sports. The teacher manages to meet his pupils once a week to discuss the progress of the project-conducting a survey. One of the meetings was out of class time. The teacher sent invitations to his pupils' parents to fulfil the tasks of the project work. Learners brought their flash drives which contained the downloaded pictures and videos. The teacher fixed the data show for learners to see the pictures and videos and select those that will be used. The learners, then, discussed and commented on the content of the data gathered.

Before conducting the survey, learners are asked to design a questionnaire. They have to identify the informants and limit the number of questions. Learners, thus, practise the interview and act it out in class, then report it. Students reported both answers and questions which were supposed to be employed in the presentation. The learners, above all, succeeded in carrying out the different tasks

with the teacher who played the role of a monitor, guide, facilitator and motivator. That created a real fantastic interaction. Indeed, the teacher was so flexible accepting the various ideas and answers.

The teacher frequently refers to the project work. Whenever he introduces a language point, he reminds his pupils of its utility in the realization of the project. The teacher, therefore, stresses the fact that each lesson is a step towards the project work. Recycling and continuous evaluation are thus so vital for while in checking the progress of the project.

During the presentation, learners showed mastery of the different skills that the project work caters for namely: the social and communicative skills, the language skills as well as computer (ICT) skills. The social and communicative skills of interpreting reporting orally the survey results were apparently interwoven with the different functions of expressing a point of opinion, giving advice, making suggestions and recommendations, expressing likes and dislikes as well as narrating. Most of the language skills, in addition, had been successfully employed by the learners. Indeed, pupils used the language forms taught throughout the unit. Adjectives ending in ‘-ly’, degree adverbs: quite / absolutely, direct / reported speech, reporting verbs: suggested / ordered, adverbs of manner all had a place in the pupils’ different presentations. Besides, learners developed computer (ICT) skills. They used many technological devices such as data show, laptops, flash drives, cameras, the Internet and mobiles to illustrate and disseminate the findings of their survey about “How Sporty are our Teenagers?”.

In a nutshell, the presentation was an evidence of the success of pupils and the teacher in realizing the project work. Thus, almost all the skills and competencies were greatly developed and enhanced. Creativity, moreover, shaped and refined the pupils’ productions in terms of language, skills, ideas as well suggesting various solutions and recommendations to the problem of violence in sports.

The Observation Grid

To examine further the efficiency of the project work in enhancing learners’ creative thinking skills, an observation grid was designed wherein different criteria of a creative project are targeted. These criteria cover interaction which examined learners’ participation and involvement, learners’ motivation, collaboration, communication skills, and teacher-learner relationship. It also explored learners’ interpretation skills going through critical thinking skills, analysis, as well as evaluation of information.

Besides, the grid analysed learners' final outcome: the type of the project, the end product (report and oral presentation), and project development. Furthermore, the grid is set to assess the main characteristics of the project work, namely learner-centeredness, content-based, integration of the skills, relevance, autonomy and responsibility, and interdisciplinary. Besides, the observation grid inspected teacher's role: adaptation of the textbook, fostering cooperation, guiding, facilitating, monitoring, and motivating. Moreover, the grid examined learners' creative thinking skills of processing information, problem-solving, creating, trial and error, *etc.*

The project was realized by a class of twenty pupils who were highly motivated. Indeed, learners were both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated. They were ready and eager to carry out the project even out of class time. The topic, violence in sports, was also of a great interest and relevance to them.

Besides, the teacher, too, played a crucial role in motivating and encouraging them to fulfil the tasks. The teacher established a real intimate teacher-learner relationship. Throughout the realization of the project, learners felt the satisfaction of working on such complex tasks over a period of time. Learners participated in the different activities and were deeply involved in discussions. In effect, the project created a community of collaborative inquires. Thus, learners developed the different communicative skills of seeking information, discussing, as well as producing oral and written reports of their investigation. Interaction, then, was at its highest level.

Learners were so analytic and evaluative in the fulfilment of the tasks. They were constantly analysing and evaluating the data at hand. Learners expressed diverse points of view towards violence in sports particularly violence in feminine football. They expressed agreement and disagreement, likes and dislikes. Thus, learners were critical and sorted out different conclusions and assumptions about the topic. They concluded that sportsmen should compete for the sake of sports not for money; they should be sporty and accept failure.

The project is semi-structured since both teacher and learners take part in its planning. The project, too, is a research, encounter, survey, and text project. Learners gathered information, consulted a native speaker (a football player in CSC club, Constantine), designed and conducted a survey and finally reported the survey findings. The project, too, is organizational project, production project, and performance project. It enables learners to organize and plan a project framework, to write reports, and to perform different tasks and oral presentations. Our constant observation to the gradual progress of the projects also showed

learners use of the different steps of the realization of the projects. Evaluation of the project work was both peer evaluation as well as teacher evaluation.

Learners' project works showed learners' involvement, responsibility, autonomy and ownership of learning, of course, under the teacher's constant support and guidance. The project was typically a learner-centered task. The project, moreover, was content-based. Indeed, learners' project work fully integrated language and content. They employed the language of reporting along with the subject matter of violence in sports. In addition, the projects integrated the language four skills. Learners, for instance, practiced the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing through oral performances and writing reports. Last but not least, the project was a real problem solving task in which learners were challenged by the problem of violence in sports which led them to investigate and suggest effective solutions to solve it.

Most of the linguistic objectives had been successfully attained by learners. Indeed, pupils reinvested the language forms taught throughout the unit. Decision making skills also had occupied an important place in the process of the realization of the project work. Furthermore, the projects steered the cognitive skills of critical and creative thinking. Besides, learners developed computer (ICT) skills. They used many technological types of equipment such as: data show, laptops, flash drives, cameras, internet and mobiles to illustrate and disseminate the findings of their survey about "How Sporty are our Teenagers?"

The teacher adapted the project of the textbook. He rather tried to address his learners' specific needs, interests and preferences. What is more is that the teacher helped the group formulate plan of the project process and thus maintain cooperation and collaboration. In the midst, the teacher's role was that of a guide, facilitator, monitor, and motivator.

Learners were highly creative in carrying out their projects. They succeeded in creating something new and novel which is reporting a survey about violence in sports. Thus, an effective solution was suggested to remedy the violent attitudes and behaviours of sportsmen. Hence, learners' productions were of a positive value which tried to strengthen the moral and ethical values of fair play, especially when playing a sport or a game. They heavily stressed sportsmanship and fair play. Learners, therefore, were very imaginative in carrying out their projects.

Learners were creative in processing information. From the very beginning they were very sensitive towards the issue of violence in sports. Learners were also flexible in producing ideas of various types. Throughout conducting the survey, they showed variation and flexible attitudes towards change of a point of

view as far as feminine violence in sports is concerned. Fluency, producing lots of ideas and proposing more solutions, greatly manifested itself in the different tasks and activities of the project. Elaboration (building on and embellishing existing ideas) had been employed by the learners in many ways. In effect, learners built from the daily realities of our sport clubs and their fans. This led them to generate solutions. Last of all, originality, the process of producing clever and original ideas, had been largely used by learners. Learners discussed very original and clever ideas concerning feminine football; some view men as more violent and aggressive than women.

The teacher played a decisive role in the success of his pupils. He strives to motivate his learners to conduct a very creative survey about a topic which they were very excited by. Indeed, learners enjoyed working on the project with their teacher who was a source of joy and fun. The teacher created a fantastic atmosphere full of joy, freedom, responsibility, and above all self-confidence. Learners' presentations, then, were hesitation-free thanks to the teacher who was constantly encouraging them to be spontaneous. Thus, the teacher devoted part of his time to checking learners' progress in the realization of the projects. He did his best to meet his pupils out of class time and even on Saturdays. In fact, the teacher did something quite simple but highly unusual. He played the different roles of a guide, facilitator, monitor and motivator.

Few projects, if any, are successful unless the pupil is encouraged by the parents and other caring adults. Once the pupils have developed their own original ideas, they should discuss them with their parents. Together, they can work to make the pupil's idea come to life. The parents of our subjects are no exception. Their contribution was vital. They showed interest and collaboration with the teacher. The latter involved the learners' parents by simply sending a letter home to explain the project and invite learners and let their parents know how pupils would participate. The institution also played a crucial role in the provision of the different media necessary to gather data and present the project findings. The media used were data shows, laptops, speakers, and cameras. All these media were available at the level of the school.

Learners made use of trial and error strategy in practicing the language points. In practical terms, pupils tend to make efforts in conducting surveys and writing reports by refining and improving them. Learners were so expressive as far as language is concerned. The pupils reinvested the language forms practiced in class such as reported speech, summarizing verbs, adverbs of manner and degree. The teacher made a constant discussion and brainstorming activities to

enrich the learners' knowledge about the topic. Early from launching the project, the teacher generated the maximum number of ideas through discussing the project general theme; he stimulated his pupils' background knowledge and ideas and wrote them randomly on the board. At last, great deal of thoughtful creative ideas.

The project was a real problem solving task in which learners were challenged by the problem of violence in sports which led them to investigate and suggest effective solutions to cure it. The project work includes investigative activities which give students the opportunity to work autonomously over extended periods of time; and culminate in realistic products or presentations. The project's driving question, violence in sports, necessitates learners inquiring attitudes towards solving the problem of violence in sports. The project was an open-ended assignment. All learners' views were accepted and integrated in the process of the realization of the project work. The teacher was so flexible accepting the various ideas and answers letting a room for different views and assumptions about the topic.

Elaboration on the Findings and Pedagogical Relevance

Above all, our close investigation proves the efficiency of the project work in enhancing learners' creative thinking. Indeed, our observation and analysis of the data gathered lead us to the conclusion that the project work is the context where learners' creativity is greatly triggered and fostered. First year secondary school learners of English as a foreign language -Constantine, moreover, were fascinated and captivated by the project work which in fact appeals to their needs, preferences, motivations, creation, imagination as well as innovation.

The teacher must be essentially involved in the realization of the project work. Teachers ought to be creative by selecting and adapting the project work tasks and activities to learners' respective needs and interests. The Competency-based Approach teacher has to bring the outer world to the classroom and vice versa. He should know his learners, their needs, dreams, and their imagination of their future. They have to motivate and encourage learners to realize the project work, the learning outcome, using various methods that really reflect the 21st century learner. Furthermore, teachers must avoid ready-made projects which involve no creation from the part of the learners.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the project work should not be conducted as a task to be evaluated and marked at the end of every unit. Rather, it is to be assigned at the very beginning of each unit of instruction. Thus, the project work is an essential

part of teaching- no teacher can do without it. It should be conducted through interest, motivation, and encouragement which give room to innovation and creation from the part of the learners.

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