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APPLICATION OF CASE-STUDY TECHNIQUE IN ESP TEACHING

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Information society of the XXI century sets new requirements to the quality of professional personnel training. Specialists have to possess theoretical knowledge and practical skills sufficient for creative activities in the selected professional sphere. Modern education is focused on the development of person's cognitive potential, improvement of learning ability, mastering new knowledge systems, development of person's creative abilities and expansion of his/her creative skills. Thereat, great responsibility comes upon teachers. Under such conditions, they are called to find efficient ways of improving educational programs and define optimal teaching methods and approaches.

Modern technique of teaching foreign languages constitutes a flexible and expanding informational and educational environment, in which alongside

with traditional approach to teaching there exists increasing interest in new educational models, pedagogical innovations, technologies and methods. One of them is represented by teaching organizational method called Case Study – method of case analysis.

“Motherland” of the method is the United States of America, and namely, Business School of Harvard University, which is famous for its innovative developments. Currently there are two classical Case-Study schools – Harvard (American) and Manchester (European). Within the first school, the method’s objective lies in teaching how to find the only correct solution; the second one contemplates existence of numerous variants of problem solving. The leading part in theoretical development of the method and its practical application belongs to American teachers (Dr. Copeland, J.A. Erskine, M.R. Leenders, L. A. Mauffette-Leenders, R. Merry).

In native educational practice, favorable preconditions for application of interactive teaching techniques on the whole and Case Study, in particular, formed only in the 90s of the XX century, when sudden renewal of all disciplines’ content took place.

Case Study constitutes the specific method of education used for solution of compulsory tasks. The above specified Harvard Business School defines case method as a method of education, in which students and teachers actively participate in actual discussion of business cases and tasks. Thus, the core of such method lies in understanding, critical analysis and solution of certain problems or cases. Case constitutes the description of situation, which took place in some practical circumstances and contains a certain problem to be solved. This is a kind of tool, which helps introduce a part of real life into a classroom, a practical situation to be discussed with provision of substantiated solution. Cases are usually prepared in writing and made on the basis of real human experience. Due to high concentration of roles in cases, such technique is close to game methods and problem-based learning.

The case is a complex phenomenon; it has to contain the most real picture and specific facts, and to have a stable set of characteristics. Each case has to include the following aspects: a problem, conflictogenic, role-playing, event, activity, time and space. Students’ task is to think over an offered life situation which description not only reflects practical problem but also actualizes previously learned knowledge complex, to formulate and qualify a problem and develop a certain algorithm of actions leading towards problem solution.

There exists a wide range of educational tasks and a wide range of case study possibilities:

- acquisition of new knowledge and development of general ideas;
- development of students’ independent critical and strategic thinking, ability to listen to and consider alternative viewpoints, to express own viewpoint in a well-grounded manner;
- acquisition of skills to analyze complex and unstructured problems;
- development of common sense, responsibility for made decisions, communication ability;

- acquisition of skills for actions development and implementation;
- ability to work in a team;
- ability to find the most rational solution of a set task.

For future graduates to feel comfortable in real-life situations, in the classrooms they also have to be put in the situations, in which they could solve their problems using a foreign language.

Application of Case Study at English language classes in professional environment pursues two complementary objectives, namely: further improvement of communicative competence (linguistic and socio-cultural) and formation of students’ professional qualities. Acquaintance with a case (reading a text of professional orientation, in which a professional task is formulated, in original or with slight reductions and adaptation), independent search of solutions (inner monologue in English language), procedure of situation analyzing with other students (monologue and dialogue, prepared and spontaneous, also in English) – all those are examples of communicative tasks.

Communication in classroom connected with work on a case characterized by dispute, discussion, argumentation, description, comparison, conviction and other speech acts, trains the skill of the correct strategy development for speech conduct, observing rules and standards of communication in English. Students’ comments on case content shall be assessed by the teacher in respect of the following skills: analytical, managerial, decision-making skills, ability of interpersonal communication, creative approach, skills of oral and written communication in English language (lexical and grammatical aspect). Therefore, Case Study at the same time includes a special type of educational material and special means of using it in the practice of teaching English language.

Foreign-language speech activities shall be performed in the following sequence: discussion of obtained information contained in a case, discrimination of the most important information; opinion exchange and making the plan of work on the problem; work on a problem (discussion); development of problem solution; discussion for making a final decision; report preparation; reasoned brief report.

Case Study in English is recommended to be used in undergraduate years, because students need certain knowledge on the speciality, sufficiently high level of English language and formed skills of business communication. Besides, while being a complex and efficient teaching method, Case Study constitutes no comprehensive method and can be particularly successful only in combination with other methods of teaching foreign languages, because, when used alone, it fails to generate compulsory standard knowledge of language.

Thus, Case Study helps develop the ability to analyze situations, assess alternatives, select an optimal variant and make a plan of its improvement. In case such method is used more than once during an academic year, students develop stable skills of solving practical tasks.

Drawbacks of using such teaching organization method can include the fact that it is quite hard to guarantee independent execution of all tasks by separate students.

Nevertheless, organization of students' work in Case Study regime constitutes actualization of systems, activities, problem and game approaches to teaching. Whereas the range of tasks is unlimited in each case, it helps vary the types of tasks and content.

Case Study application requires from a foreign-language teacher special pedagogic skills, high qualification, readiness to spend serious time resources on preparation to work using the method, including possible necessary consultations with colleagues – teachers of special disciplines. The main teacher's task during class lies in setting direction of conversation or discussion, in encouraging students to give up on shallow thoughts, and in involving all students in the process of case analysis.

As practice has shown, students positively respond to Case Study. The teachers using Case Study achieve the following results:

- 1) oral and written speech control has shown that students' vocabulary increases;
- 2) English-learning motivation of students improves;
- 3) more and more students understand practical significance of the ability to communicate in English.

Quite possible that the Case technologies in the nearest future will become among the most important ones in teaching not only management, economics, sociology, political science and marketing, but also ESP.

In conclusion, it should be noted that case application has to be methodically, informatively, organizationally and pedagogically substantiated and supported. There is no doubt that functional area of cases reveals great opportunities for using and complements, traditional classical methods of ESP teaching. Application of cases in teaching English language constitutes one more step towards integration of educational system into the world educational environment.

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E-BOARDS IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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While preparing or conducting his classes a modern teacher today should take into account a very important psychological factor that students who have a computer at home with a number of games and a TV-set with a rather aggressive picture got used to perceive the surrounding reality the same way. The possibilities