

Title: Learning Russian in Montreal: A Comparative Evaluation of Two Online Intercultural Exchange Projects with Elements of PBL

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Abstract:

Despite increased popularity of telecollaborative partnerships, many language educators believe that only language learners with some experience with the target language can benefit from the opportunity to engage in spontaneous conversations and collaborative work with target language speakers. This paper will describe an international educational project based on telecollaboration with elements of project-based language learning (PBLL) carried out in two first-semester Russian language classes. Three partner universities were involved in the project: University of Montreal, McGill University and Moscow State Pedagogical University. The research objective of the project was to evaluate the potential of implementing an online language exchange combined with PBL in a beginner's level Russian language course (A.1.1.) in two different contexts: as an online language exchange within the local community of Russian learners, and as a transatlantic intercultural exchange. The paper will present a comparative evaluation of learner expectations in two projects and provides some practical recommendations.