



INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO TEACHING HISTORY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract: The design of a history course for Uzbek university students using the Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) methodology is presented in this study. Through the use of real resources and inquiry-driven assignments, the course seeks to improve students' research, critical analysis, and historical thinking abilities. It emphasizes how crucial reflective learning, learner autonomy, and formative evaluation are to fostering a deeper comprehension of the past.

Keywords: History education; inquiry-based learning; higher education; historical thinking; critical analysis; active learning; course design; student-centered approach; reflective learning; Uzbekistan

Introduction

I have taught history in a tertiary education. Though the course is originally for university students, I think the overall structure and the emphasis on needs analysis are very exportable to the historical environment. The model is very relevant since the course is for professionals who have particular communicative objectives in mind, and it is intensive and short-term in nature, which is appropriate for the time constraints and the learning targets of most people in Uzbekistan. According to Woodrow (2018), effective course design must be founded on ongoing and in-depth needs analysis in order to align teaching to the real needs of the workplace in which the learners will be operating. The course achieves this through the use of individual interviews, participant feedback, and working with practitioners in the profession—methods which I also seek to implement in my own course in order to encourage relevance and learner ownership.

Moreover, the model prioritizes skills training (reading and speaking) and applies task-based learning through analysis, presentations, and case-based discussions. This is directly aligned with the professionals' communication requirements since they will be most likely to present, write formal reports. Course instruction has shifted towards more task-oriented, student-centered methods that prioritize communicative interaction over mechanical learning of history, as per Belcher (2004), which supports my justification for applying this model. In addition, initial diagnostic testing and continuous feedback during the course are consistent with best practices in this course design in offering instructor flexibility and learner autonomy. In short-term professional training, formative assessment and feedback are also very important in order to guide the participant's learning as mentioned by Woodrow (2018).

Description of participants

My context is teaching history with the participants with various educational backgrounds at the University in Uzbekistan. They have to learn History to communicate with their partners, to report and to conduct researches at work. The duration is three times a week, overall, 3-month-course and we cover one new unit every two lessons. Their weaknesses are



in memorising skills regarding historical data and names. Though they need to develop some specific abilities.

Needs Analysis

Information will be collected through an ad hoc needs analysis on the first morning of the course. Individual interviews are organized with all the participants to reflect on how they can best use the course to develop skills for their own specific professional purposes, and the course tutors to reflect on how to adapt materials and their teaching methods and focus to meet the needs of the group. Strong emphasis will be on developing language skills for professional contexts.

Approach to History Course Design

The course framework for students follows the Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) approach. IBL has been selected because it combines the acquisition of communicative competence and the study of the appropriate content knowledge in the field of the students' professional expertise.

The IBL model makes it possible to integrate professional material in ready-to-adapt format with the content study. Cited by Arnó-Macià and Mancho-Barés (2015), one of the strengths of this model is the reflection of in-the-field discourse and the enabling of cognitive processing in the medium of the studied subjects. Authenticity and task relevance walk side by side and have been persuasively described by Woodrow (2018), who is of the opinion that the courses must be purpose-designed to cater to the communicative needs of the students in focused areas.

In order to pursue this progression, the course framework integrates genre-related activities and exercises in the virtual environment to enable receptive and productive skills. The participants will be exposed to natural historical writing/texts (e.g., reports, presentation, historical case summaries), speaking and writing exercises in order to understand how to transform comprehension for productive uses. This corresponds to the idea of cognitive demand in IBL to be supported by language aid, and makes the special point of the teaching in close correlation with working conditions.

In addition, the IBL model makes students reflect, analyze and make decisions. Students are not just asked to study professional content but to comment on, analyze, and persuade with concepts in their own language. It has the broader educational goal of promoting the use of language to have consequences in the outside world, says Arnó-Macià and Mancho-Barés (2015).

Course Aims

The course aims are to develop students' historical thinking skills, including the ability to analyze cause and effect, continuity and change, and the significance of historical events; to promote critical and analytical thinking, enabling students to evaluate different perspectives and interpretations of historical events; to incorporate real historical concepts and jargon into task-based and IBL-focused activities to foster both subject content and use in real contexts.

Assessment

The participants are interviewed at the beginning of the course. Regular feedbacks is provided throughout the course. In addition, the participants create a short presentation on a historical topic and get feedback from their peers and the course tutor at the end of the course. In order to match the assessment with the approach (IBL), participants have to give an oral



summary of a historical case report. There are opportunities for extra tasks to be completed outside class. **Course materials**

The course will be provided with access to a mixture of authentic as well as specifically tailored content suitable for mid-career professionals' learning requirements. Such content includes case studies, videos of historical events, listening exercises, as well as additional resources for memorization, PowerPoint presentations, as well as web-based multimedia like Kahoot and Quizizz for learning support. Special content will be prepared where necessary for high relevance, especially for history applications of Uzbek speakers.

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