



TA'LIMDA TILLARNI O'QITISHNING MUAMMO VA YECHIMLARI
XALQARO ILMIY-AMALIY KONFERENSIYA

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**TA'LIMDA TILLARNI O'QITISHNING
MUAMMO VA YECHIMLARI
(ПРОБЛЕМЫ ЯЗЫКОВОГО ОБУЧЕНИЯ
И ПУТИ ИХ РЕШЕНИЯ/
PROBLEMS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING
AND WAYS TO SOLVE THEM)**

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RAISING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS OF STUDENTS THROUGH PROJECTS IN EFL CLASSES

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Abstract: The article focuses on ways to raise public awareness of ecological issues, such as air pollution, through projects in EFL classrooms. The author provides information about the hazards of air pollution and suggests how students can learn about the topic and promote public awareness through poster presentations and surveys.

keywords: environmental awareness, air contamination, particulate matters, urbanization, project-based learning, poster presentation, survey.

Introduction

In today's rapidly developing world and fast-paced urbanization, humanity is facing many health issues caused by the consequences of these unstoppable processes. Environmental problems such as air pollution, water pollution, climate change, rising sea levels, deforestation and the extinction of animals are among many issues that the world is facing today. Raising public awareness of these issues can serve as a crucial step to tackle them; as more people learn about the consequences of the damage to the environment, they will be more attentive to preventing this harm and reducing their carbon footprint. In this article, we will focus on the problem of air pollution and discuss how public awareness can be raised through projects in EFL classrooms at higher educational institutions.

Discussion

Air pollution is becoming one of the greatest scourges in the world, one that is causing harm not only to nature, but also to the public health [Manisalidis et al., 2020:1]. Rising degrees of morbidity and mortality can serve as proof of the impact of air pollution on public health. According to Manisalidis et al [2020:1], asthma, respiratory problems, chronic conditions and cardiovascular diseases are connected to atmospheric pollution. In their article, the authors mention a Swedish cohort study which proves that diabetes seemed to be induced by long-term exposure to air pollution. They further state that air pollution has various adverse health effects in early human life, leading to infant mortality and chronic disease in adulthood [Manisalidis et al., 2020: 2].

In developing countries, the problem is more serious due to overpopulation and uncontrolled urbanization along with the development of industry [Mannucci and Franchini, 2017: 2]. Air pollution mainly affects those who live near urban areas, especially city centers. The main causes are vehicle emissions and a high level of windblown dust. In some countries, the lack of information on sustainable environmental management is causing poor air quality. This is mainly caused by low incomes, which lead people to burn fuels like wood and fossil fuels for their domestic needs. Three billion people in the world burn them for daily usage in order to survive and most of those affected are women and children. [Manisalidis et al., 2020: 2]. Furthermore, natural sources such as volcanic dust, desert dust, forest fires, and soil erosion are also damaging the ecosystem throughout the world.

Urbanization is rising rapidly in Asian countries such as China, India and Uzbekistan. In China, air contamination was once critically high with an Air Quality Index (AQI) of 750m but it has steadily declined to 24 since 2013. [Wikipedia Contributors, 2019] In India, poor air quality has frequently led to reductions of incoming and outgoing flights.

Uzbekistan has also been grappling with this issue, reaching an AQI of 254 which indicates an unhealthy atmosphere. On November 20, Tashkent ranked as the 3rd most polluted city in the world. Tashkent's air contamination stems from a mix of human-made and natural sources. According to IQAir, windblown dust accounts

for 36 percent of PM 2.5, while heating systems contribute 28 percent, and transport emissions add around 16 percent. [IQAir Staff Writers, 2025].

Being aware of a problem leads people to tackle it. That is why, in language teaching programs we often encounter themes about nature. Environmental awareness refers to understanding ecological problems and recognizing one's responsibility to address them. When environmental topics are introduced through meaningful activities, students develop a sense of responsibility, critical thinking, and sustainable behavior. [Project Learning Tree, 2019: 2] This approach helps foster environmentally conscious individuals who are prepared to contribute to sustainable development. If students receive the proper information about what is happening to nature, they will undoubtedly try to reduce their bad habits in order to protect themselves and help the ecology. Their awareness comes from project work that they do themselves. Project or independent work gives them grades, which is the main goal of students; by doing the project, they gather information from books. Project-based learning (PBL) is a method in which students acquire knowledge by exploring real-world problems and producing practical outcomes. [Natori and Mohtar, 2025: 2]. According to the article "Maximizing the benefits of the project in foreign language classrooms," project works develops students' teamwork skills and teaches them how to engage with a topic independently. The authors of the article state that it builds students' confidence. For instance, high schools in Italy have structured their curricula around topics of relevance to students in various vocational areas, resulting in students creating brochures for tourists and gathering information about their experiences - such as whether they enjoy living in Italy or not, and if not, why. This method encourages students to be open-minded and sociable.

At the University of World Economy and Diplomacy (UWED), students learning English at upper-intermediate level use various methods – such as oral presentations, poster, and survey reports – to complete project work. One of their independent works is devoted to raising students' awareness of ecological problems. First, students form teams and choose a particular article related to a

major environmental problem. The second step is to read, gather information about the topic, and create a poster that includes key takeaways. After that, students conduct a short survey related to the environmental problem they read about. Finally, they present information about the environmental problem as well as their findings to their classmates and teacher. Thus, they will not only learn more about different environmental issues reading authentic scholarly articles, but also disseminate what they have learned and contribute to public awareness through their posters and surveys.

To gather students' opinion about this project, a survey was conducted on December 20th among 34 students at UWED. Sixty-nine percent of participants believe that the project increased their environmental awareness, while 31% strongly agree with the statement. Reading articles was the best way for them to gather different ideas on one particular topic; 24 students chose this method, whereas about 14 students preferred making a survey. In addition, 8 students preferred making a survey, while 11 thought making a presentation was more useful than the other methods.

When questioned about their contribution in raising other students' awareness, 89% of UWED students answered "yes" and others answered "no." Every participant offered advice on what could be added to the projects. Most think that simple approaches are better than making posters, while some suggested practical ideas like planting trees or creating a video. In summary, the survey results are positive, showing that project work genuinely helps increase students' knowledge. [Google Docs, 2025]

In conclusion, integrating environmental awareness through project work in English language teaching is a powerful educational approach. It not only improves students' language proficiency, but also nurtures responsible, environmentally conscious citizens. Engaging students in meaningful projects fosters 21st-century skills such as communication, creativity, and problem-solving while promoting sustainability. In fast-growing countries, issues like air contamination are among

the greatest problem. To solve this issue, everyone must contribute, and educational programs provide the most effective way to achieve this.

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