

Tomasz Drożyński<sup>1</sup>

ORCID: 0000-0002-0960-3954

---

## **"The Emi & Gracja's backyard" – An innovative educational project for Polish children**

## **„Podwórko Emi & Gracji” – innowacyjny projekt edukacyjny dla dzieci polonijnych**

### **Introduction**

In the pedagogical literature there are many definitions of the educational project, which most generally is a participatory didactic method of working with pupils. It is not just about imparting a specific educational resource. The idea is that "schoolchildren should not be fattened with knowledge like farmed geese" (Szymański, 2010, p. 276). Thus, the project requires "innovating the didactic process, deepening knowledge and developing psychosocial competence" (Torończak, 2011, p. 11). Activity-based learning seems to be an effective and motivating source of work.

"The New Dictionary of Labor Pedagogy" indicates that "the project method consists in the undertaking of student groups to develop, plan and design, and then implement the execution of the project. (...) Its advantages lie in organising the independent work of schoolchildren in devising the project and

---

<sup>1</sup> Tomasz Drożyński PhL, PhD (cand): Research Group on Social and Political Philosophy: Pontifical Gregorian University of Rome, Italy, e-mail: xtomaszd@gmail.com

its implementation, preparing thereby and developing the ability to work independently and at the same time as a team. (...) However, it is not so much a method as a strategy, presenting great advantages not only in the development of schoolchildren's mental and practical skills, but also in their socialisation. It brings about increased activity on the part of schoolchildren, and school becomes fully attractive to them as a place for unleashing creative forces" (Nowacki, Korabiowska-Nowacka, Baraniak, 1999, p.130).

The method of educational projects, in the realities of the modern world, can be implemented both for stationary work and adapted to the online mode; the solution can also be a hybrid mode.

Usually, the place where educational projects are realised is a specific educational institution. More and more interesting projects are appearing in schools at various educational levels, and their addressees can choose from a wide range of offers for an attractive project. In the case of expat children, access to a Polish-language school is sometimes difficult, especially in smaller Polish communities. Children of Polish immigrants undertaking education in a foreign country have limited access to educational projects conducted in Polish and those promoting native culture, tradition and customs. They only carry them out in the local school under the supervision of their teacher, who, based on the core curriculum, proposes a specific educational project where Polish-related content is featured sparsely.

A cursory analysis of the offers of educational projects oriented towards the emigration context leads to the conviction that there are not many such proposals on the educational market today. In this context, a pilot educational project aimed at Polish-speaking children entitled "Emi & Gracja's Backyard" attracts attention. This innovative project was developed by the Polish emigration association "Familiaris" in Freiburg. Its scope extends beyond children living in Germany, as children from Italy, France or Switzerland participate thanks to remote work. The initiative is aimed at Polish children with a communicative knowledge of Polish between the ages of two and 12. The school community of Polish and Polish schools in Germany, together with their parents and guardians, have been invited to take part in the project. The children's participation is of an integrative nature. It is a multi-level integration: with the local community and the local Polish community as well as integration with the broader community of expatriates of the Polish diaspora. The project work pays particular attention to the standards of protection of minors – *Schuzkonzept*.

The project "Emi & Gracja's Backyard" is a form of preparation for the impact of foreign culture and concerns not only cultural exchange, but rather cultural transfer (*Kulturtransfer*).

The educational project "Emi & Gracja's Backyard" is aimed at the youngest compatriots and is a supportive training of Polish children, the aim of which is to promote awareness of the expat identity and also to counteract helplessness in the face of the challenges of life as an emigrant (Młyński, Drożyński, Białecka-Urbańska, Urbański, 2022).

### **Educational project – outline of issues**

Pedagogical theorists point out that the origins of project work can be traced back to the 16th century and Rome's *l'Accademia di San Luca*, where the term *progetti* was used to describe practical teaching exercises carried out by architecture students. Etymologically, the word *project* derives from the Latin *proiectus* "put forward" and "denotes in the development of a project a phase which, as it were, throws forward its results" (Braun 2009, p.143).

The theory of the project can be found in J. Dewey's conception of promoting learning through problem solving, to which the PBL (*Problem Based Learning*) strategy refers today. The definition of a project was developed by W.H. Kilpatrick, who pointed out that it is "a whole-hearted purposeful activity proceeding in a social environment" (Kilpatrick, 1918). The project method was refined by J.A Stevenson by defining the project itself as "a problematic act carried to completion in its natural setting" (Stevenson, 1925). At the heart of this method is the philosophy of pragmatism and cognitive constructivism. Theoretical inspiration for the project method was provided by both O. Decroly's method of The Centres of Interest and M. Fourestier's *mi-temps* system (Kotarba-Kańczugowska, 2015).

Archibald (2004) suggests that a project is a complex, unique and time-bound endeavour to achieve a clear and predefined objective through a continuous process of planning and control of various resources and under the interdependent constraints of the triad: cost, time and quality.

In education, as Szymański (2002, p. 66-67) points out: "the project method is a method of education that boils down to a team of learners independently initiating, planning and executing a certain project and evaluating its performance. (...) Ideally, the source of the project is the world of everyday life and

not abstract science. The starting point is a problem situation, an intention, taking an initiative, setting a goal, and the starting point is a project in the broad sense”.

An educational project, according to the Polish regulation of the Ministry of National Education (2010), is “a team, planned activity of schoolchildren aimed at solving a specific problem, using a variety of methods”.

A project is a multifaceted endeavour limited in time, a purposeful and planned activity carried out under specific conditions (Chafas, 2004). As a didactic strategy, it has its essential stages and phases (Klimowicz, 2009). As a teaching method, it strives to create learning situations (Nowacki, 1999). Fundamental features of the project include: the partnership and advisory role of the teacher, the subjective treatment of schoolchildren, the holistic and socially practice-open treatment of the learning material, and the departure from the traditional assessment of schoolchildren (Chafas, 2003). Moreover, project-based education is determined by such factors as the age of schoolchildren, the level of independence, problematic issues, the possibility of integration of the environment and the subject, and the definition of main and specific objectives (Strykowski, Burewicz, 2011).

It should be remembered that “by using this method, one breaks with the traditional - in the bad sense of the word - education characterised by intellectualism and verbalism, encyclopaedism and conventionality, stimulating - according to Pestalozzi’s classical triad: head-heart-hand, or with Benjamin S. Bloom’s equally well-known modern taxonomy of educational goals: cognitive, affective, psychomotor goals - the cognitive, emotional and motor development of schoolchildren, fostering their creativity and innovation” (Szymański 2010, p. 72).

The creation of educational projects has many positives. Among the advantages are the following: it integrates schoolchildren, develops their independence and ability to cooperate in a peer group. Moreover, it stimulates the cognitive, emotional and motor development of project participants and develops creative thinking (Kupisiewicz, Kupisiewicz, 2009). The project method takes into account the individual needs of schoolchildren and their interests and talents. Schoolchildren can learn from each other, integrate school and extracurricular knowledge and assimilate educational content more easily (Jakubowski, 2016).

An educational project, as Palmieri (2011) suggests, is a bridge connecting two shores: the world of education and the world of life. The project participant moves across the bridge entering the world of education from the world of their life to which they belong. At the same time, they bring into the world of education their habits, behaviours and ways of learning and everything related to their way of living and experiencing.

### Characteristics of the "Emi & Gracja's backyard" project

The project "Emi & Gracja's Backyard" is an original programme of the pro-family association "Familiaris" from Freiburg, Germany, which is active for Polish emigration. The name of the project refers to the "backyard" as an area, a neighbourhood and social space, and to someone's immediate surroundings together with the situations and issues that affect it. In this context, it refers to the Polish community, which is a specific social space. "Emi" and "Gracja" are the main characters of the project, designed in the form of dolls, which are handed to the participants in the project. The names of the two title characters are a play on words and refer to the term "emigration" (in Polish: "emigracja").

With reference to the literature on the subject and a number of studies, it is possible to classify the educational project for children carried out by "Familiaris" according to particular specific criteria that determine the effectiveness of the project (Mikina, Zajac, 2004).

Table 1. Project criteria and specificity

Criterion type	Description
Criterion of place	The project is carried out outside the school in a hybrid mode: face-to-face meetings at the association's office, online meetings.
Criterion of duration	Long-term project: Dates in 2023: 8.03, 12.04, 10.05, 14.06, 12.07, 09.08, 13.09, 11.10. 08.11, 06.12 Dates in 2024: 10.01, 14.02, 13.03, 10.04, 08.05, 12.06, 10.07, 14.08, 11.09, 09.10, 13.11, 04.12 Dates in 2025: 08.01, 12.02, 12.03, 09.04, 14.05, 11.06, 09.07, 13.08, 10.09

Criterion of division of labour	Team project, divided into stages.
Criterion of form of work	Differentiated project leading to different objectives for schoolchildren.
Criterion of structure	Semi-structured project engaging moderately active schoolchildren and developing their independence.
Criterion of the scope of the learning material	A cross-curricular and interdisciplinary project integrating knowledge and skills from different school subjects.
Criterion of purpose	The project takes the form of a community-wide project
Criterion SMART+ER	<i>Specific:</i> Promotion of Polishness based on traditional values as part of cultural transfer <i>Measurable:</i> children know Polish customs and traditions <i>Achievable:</i> building cultural identity <i>Realistic:</i> achievable <i>Time-related:</i> from September 2022 to September 2025 <i>Evaluated:</i> assessed against educational standards <i>Reviewed:</i> recorded in booklet form and available on YouTube platform

Source: own study

## The planning and implementation process of the “Emi & Gracja’s Backyard” project

The unique project “Emi & Gracja’s Backyard”, like all educational projects, has its basic phases: project preparation and planning, project execution and implementation, project presentation and evaluation. In the project planning and implementation process itself, based on Designing Education Projects, we can distinguish 12 steps (Day-Miller, Easton, 2009).

### *Step 1 (Re)assess the need and capability*

The starting point was to find an interesting idea for an educational project, which demanded a detailed definition of the topic. The articulation of the

project idea grew out of the emigration context of the Polish community in Germany and was a response to the educational needs of Polish-speaking children. Emigration affects not only adults, but entire families, including children. For many families, the experience of emigration appears to be a challenging situation. Some children have already been born in Germany and their parents are still trying to pass on their Polishness to them. Other kids had to leave their peers in Poland and move abroad. Some assimilate into their new surroundings quite quickly, for others the language barrier is a difficulty. In this context, a proposal aimed at children has been initiated. Through meetings with the children, an educational project programme is being developed specifically for bilingual children. The motivation for creating the educational programme was a meeting with Polish children on the occasion of Children's Day. The meeting had a patriotic character, as the Day of Poles and Poles Abroad was also celebrated on that day, introducing Polish traditions and the concept of national awareness to Polish children in the context of the 3 May Constitution Day. The ubiquitous cultural transfer motivates and activates the need to organise meetings in order to live one's life in exile even better and more consciously. Engaging in dialogue with children has become an inspiration and a discovery of their needs, which can be realistically addressed (Młyński, Drożyński, Białecka-Urbańska, Urbański, 2022).

### *Step 2 Establish the project planning team*

People coordinating an educational project are required to have "professional-personal predispositions: creative pedagogical imagination, interdisciplinary knowledge, knowledge of didactics of group work and intra-group processes" (Strykowski, Burewicz, 2011, p. 11). Therefore, the project planning team consists of a pedagogical-didactic coordinator, a content-artistic coordinator and a main project coordinator. Coordinators are not specialists in a particular subject, but leaders of complex group processes (Szymański 2010, p. 70).

Their role as partners interacting with the children is to organise the work of the schoolchildren and to encourage them to undertake various activities to stimulate their development. The project planning team, as required by the Office of the Independent Ombudsman for Child Sexual Abuse (*Geschäftsstelle der Unabhängigen Beauftragten für Fragen des sexuellen Kindesmissbrauchs*), works on the basis of the concept of protection of minors - *Schuzkonzept* "Familiaris" (Horoch, Horoch, 2022).

### *Step 3 Develop project goals and objectives*

In order to manage a project properly, its main objectives (objectives) and specific objectives (goals) must be clearly defined. By developing objectives, it is possible to determine the project outcomes and results that are intended to be achieved in an appropriate timeframe (Torończak, 2011, p.16). Objectives must also be clear and measurable and be linked to specific activities. Each goal corresponds to a specific action to achieve it in a measurable way. Goals and objectives are measured in time, have a deadline for completion and outlined evaluation criteria that indicate whether they have been achieved. The main objectives in a project include:

- fostering children's cognitive curiosity,
- supporting the development of children's interests by getting to know important cities in Germany and the Polish missions there,
- educating Polish children about the significant challenges in everyday life as an immigrant (cultural transfer, language barrier, bilingualism, emotions),
- building awareness of the expatriate child and developing skills to cope with challenges,
- reducing the stigma in bilingual children,
- changing children's attitudes and beliefs towards emigration,
- developing emotional support,
- identifying and exploring feelings associated with emigration,
- spreading Polish tradition and culture in the children's expat community,
- integration of Polish émigré children into local communities (offline meetings) as well as multiple Polish communities in Germany (online meetings),
- creation and strengthening of local and global friendships among Polish children,
- opening up the children's relationship with the local community (breaking down linguistic and emotional barriers),
- building child-parent/guardian relationships during subsequent meetings,
- arousing cognitive curiosity of Polish children,
- educating young people in patriotic values,



- getting to know Polish traditions concerning the celebration of the most important holidays,
- exchanging experiences of participating in festive traditions,
- learning and consolidation of knowledge about Polish traditions,
- education for tolerance of diversity and openness to accepting the other (cultural transfer).

In addition to the main objectives, there can be operational objectives relating to skills through which children:

- know important cities in Germany and the legends connected with these cities,
- learn about the traditions and culture of German cities,
- improve their knowledge of famous Poles connected with local communities,
- are able to collect and gather information, materials,
- use multimedia aids,
- are able to work in a group,
- develop an interest in their "small" homeland,
- strengthen links with the local community,
- learn to make decisions, make judgements, communicate,
- identify with their direct environment, region and country.

#### *Step 4 Develop a logic model*

The planning of the project involved the development of a logic model and a well-thought-out activity strategy taking into account different activities, educational methods and teaching aids (Knoll, 1997). Each thematic meeting in the implementation of the project follows a pattern:

- Welcoming project participants and creating interactive spaces (singing the title song "Emi & Gracja").

1. Emi & Gracja have their own backyard  
and invite you to play in Polish.

Ref. Although we live on EmiGration we have Polish hearts  
And together we invite children on joyful journeys

2. We want to get to know Polish culture and traditions.  
We also want to learn a bit of Polish history.

Ref. Although we live on EmiGration we have Polish hearts  
And together we invite children on joyful journeys

3. Sometimes we experience sadness or joy.

But we carefully avoid Boredom.

Ref. Although we live on EmiGration we have Polish hearts  
And together we invite children on joyful journeys

4. Although our hearts still sing in Polish,

But we don't have difficulties with languages.

Ref. Although we live on EmiGration we have Polish hearts  
And together we invite children on joyful journeys

5. We want to look kindly on every child

And we will find friends in every country.

Ref. Although we live on EmiGration we have Polish hearts  
And together we invite children on joyful journeys

- An introductory fairy tale prepared by the coordinators and the children in the form of a theatre play, in which the main characters are the doll characters Emi & Gracja. Together with Emi & Gracja, the children engage in discussions about: patriotism, Polish traditions and customs, celebrations, friendship, emotions, temperaments. In the second stage, together with the title characters, the children will embark on a journey to discover the Polish Catholic Missions in Germany, where they will get to know interesting places in the country of their current residence.
- Meeting with a guest expert who shares their knowledge and experience. During the meeting, children can ask questions, which the guest answers.
- A space for sharing talents – children play musical instruments, sing songs, recite poetry and talk about their interests.
- The conclusion is a table meeting and a shared meal at the association's office, where the children can meet locally.

### *Step 5 Select and characterise the audience*

The formation of the project group correlates with the choice of the topic of the educational project, which is set in an emigration context. The recipients

of the project are: children from the Polish Catholic missions in Germany, the school community of Polish diaspora and Polish schools in Germany. Thanks to its online operation, the project reaches beyond the strict confines of its audience and is not limited to Germany. The addressees are Polish children with a communicative knowledge of Polish between the ages of 2 and 12. The audience is highly diverse and very strongly differentiated. Thanks to the project, children can show their talents and abilities to other peers and awaken their various interests and develop skills that go far beyond traditional school curriculum.

### *Step 6 Establish program format and delivery system*

In order for a project to be an effective tool, it must be located in the principle of action preparation, which is related to proper planning (Trocki, et al., 2015). We are, therefore, talking about a specific schedule of activities.

- Stage 1 - Developing themed fairy tales, which are presented in the form of a children's theatre, thus ensuring that the youngest participants in the project understand the content presented.
- Stage 2 - Designing the characters Emi & Gracja, finding a puppet maker and implementing the project.
- Stage 3 - First thematic meeting entitled: "Emi & Gracja's meeting in exile – let's talk about Us" (hybrid form: offline meeting with refreshments for children, online meeting via the Zoom platform).
- Stage 4 - Second thematic meeting entitled: "Emi & Gracja meet Boredom – let's talk about emotions" (hybrid form: offline meetings with refreshments for children, online meeting via the Zoom platform).
- Stage 5 - Third thematic meeting entitled: "Gracja misses Poland – let's talk about independence" (hybrid form: offline meetings with refreshments for children, online meeting via the Zoom platform).
- Stage 6 - Fourth thematic meeting entitled: "Emi & Gracja in search of Santa – let's talk about Christmas" (hybrid form: offline meetings with refreshments and gifts for children, online meeting using the Zoom platform).
- Stage 7 - Fifth thematic meeting entitled: "Emi & Gracja meet the four royals – let's talk about temperaments" (hybrid form: offline meetings with refreshments for children, online meeting using the Zoom app).

- Stage 8 – Sixth thematic meeting entitled: “Gracja doesn’t feel loved – let’s talk about love languages” (hybrid form: offline meetings with refreshments for children, online meeting using the Zoom app).
- Stage 9 - Summary of the first part of the project and its evaluation.

### *Step 7 Ensure quality instructional staff*

Based on a strategy related to Human Resource Management (Armstrong, 2007), the program of the project is developed by the main coordinator of the entire project, as well as a pedagogical-didactic coordinator and a content-artistic coordinator. Pedagogues and specialists have been invited to co-create the project and provide educational content in dialogue with the children. In this progressive teacher action, it is noticeable that the child is the focus of attention and not the adult who becomes a sympathetic observer. Thus, there is talk of non-directive organisation of the educational process, flexibility geared to the needs of the schoolchildren, pointing to the application of theory in practice, motivating action, encouraging reflection and continuous improvement (Strykowski, Burewicz, 2011, p. 12).

### *Step 8 Ensure quality instructional materials and strategies*

Educational toys play an important role in the educational project aimed at Polish children, as it is contact with them that stimulates the development and broadens the perception of the world. Through free play, children learn in a natural way and better assimilate educational content (Bąk, 2009).

Each child participating in the project receives two dolls made of soft and friendly, ecological materials (yarn and wood). The two dolls in question are Emi & Gracja, who are the title characters of the project. This tangible object has an educative, educational, therapeutic and projective character. The very fact of introducing a child through a toy to the cultural context of an immigrant society has an educational value, not to mention the induction of multiple activities, which seems to be an attribute of development. By providing each child with a toy, the project coordinators aim to activate the child, to give them a certain cultural potential as part of the cultural transfer, to stimulate the child’s development, to bring a smile to their face (Sadowska, 2016).

### *Step 9 Assemble materials, resources, and facilities*

The project is carried out under the auspices of the Rector of the Polish Catholic Mission and is partly co-financed from the funds of the Polish Chan-

cellery of the Prime Minister as part of the competition „Polonia and Poles Abroad 2022” within the area: 5.1. Polish events abroad, task: Competition for Polish diaspora organisations - re-granting, carried out in cooperation with the „Polish Community” Association; as well as within the project „For Independence – continuation”, co-implemented with the „Freedom and Democracy” Foundation.

Thanks to the funds raised, it is possible to finance the project and provide high-quality teaching materials and technical and digital support.

### *Step 10 Plan for emergencies*

Unpredictable difficulties can always arise at any stage of a project (Belbin, 2008). In spite of advertising and adequate internal and external promotion, information about project meetings does not always reach the interested public. Children, as project participants, despite their sincere wishes, cannot attend a meeting on their own without the active participation of their parents. Each project meeting has its own time and course, and technical problems can sometimes arise: equipment shortages, poor Internet connection, losing connection while using the Zoom app, lagging of digital material. Added to this are potential difficulties for project participants such as: learning the range of knowledge, action skills and attitudes of schoolchildren in relation to the project goals set and its psychosocial conditions (Kupiec, 2013).

Possible failures are built into the project, which should not discourage, but become elements of reflection to develop an even better educational project more calibrated to the actual capabilities of the individual or the context (Pellerey, 2005).

### *Step 11 Promote, market, and disseminate project*

The educational project is part of a broad marketing effort. And marketing, according to Ph. Kotler (1999), “is getting the right people, the right products and services, to the right place, at the right time, at the right price and with the right promotion”. Information about the project was sent by e-mail to all Polish Catholic Missions in Germany and to Polish schools run by various associations. The promotion of the project took place within the framework of the 5th Congress of Polish Families held on 10-11.09.2022 in Carlsberg, Germany, where more than 300 representatives of the Polish community from 23 countries around the world met to discuss the upbringing of children and young people in Polish families. The congress was organised by the Polish Family

Council at the Delegate of the Polish Episcopal Conference for the Pastoral Care of Polish Emigrants and the “Helping the Family” Foundation. Information about the project was published in the Polish émigré magazine “Nasze Słowo” and on many Internet portals through the Family News Service.

### *Step 12 Implement the project*

The implementation of the educational project and its implementation is based on the principle of the AIDA marketing model, which is an acronym of the first letters of the English words: Attention, Interest, Desire, Action (Strong, 1925). The application of this model in the field of education translates into positive results and a positive perception of the venture.

Table 2. “Emi & Gracja’s Backyard” project in the AIDA marketing model

	<b>Factor</b>	<b>General description</b>	<b>Project description</b>	<b>Tools</b>
A	<i>Attention</i>	Refers to attracting the consumer’s attention to a particular good or service.	The project’s emigration awareness is made possible by advertising and promotion, as well as personal contacts in the local community.	Internet, magazine, poster
I	<i>Interest</i>	It centres around the consumer’s interest in a particular good in relation to its own benefits.	The theme of Polishness in an emigrant context is an interesting educational offer and an opportunity to spend time creatively.	Advertising spot on YouTube
D	<i>Desire</i>	Focuses on arousing the consumer’s desire to acquire a particular product.	The style, language, methods and forms are adapted to the audience and their conscious needs, which translates into tangible gains.	Dolls Emi & Gracja
A	<i>Action</i>	Defines the end result of buying the product, making an enquiry.	Motivation through self-preparation for meetings, deepening knowledge and developing collegial relationships and networks.	Presentation, excursion, educational game, theatre, booklet

Source: own study

## Assessment of the „Emi & Gracja's Backyard” project and its evaluation

Evaluation is a process aimed at making a value judgement about the performance of oneself and others (Matuszczak, 2008). There are different types of evaluation. The first concerns the evaluation of the process of the project from start to finish. Thus, the achievement of the intended goals is evaluated, the performance of tasks is monitored, and the reasons for the success or failure of the project are monitored. Other types of evaluation concern the reported results and the evaluation of the context of the project itself. Evaluation activities are an important part of a project because they make it possible to determine whether the project is achieving its objectives and allows for changes and necessary modifications (Milani, 2000). Evaluation is possible on the basis of accepted standards. Among the criteria, which relate to fundamental elements of the so-called intervention logic, are, as Torończak (2011) points out: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, utility and sustainability.

After the evaluation of the educational project “Emi & Gracja's Backyard”, the second stage of the project is planned: “Emi & Gracja's Journeys”. The eponymous heroines of the project, Emi & Gracja, will then get to know Polish centres connected with the Polish Catholic Mission in Germany, as well as interesting facts about the towns and local communities. Invited by children, Emi & Gracja come to visit a particular Polish community centre. And at the monthly meeting there will be a presentation of the visit and discovering the further adventures of the heroines of the project. At the end of this stage, the second part of Emi & Gracja's adventures will be published, as well as an educational game, which will be the result of the visits, collected materials and curiosities. The schedule for the second stage will be developed on the basis of the applications.

The operationalisation of the objectives will allow the project to be carried out effectively in terms of interests, attitudes and beliefs (Walczak, 2014).

Table 3. Operationalisation of the objectives in the 2nd phase of the project

Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- stimulating children's interest in Germany's important cities, their history, architecture, cultural achievements and natural beauty</li> <li>- promoting national dances</li> <li>- learning about the life stories of the Poles connected with local places</li> </ul>
-----------	---

Attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- encouraging children to collect information and various materials about their own place of residence</li> <li>- presenting children's work related to the local expat community</li> <li>- extending computer skills</li> </ul>
Convictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- need to broaden their own knowledge</li> <li>- showing the qualities of German cities</li> <li>- showing respect for the country's history and cultural products</li> </ul>

Source: own study

The assessment of the second phase of the project provides that:

- The project is open-ended. It will be supplemented and documented during the implementation of the individual tasks.
- The evaluation of the project will be made on the basis of the number of centres reported to have participated.
- The results of the work with the children will be the preparation and display of their works presenting the places, legends and interesting people they have learned about.
- The project will also involve parents to cooperate by helping to search for and collect materials on local towns.

## Conclusion

The “Emi & Gracja’s Backyard” project is comprehensive, holistic, interdisciplinary and covers various aspects of life in exile. It is an instrument that develops a multi-level educational process, starting from the explicit and implicit needs of schoolchildren (Doran, 1981). It addresses Polishness and upbringing in a model of traditional values passed down through generations. It goes far beyond the framework of existing forms, as it is a carrier of Polish culture and tradition and can openly contribute to the promotion of Poland as part of cultural transfer in the pluralised multicultural society in which schoolchildren live.

It is innovative in terms of organising the work of schoolchildren, who realise educational content through play. The Emi & Gracja puppets are the cornerstone that connects the world of education and the world of the child. Thanks to the use of new digital technologies (Zoom app, YouTube channel), the project participants can easily use the materials available and the content presented.



The presence of qualified educators is focused on accompaniment. This progressive teaching role encourages schoolchildren's independence and points to their subjectivity.

The location of the project outside the school environment, with the use of new aids and technologies, can stimulate forms of work that have not yet been everyday practice. The hybrid mode of project meetings (online and offline) implies the acquisition of new skills and the establishment of new friendships and acquaintances.

The project has its own and unique character, which has been highlighted by the Catholic media (Catholic News Agency) and other pro-family websites.

**Abstract:** The paper describes an innovative educational project for Polish children "Emi & Gracja's Backyard", which was designed by the emigration association "Familiaris" from Germany. In the presented analyses, the case study method was used. The purpose of the analysis undertaken is to comprehensively present a unique project for bilingual children living in the Polish émigré community in Germany based on the standards describing the method of projects in terms of its innovation. The presented project meets the criteria of: place, duration, division of labour, form of work, structure, scope of learning material, goal, SMARTER, innovative project. The process of planning and implementation of the project "Emi & Gracja's Backyard" is embedded in the context of Designing Education Projects, which include 12 steps: (1) assessing needs and opportunities, (2) establishing a project planning team, (3) developing project goals and objectives, (4) developing a logic model, (5) selecting and characterising audiences, (6) establishing a program format and delivery system, (7) ensuring quality instructional staff, (8) ensuring quality materials and teaching strategies, (9) gathering materials, resources and premises, (10) planning for contingencies, (11) promoting, marketing and disseminating the project, (12) implementing the project. The evaluation and assessment of the project makes it possible to diagnose the quality and value of the project itself, which appears to be an interesting educational offer that responds to current trends in education.

**Keywords:** the education project, impact, implementation, project-based learning, project method, project studies, the strategy of educating

**Streszczenie:** Artykuł traktuje o nowatorskim projekcie edukacyjnym dla dzieci polonijnych „Podwórko Emi i Gracji”, który został stworzony przez stowarzyszenie „Familiaris” z Niemiec działające na rzecz emigracji. W prezentowanych analizach wykorzystano metodę studium przypadku. Celem podjętej analizy jest kompleksowe przedstawienie unikatowego projektu dla dzieci dwujęzycznych żyjących w społeczności emigracyjnej Polonii w Niemczech w oparciu o standardy opisujące metodę projektów w aspekcie jego innowacyjności. Prezentowany projekt spełnia kryteria: miejsca, długości trwania, podziału pracy, formy pracy, struktury, zakresu materiału kształcenia, celu, SMARTER, nowatorskiego przedsięwzięcia. Proces planowania i realizacji projektu „Podwórko Emi & Gracji” osadzony jest w kontekście Designing Education Projects, które obejmują 12 kroków: (1) ocena potrzeb i możliwości, (2) powołanie zespołu planującego projekt, (3) opracowanie celów i zadań projektu, (4) opracowanie modelu logicznego, (5) wybór i charakterystyka odbiorców, (6) ustalenie formatu programu i systemu jego realizacji, (7) zapewnienie wysokiej jakości kadry instruktorskiej, (8) zapewnienie wysokiej jakości materiałów i strategii nauczania, (9) zgromadzenie materiałów, zasobów i pomieszczeń, (10) planowanie na wypadek sytuacji awaryjnych, (11) promowanie, wprowadzanie na rynek i rozpowszechnianie projektu, (12) wdrożenie projektu. Ocena i ewaluacja projektu pozwalają na diagnozowanie jakości i wartościowanie samego przedsięwzięcia, które wydaje się być ciekawą ofertą edukacyjną odpowiadającą na aktualne trendy w edukacji.

**Słowa kluczowe:** projekt edukacyjny, oddziaływanie, realizacja, uczenie się metodą projektu, studia projektowe, strategia kształcenia

## References

- Archibald, R.D. (2004). *Project management. La gestione di progetti e programmi complessi*. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Armstrong, M. (2007). *Zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi*. Kraków: Wolters Kluwer.
- Bąk, A. (2009). Zastosowanie metody projektów jako działania wspomagającego długotrwałe motywowanie uczniów. *Języki Obce w Szkole*, nr 1, pp. 131–135.
- Belbin, M. R. (2008). *Twoja rola w zespole*. Gdańsk: Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne.
- Biegańska, A. (2005). Czym jest projekt edukacyjny?: wykorzystanie projektów edukacyjnych, *Dyrektor Szkoły*, 7–8/2005, pp. 67–68.
- Braun, D. (2009). *Podręcznik rozwijania kreatywności. Sztuka i twórczość w pracy z dziećmi*. Kielce: Wydawnictwo Jedność.

- Chałas, K. (2003). *Metoda projektów i jej egzemplifikacja w praktyce. W poszukiwaniu strategii edukacyjnych zreformowanej szkoły*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Nowa Era.
- Chałas, K. (2004). Metoda projektów. In: T. Pilch (ed.). *Encyklopedia pedagogiczna XXI wieku*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie Żak, vol. 3, pp. 191–193.
- Day-Miller, E. A., Easton, J. O. (2009). *Designing Education Projects: A Comprehensive Approach to Needs Assessment, Project Planning and Implementation, and Evaluation*. Washington: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.
- Doran, G. T. (1981). There's a S.M.A.R.T. Way to Write Management's Goals and Objectives, *Management Review*, Vol. 70, Issue 11, pp. 35-36.
- Horoch, W., Horoch, M. (2022). *Schutzkonzept zur Prävention gegen sexualisierte Gewalt an Kindern und Jugendlichen sowie erwachsenen Schutzbefohlenen*. Freiburg: Familiaris e.V.
- Jakubowski, R. (2016). *Metoda projektów w uczeniu się i nauczaniu fizyki w gimnazjum*. Poznań: UAM.
- Kilpatrick, W. H. (1918). The project method. *Teacher's College Record*, vol. 19, pp. 319–335.
- Klimowicz, A. (2009). Projekt – co to takiego? In: A. Fijałkowska, J. Płachecka (ed.). *Z Comeniusem dookoła Europy w ramach europejskiego programu edukacyjnego „Uczenie się przez całe życie”*. Warszawa: Fundacja Rozwoju Systemu Edukacji, pp. 77–82.
- Knoll, M. (1997). The project method: its vocational education origin and international development. *Journal of Industrial Teacher Education*, 34(3), 59-80.
- Kotarba-Kańczugowska, M. (2015). *Praca metodą projektu*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo ORE.
- Kotler, Ph. (1999). *Marketing. Analiza. Planowanie. Wdrażanie i kontrola*. Warszawa: Felberg SJA.
- Królikowski, J. (2001). *Projekt edukacyjny. Materiały dla zespołów międzyprzedmiotowych*. Warszawa: Centralny Ośrodek Doskonalenia Nauczycieli.
- Kupiec, M. (2013). Projekt edukacyjny w praktyce szkolnej. *Nauczyciel i Szkoła*, 2/2013, pp. 267–278.
- Kupisiewicz, C., Kupisiewicz, M. (2009). Metoda projektów. In: *Słownik pedagogiczny*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, p. 103.
- Matuszczak, K. (2008.) Ewaluacja prezentowanych przykładów w kontekście możliwości wykorzystania osiągniętych rezultatów w polityce i praktyce edukacyjnej w Polsce. In: T. Wojciechowski, E. Kolasińska (ed.) *Wykorzystywanie rezultatów programu „Uczenie się przez całe życie” w rozwoju polityki i praktyki edukacyjnej w Polsce*. Warszawa: Fundacja Rozwoju Systemu Edukacji, pp. 124–137.
- MEN, (2010). *Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 20 sierpnia 2010 r. zmieniające rozporządzenie z dnia 30 kwietnia 2007 r. w sprawie warunków i sposobu oceniania, klasyfikowania i promowania uczniów i słuchaczy oraz*

- przeprowadzania sprawdzianów i egzaminów w szkołach publicznych.* In: Dz.U. n. 156, poz.1046.
- Mikina, A., Zając, B. (2004). *Jak wdrażać metodę projektów? Poradnik dla nauczycieli i uczniów gimnazjum, liceum i szkoły zawodowej.* Kraków: Impuls.
- Milani, L. (2000). *Competenza pedagogica e progettualità educativa.* Brescia: La Scuola.
- Młyński, J., Drożyński, T., Białecka-Urbańska K., Urbański, M. (2022). *eVademecum „Familiaris”.* Freiburg: Familiaris e.V.
- Nowacki, T. (1999). *O metodzie projektów.* Warszawa: Centralny Ośrodek Doskonalenia Nauczycieli.
- Nowacki, W.T., Korabiowska-Nowacka, K., Baraniak. B. (1999). *Nowy Słownik Pedagogiki Pracy.* Warszawa.
- Palmieri, C. (2011). *Un'esperienza di cui aver cura. Appunti pedagogici sul fare educazione.* Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Pellerey, M. (2005). *Educare, Manuale di pedagogia come scienza pratico-progettuale.* Roma: LAS.
- Potocka, B., Nowak, L. (2002). *Projekty edukacyjne. Poradnik dla nauczycieli.* Kielce: SFS.
- Sadowska, K. (2016). Zabawki współczesne – o przemianie materii – realizm i surrealizm. In: K. Kabacińska-Łuczak, D. Żołędź-Strzelczy. *Zabawka – przedmiot ludyczny i obiekt kolekcjonerski.* Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, pp. 147–159.
- Stevenson, J.A. (1925). *The project method to teaching.* New York: MacMillan
- Strong, E.K. (1925). *The psychology of selling and advertising.* New York: McGraw-Hill BookCompany Inc.
- Strykowski, W., Burewicz. A. (2011). *Metoda projektów w zajęciach szkolnych. Neodidagmata*, 31/32. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, pp. 7–19.
- Szymański, M. S. (1999). Z historii projektów. *Kwartalnik Pedagogiczny*, 2/1999, 3–27.
- Szymański, M. S. (2002). Rozprawa o metodzie (projektów). In: K. Kruszewski (ed.) *Pedagogika w pokoju nauczycielskim.* Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, pp. 275–293.
- Szymański, M. S. (2010). *O metodzie projektów. Z historii, teorii i praktyki pewnej metody kształcenia.* Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie Żak.
- Torończak, E. (2011). Metoda projektu edukacyjnego w procesie kształcenia. In: M. Szpotowicz. *Europejski wymiar edukacji – program Comenius w Polsce.* Warszawa: Fundacja Rozwoju Systemu Edukacji, pp. 11–29.
- Trocki, M., Wyrozębski, P., Bukłaha, E., Grucza, B., Juchniewicz, M., Metelski, W. (2015). *Planowanie przebiegu projektów.* Warszawa: Szkoła Główna Handlowa w Warszawie – Oficyna Wydawnicza.
- Walczak, R. (2014). *Podstawy zarządzania projektami metody i przykłady.* Warszawa: Difin.