

# ЛІНГВІСТИЧНЕ ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ ОСВІТЯНСЬКОЇ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ



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## CASE STUDIES AS ONE OF THE COMMUNICATION METHODS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING LAW STUDENTS

*The article deals with the problem of «case» in methods of teaching foreign languages. Considerable attention is paid to finding out features of using case studies during training law students a foreign language in order to maximize communication approach of classes. The papers contain examples of the use of case studies in classes of law students to train speech (monologue, dialogue speech) and speech preparation (formation of lexical and grammatical skills) activities.*

**Keywords:** case studies; law students; monologue speech; dialogical speech; lexical skills; grammatical skills.

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**Ситуативные упражнения как один из методов коммуникативного обучения иностранному языку студентов-юристов**

*Рассмотрена проблема ситуативности в методике обучения иностранным языкам. Дано определение учебной ситуации (по Д. Изаренкову), ее структура и методические требования*

для создания учебной ситуации на занятиях по иностранному языку. Значительное внимание уделено выяснению особенностей использования ситуативных упражнений при обучении студентов-юристов иностранному языку, чтобы максимально придать занятиям коммуникативную направленность. Приведены примеры применения ситуативных упражнений на занятиях со студентами-юристами для обучения речевой (монологической, диалогической речи) и предречевой (формирование лексических и грамматических навыков) деятельности.

**Ключевые слова:** ситуативные упражнения; студенты-юристы; монологическая речь; диалогическая речь; лексические навыки; грамматические навыки.

**Formulation of the problem.** In the context of the communicative focus of teaching foreign languages Methodists and practicing teachers pay much attention to the use of case studies in the classroom with students. Among foreign language teachers there is no doubt about the importance of their use, because such methods of teaching motivate, stimulate oral language, promote the expansion of foreign language vocabulary, stimulate the use of certain grammatical structures, increase the cognitive activity of students and allow evaluating the correctness of the language of learning subjects. The methodology of foreign language teaching considers «case» as a set of circumstances related to the content of speech. Case studies enable students to link linguistic response to specific circumstances.

**Analysis of research and methodical literature** suggests that case (oral) method of teaching foreign languages appeared in the 30's of the last century in the UK. It was founded by H. Palmer, M. West, A. Hornby, who considered rigorous selection of lexical material to be the basis of this method. Domestic research of the effectiveness of case studies usage in teaching foreign languages have begun since late 70's of the XX century. At that time there appeared works and thesis by O. Bibin, M. Burlack, Z. Ponomareva and others. In recent years the problem of case approach to study various aspects of foreign speech is developed by many scientists (V. Artiomov, A. Greiser, R. Minjar-Byeloruchev, L. Semenets, A. Tyeryehova and others) and Methodists (L. Dyachenko, I. Ovcharenko, T. Plotska, etc.). However, scientists and Methodists mostly concentrate on secondary school without touching features of teaching foreign languages to students while training specialists in higher educational institutions. So, the case studies usage as a method of communicative of foreign language teaching law students is not still developed.

**The purpose of the paper** is to ascertain the specific case studies and features of their usage as one of the communication methods of foreign language teaching law students.

**Paper main body.** It is known that the principle of case learning foreign languages emerged from the distinction between language, speech, speech activity, and also from understanding that speech and speech activity caused by the situation. A significant role in shaping the researched phenomenon played awareness of the importance of practical orientation of learning foreign languages.

For a long time teachers used to understand «the case» as certain conditions of activities combined with a set of different factors (motivational target; general context; relationships and the number of speaking partners; characterization of situation;

its time-spatial location; communicative tasks, such as dialogic, monologue or written speech; information content; speaking and language training of communicators; the presence of speech stimuli, etc.) which prompted students to speech activity.

The study analyzed a large number of definitions of «the case». In our view, the most clear and comprehensive definition proposed D. Izarenkov, who meant training case as «a set of conditions (circumstances) in the activity of any person, one of which, that includes the contradiction, highlights the problem – the task of action. Another part necessitates feasibility and provides the ability to solve the problem by using the companion, appealing to whom with this purpose provides speech act that is formed by the totality of the circumstances as a whole» [2, p. 14]. Therefore, to create an effective training case we must meet the conditions of two groups: the first objective is to cause the need for action, as should contain contradictions, the solution of which serves as the second group of conditions that ensure the implementation of these activities.

So, a problem in a training case is a prerequisite for creation of such a case at the lesson of foreign languages. We agree with K. Lelyushkina that «problem case – is a speech exercise, the exhibition of which includes some extra-personal and meaningful tasks, analyzing which actors make learning creative speaking solutions of a perceived problem» [3, p. 104]. Scientists and Methodists almost unanimously say that in order to a student was able to solve the problem that confronts him, he must have cognitive needs, training case should be adequate to the actual situation of communication, the student must have a good understanding of the conditions of the case and his problem, possess particular abilities both linguistic and intellectual.

Analysis of the scientific and methodical literature revealed methodical requirements that apply to the creation of training cases, namely, finding out extra-linguistic purpose of educational task; description of conditions which are sufficient to achieving this goal; the presence of conflict in these conditions [2; 3; 4].

In order to use case studies for foreign language lessons it is important to note that such kind of exercises always consist of three main components: objectives, description of the situation (case) and verbal reactions. Their basis is the micro text, which briefly describes the communication model.

Case studies at foreign language lessons in higher education is the most common type of training because they are not only communicative directed but also serve for training monological and dialogical speech, for learning grammar and vocabulary.

Thus, at foreign language lessons for law students to train them *monologue* speech are used such kinds of educational and speech cases like: the ones you need to supplement the case, the problem cases, and imaginary cases.

The essence of the first kind of case studies is to supplement, complete induced situation. Example:

Situation: John is my neighbor. He used to be very cheerful and careless. Now he looks frightened and he hired a guard to watch over the house. I think ...

Student: I think his house was robbed. May be robbers tried to break into his house. Anyway it is very unpleasant to know that somebody visited or wants to

visit your house when you are absent. Now when number of crimes increased it is better to provide your property with special guard. You should be attentive and prevent robbery.

Sense of problem case is the analysis of the problem, finding ways to solve it, and giving a detailed description of these routes. Example:

Situation: John with his girl-friend was walking in the park. Two juvenile offenders attacked them.

Task: Describe what John with his girl-friend must do.

Student: I think the boy must try to defend his girl and himself. And the girl must call the police. However if the offenders are stronger, if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or may be armed, it is better to run away and then inform the police about aggressive behavior of the juveniles in the park.

Imaginary case studies are greater connected with daydreaming of students because they have to imagine the time and place of events, possible persons who took part in it, certain details of the situation, which teacher provides briefly. Example:

Imagine: You are an investigator. You came to the scene of a crime (alone or with your colleges). What will you do?

Guide words: to look for evidence, to interview witnesses, to inspect the scene of the crime.

We know that one of characteristics of dialogue communication is situation. It is the basis and defines the logic of this form of communication. Therefore, the case studies are used extensively by teachers for foreign language while training *dialogic* speech, the success of which largely depends on the given situation and students' understanding of their speech problem. It is important to say that in this case the common method of training law students is playing games. They approach students near to the real conditions of their future careers and thereby intensify their work at classes in foreign languages.

We should note that these types of exercises are almost indistinguishable from those presented above. Here are a few examples of case studies such as role-playing games that can be used for training dialogic speech law students.

Case exercise that requires additions:

Situation: A day before a grave crime was committed. A young successful business-woman was killed in front of her house. Police managed to find a suspect. The interrogation is in process. The investigator is speaking to the suspect.

Investigator: Do you know ...?

Suspect: No, I ...

Investigator: Where were ...?

Suspect: Yesterday morning ...

Investigator: Who can ...?

Suspect: John Smith was ...

Investigator: What time were you ...?

Suspect: I do not remember exactly, ...

Investigator: Did you visit ...?

Suspect: May be I ...

Investigator: How can you explain the words of witnesses that you were seen ...?

Suspect: ...

Task: complete the conversation.

Problem case studies (role playing game) complicate task for students because they need to find solutions to complex problems. For example, in the same situation investigator / suspect the investigator has to build his questions in such a way to prove that the suspect tells a lie, and the suspect, in turn, should try to confuse the investigation and argued that he could not physically and had no motive to commit the crime.

Scientists [3] have found out that problem level of case studies aimed at teaching speaking skills can vary from zero level to high one. So, zero problem level is characterized by clear description of the problem case, students' objectives and by providing them with auxiliary language means in the form of linguistic clichés, samples, etc., which are needed to solve the problem. These exercises help to systematize the knowledge of students, transferring passive vocabulary into active, stimulating the development of speaking skills.

The low level of problem differs from zero one only because the teacher does not indicate the language tools that help to solve the problem. But students are provided with visual support for building logical and reasoned statements.

Intermediate level of problem case studies is characterized only by necessary description of the situation and unambiguous indication of the problem. Students have to determine plan of their own statement and invent solutions to problems.

If problem case studies have high level of problem students must do everything themselves: find, formulate and solve their problems.

K. Lelyushkina rightly argues that the specific of dialogic communication training «is to create conditions that provide management of problem solving, stimulate dialogical statements from short to deploy» [3, p. 104].

It is necessary to note that while teach foreign languages for law students teachers use not only speech case studies that are focused on the formation of speech skills but they also deal with preparation (before speech) case studies, those that form different aspects of language, such as vocabulary and grammar.

Thus, among the researched works of scientists on the study of the use of case exercises in teaching *vocabulary*, of particular interest is the work by Z. Ponomareva [6]. The author recommends teaching to select synonyms from a synonymic number using semantic and case studies. Z. Ponomareva attributes these with exercise where the situations are given by pieces of texts, and the students' task is to find out the missing words, focusing on the meaning of the sentences. Drawing cases by students, which the scientist refers to the level of communication exercises, is proposed by her as a means of teaching the use of words in connected speech. Methodological concept proposed by Z. Ponomareva, is that first it is necessary to teach synonym selection policy, and after that its use in speech.

Quite different views on teaching lexical meaning adheres O. Bibin [1]. The semantics of foreign words, according to him, is revealed gradually in the process of

language practice. As a result of «semantization exercises» (they are the exercises which primary fix lexical meaning) the students should emerge sufficiently clear idea of the semantics of the introduced word, its forms and compatibility, and the initial skills of its using are produced. Full understanding of the meaning comes later, as a result of students' attempts to formulate appropriate concept.

We believe that these concepts of teaching lexical meaning not correctly reflect the process of mastering the semantics of foreign words. Z. Ponomareva, in our view, wrongly interprets a synonym choice as using lexical knowledge acquired before independent speech practice of students and beyond it. Knowledge of word semantics like any abstraction is formal, if it is divorced from the concrete base, in this case – the language. By O. Bibin, it follows that the semantic knowledge that lead to the formulation of concepts are accumulated gradually. In this regard, it is unclear what links are fixed in semantization exercises that simultaneously function as consolidation. In addition, the scheme of training lexical knowledge of both these scholars there is no place for visual clarity. We believe that to form foreign language meaning («concept» by O. Bibin) it is important to correlate the introduced word not only and not so much with the context, as with the extra-linguistic reality. The latter has to change and divide in the language being studied according to its semantic rules. It is mastering this way of extra-division of reality that is possible only in language, which leads to mastery of semantics foreign words.

This approach to learning lexical meaning encourages us to use as an instrument interpretation of typical situations of foreign word using for its semantization. Context of word using with the application of internal and external visibility, with the release of its features that are characteristic of the semantics of the word – is the essence of this technique. But semantization does not exhaust the problem of assimilation of meaning. Specific features of actions, objects, qualities that are listed and the meanings that are distinguished in the semantization and represent semantic components have to be fixed in language exercises. The use of case studies facilitates implementation of this task. The content of such exercises is description of fragments of reality presented in the form of certain cases. During their performance the students should pay attention to those components of situations that usually are not reflected in the special design of the lexical phrases in their native language, but which play a crucial role in the choice of a foreign word. The sense of case studies in teaching vocabulary is to work out a stable relationship between certain foreign word and a situation component, which determines its use. For this purpose these components (signs of action, object, etc.) must be represented graphically if possible. It is achieved with the help of situation where visible or familiar for students surrounding objects, illustrations, diagrams and the like, and the circumstances of their lives, their future profession are used.

Here are a few examples of case studies that can be used to consolidate law students semantics of verbs *investigate*, *detect* at lessons on «Investigator» topic.

1. Name the infinitive of verbs that should be taken in the following sentences (presented in native language) related to real events in the country and students'

future profession: Служба Безпеки України розслідує тяжкий злочин. (The Security Service of Ukraine is investigating a serious crime.) Виявляти та розслідувати випадки корупції має Національне Антикорупційне Бюро України. (To detect and to investigate cases of corruption is the task of The National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine.)

2. Translate the sentences associated with real events in the country and future profession of the students: Виявлено тяжкий злочин. (A felony has been detected.) Харківські слідчі розслідують тяжкий злочин, скоєний неповнолітніми. (Kharkiv investigators are investigating a serious crime committed by minors.)

3. Make sentences with the verbs *investigate*, *detect* (according to the actual events, known from the media).

4. Make a phrase using a list of words, which should take the verb *investigate*, but not *detect* (according to the actual events, known from the media).

5. Translate the sentences, which describe the content a newspaper article (worked out by students), with the use, where necessary appropriate verb *investigate* and *detect*.

In addition to the above exercises, you can, for example, offer a comment on action, answers to questions regarding various circumstances, their description and so on.

Using case studies to build *grammar* skills promotes communicative orientation of classes; motivating students to develop skills in various lexical material and various educational cases; activation of certain grammatical structures, not focusing on grammar, because the case has numerous tasks.

The most effective case studies that form grammar skills are transformational and filling gaps exercises, as Methodists believe. They if necessary can be accompanied with visibility.

Depending on the stage of formation of grammar skills in the classroom with law students we can use different types of case studies. Thus, during the presentation of grammatical material such case studies can be offered to students:

1. Compare the use of Active Voice and Passive Voice in the proposed cases and define the main difference between the two.

2. Compare the cases and identify the common and different in application of Active Voice and Passive Voice (application features of Passive Voice).

3. Identify the cases (among the given), where Passive Voice can be used.

4. Change the situation in such a way that Passive Voice was used.

At the stage of forming a grammar skill focus is made on exact reproduction of a grammar structure in typical speech situations and development of its flexibility in different conditions of communication. For this purpose, Methodists propose using simulation, filling gaps, transformational exercises and game character exercises [5].

For example: simulation (1. Confirm or simplify statement; 2. Convince the audience that someone is wrong, etc.), filling (1. Make sentences on the model; 2. Make a dialogue on the model, etc.), transformation (1. Find out from the witness how (when, under what circumstances, where, etc.) he witnessed the crime; 2. Express

doubts about answers of the suspect during the interrogation, etc.), playing exercises (1. Guess legal term (provided signs); 2. Tell us what you have heard, without specifying what happened (which the crime was committed), etc.).

At the stage of improving grammar skills when the transition from adeptness to skill are taking place, students are required to use the grammatical phenomena being studied, in appropriate speech circumstances without assistance.

At classes with law students at this stage following exercises may be applied:

1. Comment on the actions of the Prosecutor (judgment etc.) in a particular case.
2. Listen to the final word of the accused and explain his act (specify the judgment).
3. Ask the logical conclusion of the situation.
4. Express your opinion on ...

Of course, the list of case studies is not limited to these. Their choice depends on the nature of studied grammatical phenomena, thematic content, level of training of students and others.

Thus, the analysis of the specific of case studies and research of the characteristics of their use as a communicative method of foreign language teaching law students allowed to come to this **conclusion**: Firstly, while applying case studies at classes on foreign language teacher has to follow certain methodological requirements (availability of extra-purpose tasks, description of the conditions, existence of the problem). Secondly, case studies consist of tasks, description of the case and verbal reactions of students. Thirdly, case studies are widely used in the classroom on foreign language for law students. Fourthly, this kind of exercises provides communicative character of classes. Fifthly, they contribute both to the training of students for speaking (monologue and dialogue speech) and to the formation of speech preparing skills (lexical and grammatical). Sixthly, in the classroom with law students teachers use different types of case studies (those that need to supplement, problem, imaginary – for teaching speech activities; simulation, filling gaps, transformation and exercise of game character, etc. – to form the vocabulary and grammar skills).

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**Ситуативні вправи як один із методів комунікативного навчання іноземної мови студентів-юристів**

*Розглянуто проблему ситуативності у методиці навчання іноземних мов. Дано визначення навчальної ситуації (за Д. Ізаренковим), її структуру та методичні вимоги для створення навчальної ситуації на заняттях з іноземної мови. Значну увагу приділено з'ясуванню особливостей використання ситуативних вправ під час навчання студентів-юристів іноземної мови з метою максимального надання заняттям комунікативної спрямованості. Наведено приклади застосування ситуативних вправ на заняттях зі студентами-юристами для навчання мовленнєвій (монологічне, діалогічне мовлення) та передмовленнєвій (формування лексичних та граматичних навичок) діяльності.*

**Ключові слова:** ситуативні вправи; студенти-юристи; монологічне мовлення; діалогічне мовлення; лексичні навички; граматичні навички.

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