

Educational Discussion as a Technology of Professionally Oriented Foreign Language Teaching in the Higher Educational Institutions¹

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Abstract

In the context of world globalization and international integration, a high level of knowledge of foreign-language communicative competence is an essential component of the professional competence of a modern competitive specialist. This goal leads to the search for innovative technologies of professionally oriented teaching of foreign languages, among which an important place is occupied by the method of educational discussion, the effectiveness of which is associated with the creation of problematic situations that contribute to unlocking the creative potential of students. This article substantiates the importance and appropriateness of the use of educational discussion in the classroom on the practice of speech in a language university, as the most effective method of forming spontaneous speech of students in the framework of creative learning, and also considers the criteria for the selection of educational materials that can be used as the basis for the development of unprepared students' speech and discussion skills. The authors emphasize that one of the most important characteristics of a secondary linguistic personality capable of intercultural communication is the possession of a free, clear and logically constructed foreign language speech. In general, in the course of the study, it was found that the method of educational discussion is one of the most effective means of developing foreign language communicative competence, the development of spontaneous speech, informational, analytical and creative skills of students, as well as increasing motivation and interest in learning a foreign language.

Keywords: Academic Discussion; Creative Learning; Secondary Language Personality; Spontaneous Speech.

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1. Introduction

One of the fundamental tasks facing linguistic education at the university today is the formation of the ability to communicate freely in a foreign language. In this regard, it is important to form and develop students' skills in foreign language spontaneous speech, which can be facilitated by the use of the method of educational discussion in the educational process as a method of creative learning. It is the spontaneous (unprepared speech) carried out by the speaker in various communicative situations that is a real indicator of a high level of proficiency in oral foreign language speech. In our opinion, unprepared foreign language speech of trainees should have the following features: spontaneity, naturalness, ease, correctness of the speech pronunciation of the statement (absence of errors), linguistic creativity, pace of speech, ethics and communication culture.

We share the opinion that “educational discussion is the most difficult and integral type of the unprepared speech” (Yarullina & Fakhretdinov, 2015).

However, despite the fact that the process of preparing and conducting a training discussion is very time-consuming and requires the teacher to have creative educational technologies, in recent years, this method has become more and more often used as a part of professionally-oriented training in foreign language classes in connection with by the fact that it contributes to the problematization in teaching foreign languages. It is the problematization of the content and the learning process that effectively stimulates cognitive activity, creative thinking of students, an independent search for information, a creative perception of educational material and contributes to the formation of readiness for effective professional and interpersonal communication.

2. Materials and Methods

The material of the research was the most effective from the linguistic and methodological point of view authentic resources used in the process of teaching the French language for the development of unprepared foreign language speech of students.

To solve the problems posed in the study, the method of educational discussion was used, as well as a set of theoretical and empirical methods: a systematic analysis of psychological, pedagogical, scientific and methodical literature on the problem under consideration; directional selection of authentic material used in the development of spontaneous speech of students in French classes; pedagogical monitoring; observation; analysis of the results of educational activities: a survey and questioning of students.

3. Results and Discussion

In the context of higher professional education, the use of interactive forms and creative methods of teaching foreign languages is becoming an integral part of the modern educational process.

“The main purpose of creative learning is to reveal the creative potential of the individual, and in relation to the study at the University – the acquisition by the student of his creative personality. For this it is necessary to learn student to independently think of, to have its own judgment, to know how him to argue and to defend in the discussion, to make nonstandard decisions, to demonstrate ability and readiness to use creative qualities in practice” (Ostroumov & Ostroumova, 2013).

The method of educational discussion as a method of creative teaching of foreign languages finds more and more supporters among teachers of foreign languages, mainly working at senior courses of language universities, due to the fact that graduate students are ready for creative understanding of the material studied, creative expression.

Most authors are of the same opinion in defining the discussion as a method of discussion and resolution of controversial issues, when each party argues its position, proving or rejecting certain provisions.

A training discussion is a specially organized, purposeful, reasoned discussion by students of the problem in question in order to find the truth and achieve a mutually acceptable solution. The main purpose of the discussion at the lessons of a foreign language is the formation of a foreign language communicative competence and the skills of students' spontaneous speech when discussing a problem put forward. “Developing discussion, students develop speaking skills, acquire fluency and develop positive effects towards friendship” (Harizaj, 2015). I.G. Morozova notes that “the discussion method allows you to educate speech culture, encourages students to search for independent solutions to problems, resulting in a culture of creative thinking” (Morozova, 2010; Saidi & Siew, 2019).

In order for students to gain communication experience, it is necessary to engage in communicative activity, during which communicative competence develops, which is understood as a combination of communicative abilities, skills and knowledge that are adequate to communicative tasks. But for successful communication, students must certainly possess sociocultural competence. “The concept of “sociocultural competence” involves the ability to use specific information about nation, speech etiquette knowledge and communication technology in order to achieve mutual understanding with other culture bearers” (Rakhimova, 2017; Fateminasab, 2014).

The educational discussion from the point of view of its preparation and implementation requires the teacher not only to know the problem proposed for discussion, communicative skills and creative thinking, but also to be able to choose

the type of educational discussion that is appropriate for the solution of the communicative problem, to select and structure the material for the organization of the educational discussion in accordance with its linguistic and regional value and discussion potential, develop tasks that students must complete at the preparation stage with the goal of overcoming linguistic and speech difficulties, the development of divergent thinking.

At the preparatory stage special importance should be given to creative tasks. For example, when working with a problematic text, or a discussion video, you can offer students the following types of tasks: to identify a problem, substantiate its relevance, determine its social significance, express its opinion on the problem under consideration, etc. Such kind of creative exercises stimulate the intellectual development of the student's personality, activate his potential, form critical thinking (Sadykova & Shelestova, 2016).

At the stage of the implementation of the educational discussion, the teacher of a foreign language needs to determine a strategy for conducting the discussion, coordinate the work of groups, creating an atmosphere of goodwill; to stimulate the initiative of students, ask divergent questions that encourage search and creative thinking, questions of a clarifying nature, interpretation questions; to convince, arguing their position; neutralize conflicts if they arise. During the discussion, students should learn to argue in a civilized manner, namely, listen to their opponent, respect his opinion, agree on certain issues, compromise, and develop a common strategy and tactics.

At the end of the academic discussion, a brief summary should be summarized, also orienting students to further thoughts.

Thus, the effectiveness of this method depends largely on how the discussion is prepared and implemented.

It is necessary that the discussion contribute to a "harmonious merger of learning in colloquial topics and the development of unprepared speech" (Lysanova & Boyarkina, 2017). Not every topic can be debatable. It should be noted that the subject of discussion may be topics that cause an ambiguous reaction, controversy. For example, global problems of mankind, environmental problems, urgent problems of modern society, etc. A discussion of the above topics can help students not only develop communication and discussion skills, but also realize the severity and global nature of the problems raised, and contribute to the formation of their own worldview.

But, to participate in the discussion, students must possess factual material and sociocultural knowledge that can be gleaned from authentic sources. A variety of authentic materials can be used as supporting materials for the discussion: newspaper and magazine articles, documentary and feature films of a discussion nature, audio documents, photographs, drawings, illustrations, creolized advertising texts, etc. At the same time, the main criteria for selecting authentic materials for preparing for a training discussion are: the presence of an urgent and interesting problem for students,

which can become the subject of discussion, as well as their linguistic, cultural and educational values. The authors of the article “Promoting Scanning Through Mass Media in The Foreign Language Classroom” emphasize that “the task of the teacher is not only the competent selection of materials, taking into account the urgency of information, the level of complexity, and also ambition to satisfy the interests of students in choosing a topic” (Shamsutdinov et al., 2018).

For example, at the preparatory stage of the organization of the educational discussion in the foreign language classes, the teacher can collectively use various media reflecting topical social or global problems that may be discussed: environmental protection; targeted fight against smoking and excessive alcohol consumption; violence in family; teenager's problems; road safety; demographic issues; problems of large cities and megacities, etc. Only the integrated use of both written and audiovisual texts can contribute to the successful preparation of students for discussion or debate. The experience of conducting educational discussions shows that it is effective to integrate texts of commercial and socially-oriented advertising in the educational process to prepare for the discussion, which focuses on current issues of modern society. “The integration of creolized advertising texts into the process of teaching foreign languages can effectively contribute to the development of communicative competence, creative thinking, creative abilities, stimulating students' speech-thinking activities, development of discussion skills and culture” (Andrianova et al., 2018). A single visual-text advertising message promotes a better understanding by students of the ideas expressed by the author, a visual element in creolized advertising texts expands the didactic potential of these materials, offering even more food for active discussion, including discussion of the general idea of the advertising campaign, the concept of the photographer, and the perlocative effect of this message. At the same time, E. Martin notes that “advertising messages trigger emotions, grabbing and holding the attention of an audience, and therefore stimulate students' interest and motivation” (Martin, 2012). In addition, the authors of the article “Rhetoric of Social Advertising” argue that by the age of twenty modern youth are viewing a large number of commercials and that advertising, along with the media in general (in the absence of interest in fiction), is today an important source of influence (Brusenskaya et al., 2017).

Thus, the participation of students in a group discussion on socially significant problems will allow them to express their vision, their position, their attitude to the problem under consideration and offer a way to solve it, demonstrate linguistic creativity, and debate skills.

The organization of live communication with native speakers of the language being studied via Skype is also interesting and promising (Shemshurenko et al., 2016).

In the course of the study, we conducted a survey among senior students, studying French (75 people). As a result of the survey, it was found that among other

forms of training, students prefer discussion - 51%, followed by a business game - 30%, 19% of students' highlight project work. In addition, students noted that the discussion of contemporary pressing problems affects the formation of value orientations and behavioral attitudes. According to the survey, the most significant and interesting discussion topics for students are the problems of education and career growth, immigration, family relations, gender equality, nutrition and a healthy lifestyle, the use of information and communication technologies in the life of a modern person, etc. Most of the respondents indicated that the educational discussion influences an increase in the level of interest in studying the subject and positively affects the development of spontaneous speech.

4. Summary

As a result of the study, it can be stated that the educational discussion helps bring the learning process closer to the process of real communication, stimulates speech initiative, communicative activity, the development of critical thinking, social perception, and unprepared student speech. The use of such a form of organization of educational activities as discussion allows us to diversify the process of teaching foreign languages, to make practical classes more eventful and interesting.

But for the successful implementation of the educational discussion, the following conditions must be met:

- a) a high level of professional competence of the teacher;
- b) thorough preparation of students to participate in the discussion of problems / problems during the discussion, conscious, independent study by students of the problem of discussion.

In addition, students should have knowledge about the subject of discussion, methods of verbal influence on the participant in the discussion and managing the conversation, be able to build their statements adequately to the discussion problem, logically proving their point of view and comparing their own position on this issue with the position of the opponent, and integrating knowledge from various fields, have effective ways of intercultural communication, predict the course and results of discussion, etc.

5. Conclusion

The educational discussion has a high didactic potential. The use of group discussion in the process of teaching foreign languages gives a new impetus to problem-based learning, contributes to the realization of the creative potential of students in the context of language education. The active introduction of discussion methods will help prepare future specialists for the constructive dialogue in the professional field.

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