WAYS OF USING INTERACTIVE METHODS IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES AT THE UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The article deals with the analysis of the modern educational process at the university which is characterized by a wide range of interactive methods. A distinctive feature of interactive learning is the interaction of learners with both the instructor and with each other, as for the learning environment, it can be considered as an area of experience.

In the modern era, one of the main directions in the development of the education sphere is informatization and introduction of modern information and communication technologies into the educational process.

On the one hand, electronic textbooks and interactive training programs are actively being created, automated training systems are being developed, virtual universities are being founded, and distance learning is being introduced into the learning process.

On the other hand, there is an imbalance between technical capabilities of modern teaching tools and the ability of teachers to use them in full. The development of information and communication technologies and the availability of the Internet access do not guarantee the quality of language education.

In our opinion, various methods of interactive learning that involve students in interactive activities in the classroom are becoming particularly important nowadays.

Foreign language is the most important means of learning a “different” culture, a “different” picture of the world. The topical task of teaching foreign languages as a means of intercultural communication is that “languages must be studied together with the world and culture of peoples who speak them”.

Teaching foreign languages at the university with the use of interactive methods is aimed at solving several problems: communicative-cognitive, which teaches communication skills; concrete-cognitive, which considers a specific educational situation; socially-oriented, which shapes and develops adequate socialization of a person beyond the educational situation.

The undoubted advantage of interactive methodology of teaching a foreign language is its orientation to direct live communication. While teaching a foreign language, according to this method, we should refer to documents taken from everyday life (flyers, tourist brochures, restaurant menus, etc.) as often as possible. It’s necessary to create situations that simulate everyday communication, while encouraging creativity of the trainees.

Among the interactive methods of teaching we would like to highlight some of the most effective ones. Such methods of teaching are discussion, collective situation analysis (case-study method) and role playing.

Thus, interactive methods are a useful and fruitful component in teaching a foreign language, due to their inherent advantages in developing communicative, cognitive, creative abilities of students, and also due to the possibility to form students’ continual interest in the foreign language culture of the country under consideration.

Keywords: interactive method, interactive learning, information and communication technologies.

1 INTRODUCTION

At present, one of the main directions in the development of the sphere of education is informatization and the introduction of modern information and communication technologies.

On the one hand, electronic textbooks and interactive training programs are actively being created, automated training systems are being developed, virtual universities are being organized, distance teaching is being introduced into the educational process. Internet resources are an invaluable and
immense base for the creation of information education and self-education of people, satisfaction of their professional and personal interests and needs. At the same time, there is a disbalance between the technical capabilities of modern teaching aids and the ability of teachers to use them in full [9]. The development of information and communication technologies and the availability of access to Internet resources are not guarantees of quality language teaching.

In this regard, it is especially important to develop and master technologies, thanks to which it is possible to receive, process and use new information. Interactive learning is considered the most important aspect of language education nowadays as it involves students in interactive activities in class.

2 METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this article is to demonstrate the possibilities of an interactive learning model in the organization of a modern process of teaching a foreign language. The article examines features and results of interactive forms and methods of teaching a foreign language at the university. The main attention is paid to collective situation analysis (case-studies) and role-playing methods of teaching.

3 RESULTS

3.1 The place of interactive teaching in the modern process of education

It is known that the organization of the modern process of education is built on the basis of a cognitive-communicative methodology, which, on the one hand, represents an innovative approach to learning that corresponds to the peculiarities of the information society of the 21st century; on the other hand, it reflects the experience of previous methods.

Obviously, the idea of developing communicative competence is based on the fact that language is primarily a tool for oral communication. Nowadays this approach determines the principles of teaching foreign languages and underlies modern methods [1], [6], [14].

The main feature of this methodology is, first of all, that training is centered on the learner [10], [11]. He becomes the leader of the learning process. Content and methods are determined by his interests and needs. The role of the teacher is to help the trainees formulate the tasks of teaching, to select the material based on their preferences and style of learning. In addition, authentic texts, video, audio recordings become the main tools in the cognitive-communicative method.

These characteristics make up the advantage of this methodology: in the conditions of the information society and computer technologies, the process of cognition has changed; thanks to the Internet, authentic materials and a foreign language environment have become available as never before [9].

Constant contact and direct participation in real communication is a powerful motivational incentive for students.

The merit of the cognitive-communicative methodology is the idea of foreign-language education as a process of transmission of a foreign culture. In modern methodology, this idea was further developed within the framework of the linguistic and cultural direction in teaching [4], [7], [13].

It is obvious that any new methodology, replacing the obsolete one, does not completely abandon the accumulated experience, thanks to which there is an expansion of the toolkit of pedagogical means, techniques and methods.

The modern educational process at the university is characterized by a wide range of interactive forms of education in the process of teaching. A distinctive feature of interactive learning is the interaction of learners with both the instructor and with each other, while the learning environment can be considered as an area of experience.

The use of the interactive model of training provides for the modeling of professional and life situations, the use of role-playing, mutual problem solving. The dominance of any participant or any idea is excluded. From the object of influence, the student becomes the subject of interaction, he participates in the learning process, builds his own learning trajectory [12].

The interactive model of training is oriented not only on the interaction of trainees with the teacher, but also with each other. The role of the teacher is reduced to guiding the students to achieve the
objectives of the lesson. At the same time, the teacher has a strong motivation for the learning process as well: he can vary and choose educational materials in his discretion – use authentic documents, apply different techniques and forms of educational activity.

3.2 Goals and objectives of interactive teaching methodology

The competency-based approach during the foreign language classes determines the primary importance of various types of interactive forms of education, since the form of interaction between the teacher and the student is a discussion club where interesting and relevant questions are considered paying maximum attention to the characteristics of the country’s culture on the basis of Intercultural interaction [5].

The fact that the work on individual interactive projects contributes to the development of a number of both general cultural and professional competencies confirms the importance of these methods.

Among the competencies should be noted: the ability to independently acquire and use new knowledge and skills in practical activities; readiness for independent, individual work; readiness to make decisions within the framework of their professional competence; teamwork; the ability to find several ways to solve a problem situation; the skill of making public presentations.

Teaching foreign languages at the university with the use of interactive methods is aimed at solving several problems: communicative-cognitive, teaching communication skills; concrete-cognitive, considering a specific educational situation; socially-oriented, shaping and developing an adequate socialization of a person outside the educational situation.

Interactive forms are used for conducting classroom activities, for independent work of students and other types of training sessions during the whole period of education.

3.3 Methods of interactive learning

As it was stated earlier, the use of interactive forms of education is one of the most important directions of improving the process of students training at a modern university. Such interactive methods as brainstorming, role-playing and business games, discussions, the method of projects were included into teaching process long time ago. In this article we will discuss the method of collective situation analysis (case study) and role-playing as the most effective methods in the practice of teaching a foreign language.

Discussion is a dynamic dialogue form, the way and the process of interaction while talking about any problems, controversial issues. The problems of moral and interpersonal relations of the group members could be the subject of discussion together with the issues of content [2], [3]. A properly conducted discussion, unlike the classical method, makes it possible to see that each statement can be interpreted in different ways and each truth can be viewed from different perspectives. Discussion animates an inanimate object - instead of repeating equally formulated paragraphs, there are personal examples taken from life. Discussion as a method makes it possible (based on the experience of a dialogue) to convince oneself of the necessity to apply the principles of fundamental rights and freedoms: the right to express opinions, taking into account the views of the minority, tolerating the clash of opposing views. In such discussions students learn to express their opinions, thereby promoting personal self-knowledge and the ability to speak on socially important topics freely.

The method of collective analysis of situations (case-study) plays a key role in managerial education. The specific situation is the presentation of a sequence of events connected with a real enterprise with a set of facts in the form of diagrams, tables, graphs. The student must analyze the situation, choose the relevant information, structure it for a clear description of the problem and work out possible ways of solution. Discussion of a specific situation can be held as an independent analysis, a discussion in small groups, between different groups, a role-play on the main aspects of the case. The results are summed up by the teacher, who analyzes the options for the proposed solutions and then announces the decision, which has been made in reality and what consequences it has caused. Case-method allows to activate various factors: theoretical knowledge on this or that course, practical experience of the trainees, their ability to express their thoughts, ideas, suggestions, ability to listen to an alternative point of view and give reasons to support their own opinion. With the help of this method students have an opportunity to demonstrate and improve their skills of analyses and evaluation, learn to work in a team, apply theoretical material in practice.
Depending on the form and internal structure, the following types of cases are distinguished: complex (modular) case includes at least 20 pages of information, primary data, sample documents, etc.; Case-presentation gives certain facts, the prehistory of the situation. It states the problem, gives the possible ways of solving it and draws the main conclusions. Case-illustration contains an example on the topic and is small in volume. Case - a practical task – provides information about the real situation for the task on the topic. Case with structured issues is a clear list of issues for discussion; Case without structured issues is a proposal to identify the ways of solving the problem described in the situation and to give necessary reasoning.

Depending on who acts as the subject of the case, they can be roughly divided into the following: personal cases in which specific individuals, managers, politicians, leaders operate; organizational and institutional cases involve organizations, enterprises and their departments; multi-subject cases usually include several parties [8].

The core of the case-method is the technology of creating the "atmosphere of success." It provides for the strategies to activate students, to stimulate their success, to emphasize the achievements of trainees. It is the sense of success that is one of the main driving forces of the method, the basis of a stable positive motivation.

Unlike the analysis of specific situations aimed at developing the student's analytical skills, the role-playing method is focused on developing a complex of skills: professional, communicative and personal (behavioral) skills.

A business game, as one of the forms of imitating a real business situation, consists in organizing a competition between the teams of students in the process of solving the given tasks. Its goal is to give students the opportunity to make and evaluate management decisions in the environment close to the real one, using theoretical and practical knowledge and skills.

Role-play serves to form more specific skills by simulating individual business processes (negotiations, project presentations, conflict resolution, etc.). While preparing business and role-play cases, the teacher plans the scenario and works out specific tasks (for groups and individuals), takes care of the protocol, the forms of discussion and the results of the analysis. In this case, the teacher plays the part of a coach, i.e. he is not only an expert of the subject, but also a methodologist and a psychologist.

3.4 Advantages of using interactive forms of learning in the educational process

Experts note the following results of using interactive forms of teaching:

1. The process of understanding, assimilation and creative application of knowledge in solving practical problems is intensified. A more active involvement of students in the process of receiving and applying knowledge ensures the efficiency.

2. Motivation and involvement of participants in solving the problems under discussion increases, the learning process becomes more meaningful.

3. There is multidimensional mastering of educational material.

4. The ability of thinking ingeniously is developed together with the ability of giving reasons, listening to a different point of view, cooperating, being tolerant and friendly towards opponents.

5. Students discover and develop new skills and talents, which is a necessary condition for competencies formation and improvement. [8], [15]

It should also be noted that one of the advantages of the interactive methodology of teaching a foreign language is its focus on direct live communication. When teaching a foreign language, teachers should refer to documents taken from everyday life (flyers, tourist brochures, restaurant menus, etc.), create situations that simulate everyday communication and encourage creativity of students.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the use of interactive methods in teaching foreign culture allows:

- to improve the skills of everyday and professional communication among students mastering the foreign culture;
• to develop communicative, cognitive, creative abilities of students and contribute to the formation of their information culture;
• to create conditions close to real speech communication when there is no natural foreign language environment.

The principle of interactive teaching methods is that the educational process is organized on the basis of interaction, dialogue, during which students learn to think critically, solve complex problems with the help of analysis of circumstances and getting relevant information, consider alternative opinions, take reasonable decisions, participate in discussions, communicate with other people. In conclusion, it should be noted that interactive learning is a useful and fruitful method of teaching a foreign language, thanks to its inherent advantages, and also due to the ability to form a constant interest of students to the foreign language culture of other countries.

REFERENCES