

LINGVODIDACTIC FUNDAMENTALS OF ORGANIZATION OF BUSINESS GAMES AS AN ACTIVE METHOD OF TEACHING FUTURE SPECIALISTS IN REGIONAL STUDIES AT FOREIGN LANGUAGE LESSONS

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Abstract: The paper touches upon the problems of organization of training business games at foreign language lessons in higher educational establishments. Training business games is viewed as an effective method of foreign language (FL) teaching. Such important constituents of a business game as motivation, reflexivity and pedagogical conditions are scrutinized.

Key words: training business games, lingvodidactic fundamentals of organization of training business games, active forms and methods of education, imitative educational medium, motivation, reflexivity

Introduction

During the recent decades the world has suffered events that have dramatically changed the position, role and status of Russia in the global community. Expansion of international cooperation in such areas as politics, economics, culture, education, launching of joint international enterprises and establishment of partner relationships with foreign companies have called forth the demand in specialists having a good command of international languages, to which English can be referred. The demand in such specialists has in its turn lead to reconsidering the content and structure of education at universities. The efficiency of work of any system of a higher education is determined by the quality of students training and increasing of human asset. These two tasks are the most urgent in higher educational establishments of Europe [1].

Humanitarian universities and linguistic faculties and departments in particular are to face the issue or reconsidering the requirements to a foreign language as a subject in the curriculum. Nowadays, one of the core

problems of lingvodidactics and methods of FL teaching is the formation of multilingual and multicultural linguistic or lingual personality, who is able to actively participate in intercultural communication [2].

Active forms and methods of FL teaching at linguistic faculties

All students of the faculty of Europe and Asia at Chelyabinsk State University, for example, perfectly realize that for them knowing foreign languages (and the English language in particular), a high level of general culture and especially communicational culture is an indispensable attribute, an essential constituent of the image of a contemporary specialist in regional studies. A good command of a foreign language helps to win a future partner's favor and gain his trust; it assists in establishing both business and personal contacts [3].

For a future specialist in regional studies, a foreign language is an integral part of his/her professional activity. This fact requires form FL teachers as specialists in lingvodidactics and

methods of teaching in a higher educational establishment to stir the educational process up by means of utilizing effective methods of teaching. For implementation of this task it is necessary to teach a language not as a sign system with some set of typical phrases but to teach communication in a foreign language in professionally significant situations. Unlike conventional classes of English in the subject "Specialty language", active forms and methods of teaching enable to approximate educational process to reality, thus imitating professional activity.

As experience shows, possessing some vocabulary and grammar skills does not guarantee any success in business communication. For a successful business communication future specialists in regional studies must be aware of peculiarities of the country of the language studied. Getting acquainted with the people, rules of business meetings conduction and business communication assists in avoiding misunderstanding and embarrassing moments during the process of communication with foreign partners. Creation of imitative educational medium, reproducing situations of real professional communication can be achieved by means of active teaching, by which we imply not only the students' active attitude to the educational process and material, but also, from the teacher's part, referring to the active lingvodidactic forms and teaching methods, that approximate educational process to the conditions of a real professional activity. From the point of view of modern lingvodidactics, it is important in educational process to aspire more to organization and management of the students' studying activity directed to elaboration of skills in practical use of their knowledge rather than to imparting this new knowledge to them. Numerous active teaching forms and methods are known in lingvodidactics, but games are of a special significance in the process of professionally-directed FL teaching.

Game as an active form of teaching

There is a range of scientific researches in the theory of employing games in educational process. In Russian pedagogics and psychology games were studied and developed by Y. Azarov, L. Vygotskiy, O. Gazman, P. Galperin, A. Leontyev, A. Makarenko,

V. Muhina, S. Rubinstein, V. Suhomlinskiy, K. Ushinskiy, D. Elkonin and others. Researches have revealed that during the game activity students develop their psychic processes such as sensory ones, those of abstraction and generalization, unconditioned memorizing, recalling, etc.

Training games at FL lessons provide emotional impact on the students, stirring to activity their personal reserve capability. They facilitate the process of gaining knowledge and skills and promote their actualization. Training games mold communicative culture and shape skills in teamwork [4].

Sociological and psychological impact of games is revealed through overcoming the fear of speaking in a foreign language and through molding communicational culture. By spurring interest to a foreign language country, a training game promotes creation of natural communication atmosphere at the lesson and encourages students to participate actively in educational process thus intensifying it [5].

A business game

A business game as a condition and means of creation of a situation approximate to the real one is of a great interest for FL teachers at universities. The goal of a business game is a definite activity, for example, mastering skills in foreign communication within a definite professional context. By a business game we imply a complex of situations in professional communication united by a single methodical scenario that represents a form of organization, teaching and control of the students' collective studying activity.

A business game not only employs the students' intellectual capabilities and their memories, but also stimulates their emotional and volitional spheres: they start expressing various intentions (e.g. agreeing, disagreeing, developing interest, specifying etc.) and different emotional states (surprise, dissatisfaction, anxiety etc.) Students act out these emotional states resorting to the corresponding intonation, facial expressions and gestures.

Organization of a business game at the FL lesson in university

A business game can be represented as a sequence of three stages in the teacher and students' activity:

- 1) preparation for a business game;
- 2) conduction and fulfillment of goals of the game;
- 3) discussion of the game or feedback (the reflexive stage).

Structural features, i.e. presence of content, plot, rules, roles (parts), successive acts, can be referred to general characteristics of all business games.

The technique of preparing and conducting business games at FL lessons has a mechanism of the participants' preparation for the game entirely different from that of preparation for business games in a native language. It is connected with the necessity of the students' getting familiar with a certain lexical-grammatical material of the topic, phonetic peculiarities of pronunciation and intonation of a foreign speech and with country-specific material.

A teacher performs important functions in the process of preparation and conduction of the game. The following tasks are set before him: to select linguistic and speech material on the topic; to make up a scenario of a business game; to prepare the students for the professionally-directed speech.

The key moment in the technique of preparation and conduction of a business game is creating a scenario. For making up a scenario of the game, it is essential to determine the goal, tasks, and the object of a business game, its structure, plot and membership of teams, level of their knowledge, the time and place of a game, speech tactic and speech intentions of the participants; linguistic material, visual aids; criteria of assessment of verbal and non-verbal components of the players' communication [6].

Significance of motivation to studying

Motivation as an internal mechanism, that arranges and directs human activity towards a solution of some problems aimed at transformation of the environment, plays an important role in educational process. Motives are internal determinations of activity, including educational one, its stimulating

component; and activity, in its turn, produces an impact on motives.

Didactic means of increasing motivation to studying are:

- situational and thematic arrangement of the material;
- novelty of the material, forms and methods of teaching;
- team interaction of the students;
- relevance of the content and topic of the material;
- correspondence of the teaching form to the form of future professional interaction, i.e. imitation of the situation and environment.

Psychological means of increasing motivation are:

- creation of positive attitude in the educational process;
- a teacher's personality and relationship between a teacher and his/her students;
- assessment and self-assessment;
- emotional stimulation.

All the means enumerated above should be fulfilled during the preparation and conduction of the game.

Reflexive stage of the game

From the point of view of perspectives of education, the last reflexive stage or the stage of discussion of the game is of a particular significance. At this stage of the game communicative competence of the participants is analyzed. Besides, separate situations and the game in general are estimated using both questionnaire polls and debates. The task of the teacher at this stage is to organize opinions exchange among the participants in order to find out such questions as: "What was successful in the game?" and "What could be changed to improve it and how?" At the same time a particular attention is paid to the professionally significant qualities and features of the participants' personalities such as initiative, politeness, positive attitude to partners, amicability, ability to compromise, but at the same time – adherence to principles and assertiveness.

We have worked out business games in the English language on the topics "Globalization", "Education and Employment", "International Relations" and others for the subject "Specialty language" at the faculty of Europe and Asia.

Lingvodidactic recommendations to the conditions of conducting a business game

While defining lingvodidactic recommendations to the organizational process of a business game at a university, it is necessary to emphasize the following issues:

1. A business game can be viewed both as a method of teaching and a method of control and assessment at the end of studying of one unit. A business game can be used at an advanced stage of teaching.
2. Optimal amount of participants is 10 to 16 students.
3. A business game in a foreign language should be preceded by vocabulary, grammatical and conditionally-speech and speech exercises.
4. As a foreign language business game is a new method for students, there is a necessity to obviate some psychological difficulties that may arise because of novelty of this form. It is recommended to conduct mini-games, representing one or two situations with the following brief analysis and correction of mistakes at the stage of preparation.
5. It is recommended to give the students opportunity to distribute the parts and explain to them peculiarities of this or that part.
6. If a game is conducted for the first time, the teacher's role is that of a consultant and a coordinator of the students' activities. In subsequent games students should gain more independence in organizational questions.

7. A teacher should encourage a student's initiative, independence and creative attitude to the given part.

8. It is recommended to film the game, as it stimulates the participants' activity, raises their motivation and responsibility for the performance. Moreover, it enables students to correct mistakes and prevent students from them in future. Video recording also makes it possible to trace flaws in non-verbal behavior.

9. Mistakes are not corrected in the course of a business game. The third reflexive stage (feedback) is intended for correction and analysis.

Conclusion

Scientifically and methodically well-grounded and also perfectly organized from lingvodidactic viewpoint, a business game in a FL class at linguistic faculties (departments) in universities presents an active and efficient method of teaching professionally-oriented communication in a foreign language and a means of intensification of educational process. A business game enables to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers in situations of business communication and leads to the formation of communicative competence of future specialists in regional studies.

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