

Discussion as a Means of Teaching Communication in a Foreign Language

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Abstract: The use of discussion in teaching helps high school students not only to expand their knowledge, but also opens the way to understanding the social world, and develops critical thinking. The teacher also plays an important role in organizing and conducting the discussion, which implies that he/she has the necessary knowledge and skills, for example, eliminating any language or other problems, it is important to motivate students to independently overcome difficulties and further develop these skills.

Keywords: teaching method, communicative competence, sociolinguistic, foreign language, secondary school.



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INTRODUCTION

Communicative competence as a goal of teaching a foreign language It is unlikely that today there is such a person who can imagine himself abstracted from any communication, because without communication human society is simply unthinkable. We communicate with each other in our native language automatically, without even thinking about the fact that one of the most important factors influencing this process is communicative competence. The concept of "competence" appeared in 1965 thanks to the works of the American linguist Noam Chomsky and today is often understood as an area of issues in which someone is well informed, has good knowledge. In modern methodological science, competence is understood as a set of knowledge, skills and abilities in language. Along with the term competence, the term competency is used. The differences between these concepts are that competence is "a set of knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired during classes and constituting a substantive component of training," while competency is "personality traits that determine one's ability to perform activities based on the developed competence."

Types of competencies

Today, there are various types of competencies that are formed through the content of education, as a result of which the student develops abilities and has the opportunity to solve real problems in

everyday life: from everyday to industrial and social. However, despite such an abundance of competencies, communicative competence plays a particularly significant role in modern methods of teaching a foreign language. This type of competence includes in its structure: linguistic (language) competence, which implies good command of phonetic, lexical, grammatical and stylistic language means, as well as knowledge of the system of the language being studied; sociolinguistic (speech) - practicing and applying communicative skills in basic speech activities: reading, speaking, listening and writing; sociocultural, which includes knowledge of the mentality, specifics and culture of the country of the language being studied and the ability to compare them with the country of the native language, as well as the ability to separate the general from the specific; social (pragmatic) competence, which determines how well a specific person meets the conditions and opportunities that a specific society provides him/her with. discursive, i.e. the ability to construct a statement depending on the current communication situation; educational and cognitive, which implies the development of general and special educational skills, which, in turn, allow one to improve the process of mastering a foreign language and satisfy cognitive interests; and strategic (compensatory) competence, which develops the ability to find a way out of a current situation in the conditions of a lack of linguistic resources when perceiving and transmitting information in the studied language.

Achieving a minimum sufficient level of communicative competence is the main goal of teaching a foreign language in secondary school. The communicative approach is based on the fact that the student should be able to apply his knowledge, abilities and skills for direct and indirect communication in the language being studied, and with successful mastery of foreign language speech, he should form an idea of the use of various language forms in real communication. The advantage of using this approach in the educational process is that in the process of forming communicative skills and abilities, the motivation of students increases, which contributes to the development of cognitive activity, self-discipline, skills of joint activities, etc.

The implementation of the communicative goal of training involves the formation of skills and abilities of speech activity in reading, listening, speaking and writing. Communicative skills and abilities are directly related, on the one hand, to the organization of speech communication depending on its goals and objectives, and on the other - to social norms of speech behavior. That is, we ourselves choose how to talk in a given situation. For example, while performing our work duties, which imply verbal interpersonal communication, we often choose a friendly tone, a business style in communication, wield terms and concepts. However, among friends or at home, we feel more relaxed, and therefore our communication changes: our style changes to informal, we can allow ourselves to talk informally, use slang, etc. In any case, the practical goal of communicative competence is the formation of communication skills. The theoretical basis of communicative competence is knowledge about the language system, about all types of speech activity, about the features of the functioning of language units in speech that are significant for the communication process. So what is “communicative competence”?

Firstly, communicative competence is manifested in speech activity, the main types of which are reading, speaking, listening, writing. Secondly, communicative competence is a person's ability to solve various kinds of communicative problems that arise in various spheres and situations of communication. The formation of this competence is achieved through the ability to select language tools depending on the speech situation, through the ability to adequately understand both oral and written speech and reproduce it, as well as through the ability to independently express oneself on the necessary topic - thus, thanks to speech skills in receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) types of speech activity. Thirdly, it is also very important to have the ability to establish a connection with the interlocutor, analyze and adequately respond to his statements, use verbal and non-verbal means of communication.

How well a person uses speech and non-verbal means (facial expressions, gestures) in the communication process is an indicator of the development of communicative competence along with reflection - the ability to assess one's position in accordance with the position and interests of the partner. Thus, we can conclude that communicative competence is an integral part of the educational process and plays an important role in teaching a foreign language. It should be noted that when developing this type of competence, one of the main tasks of the teacher is to organize such conditions under which students can acquire skills and abilities corresponding to a high level of communication, as well as set goals, determine results and solve problems.

Methodology

The methodology of this study is based on the application of discussions as a teaching method for developing communicative competence in foreign language education. The research is primarily focused on high school students, aiming to enhance their ability to communicate effectively in a foreign language. The study utilizes active group teaching methods, particularly discussions, to facilitate critical thinking, foster independent learning, and improve language skills. Various discussion forms, such as plenary sessions, round tables, debates, and brainstorming, are incorporated into the lessons. The teacher's role is crucial in guiding and motivating students, ensuring that the topics chosen for discussion are suitable for their linguistic and cognitive levels. The discussions are structured to encourage students to present arguments, engage in polemics, and develop a respectful understanding of diverse perspectives. This approach aims to improve their proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, while also enhancing their ability to function in real-world communicative situations.

Concept and forms of discussion

Whatever one may say, throughout our lives we are accompanied by conflict situations in which a person experiences various, often not the most pleasant emotions. This is partly because people do not know how to conduct polemics and constructively express and justify their thoughts. An effective means of teaching in the education of children and adolescents, serving the formation of communicative competence, the development of critical thinking, and the activation of the educational process is such a teaching method as discussion, known and come to us since antiquity. The word "discussion" comes from the Latin "discussion" - consideration, research. In the dictionary of S. I. Ozhegov, discussion is defined as "a dispute, a discussion of any issue at a meeting, in print, in conversation." As is known, a distinction is made between traditional (reproductive) and active (productive) teaching methods. Active, in turn, can be subdivided into group and individual depending on the number of students. Discussion refers to active group teaching methods and, like any public speech, aims to assert one's own point of view when discussing a controversial issue. However, discussion rather seeks not just to resolve the problem, but in the process of joint activity to deepen this problem and come to a common denominator. This is achieved by opponents arguing their points of view.

The fact that the discussion in a foreign language lesson does not take place, as it usually does, in the native language of the participants in the discussion, requires an increased degree of difficulty for students. In this case, the discussion is considered as a means of developing communication skills at the senior stage of education. It is important to pay attention to the use of this teaching method at the senior stage, in senior classes, since the integral components of a successful discussion are the maturity of students, their independence in acquiring knowledge, the ability to formulate a problem, present their own arguments, as well as a sufficient level of proficiency in vocabulary and grammar to do all this. Here, it is important for the teacher to avoid such topics for discussion that will cause difficulties for students due to their age and educational abilities. The famous Polish didactician W. Okon wrote: "The use of the discussion method is recommended in the case when students have a significant degree of maturity and independence in acquiring

knowledge and formulating problems, in the selection and clear presentation of their own arguments, in subject preparation for the topic of discussion."

In addition, there is no point in having a discussion if the answers to the questions posed are known to the teacher or students in advance and could be presented in the usual way. Problematicity is a distinctive feature of a discussion, an obligatory didactic guideline. Another distinctive feature of a discussion is the absence of a thesis, i.e. a put forward statement that is substantiated in the process of argumentation. During a discussion, students engage in polemics, formulate questions and counter-judgments, learn to speak briefly and to the point. Discussion also helps students realize their point of view, develop a respectful attitude towards the opponent's opinion, and develop public speaking skills. As for effectiveness, here a discussion is inferior to a simple presentation of information, but it wins in productivity, since it promotes creative understanding of the material studied, the formation of value guidelines and, as a result, better assimilation of knowledge. In this case, in-depth assimilation of the material occurs due to the fact that students exchange information, consider the problem from the point of view of different approaches, allow the existence of divergent or opposing opinions, and also encourage each other to seek group agreement.

Today, shortened forms of discussions are widespread in pedagogical practice. The most widespread and applicable in foreign language lessons is such a form of discussion as a plenary session or a round table, in which all those present have the right to express their opinion, and the process is led by an elected "leader" of the discussion. Usually the number of discussants does not exceed five people, which makes it possible to implement the main condition - each opponent arguing his point of view. A meeting of an expert group implies, accordingly, division into groups and the selection of a "leader" in each. In this case, each group first discusses the problem among themselves, and then explains its position to the audience. Each member of the group is given the opportunity to speak out on the problem of discussion. Group discussion, podium conversation. Representatives of stakeholder groups gather in front of the audience to present their point of view, as well as compare it with the opinions of opponents and, ultimately, come to a common denominator. This form of discussion is often found in television and radio broadcasts, where the data transmission medium is, accordingly, a kind of podium.

The next form of discussion is debate. Here, as a rule, only a few people (for example, experts) discuss, sitting opposite their listeners. A "leader" of the discussion is determined, who controls the speeches of the parties. Often, in the second half of the discussion, listeners have the opportunity to ask questions to the discussants or present counterarguments. During the forum, a group of students develops their own position on a certain problem, which they then discuss with the class. This type of discussion is similar to an "expert group meeting", but does not imply special preparation and an active exchange of opinions at the second stage. The following method is advisable to use when working with the whole class - 15-30 people in order to involve the largest number of students in the discussion, including passive ones. This is the concentric circle method, when a problem is discussed by a small group of students, who, in turn, are involved in the discussion by other participants. While the group discusses, the rest of the students listen, after which they exchange places.

The most well-known method of finding original solutions and generating new ideas is the brainstorming method, which is carried out in two stages. First, the class is divided into microgroups and puts forward ideas for solving the problem (15-40 min). At the same time, the leader strictly monitors the fulfillment of an important condition: "Ideas are expressed, recorded, but not discussed." Discussion of the ideas put forward takes place at the second stage. By the way, groups do not discuss their own ideas; for this, they either send a representative with a list of ideas to a neighboring group, or a group of experts can be formed in advance that does not participate in the first stage.

There is also a particularly strictly regulated and organised method of discussion - "court session" - a discussion simulating a court hearing. Arguments for and against an agreed upon controversial issue are presented mainly by two teams in turn. The "leader" of the discussion monitors compliance with the rules. The goal of the discussants is to convince the listeners of the correctness of their position and thereby change the conditions. Cross-discussion develops critical thinking. To organise such a discussion, a topic is needed that unites two opposing points of view, in support of which each student writes arguments (3-5). Then, in microgroups, these arguments are generalised and presented in the form of a list (five arguments in favour of each point of view). A common list of arguments is compiled. After this, according to the points of view, the class is divided into two groups, each of which ranks its arguments in order of importance. The discussion takes place cross-discussion: the first group puts forward the first argument - the second group refutes it and vice versa.

Among all the forms of discussion, the so-called "aquarium technique" stands out. It is usually used when working with material whose content is associated with contradictory approaches, conflicts, and disagreements. First, the teacher identifies the problem and presents it to the class. Then the class is divided into subgroups, which are usually arranged in a circle. The teacher or group members select representatives who will have to defend the group position in front of the class. Then, for some time, the problems are discussed within the groups, a common point of view is determined, and then the representatives gather in the center of the class and speak out. Other participants are not allowed to speak out, but they can pass notes with instructions to their representatives. It is allowed to take a time-out for reflection and consultation. The results are summed up either after a pre-set time has passed or after a solution has been reached. This version of the discussion is interesting because it emphasizes the very process of presenting a point of view and its argumentation. The "aquarium technique" not only increases children's involvement and develops skills in participating in group work and joint decision-making, but also provides an opportunity to analyze the course of interaction between participants at the interpersonal level.

Today, discussion in school practice is not only a form of organizing training and a way of working with the subject content of educational material, but also an independent subject of study, since the teacher, before resorting to this type of work, must first learn discussion procedures. To summarize, we can conclude that discussion contributes to the development of critical thinking, forms specific skills and abilities, and introduces students to a democratic society and its culture. During the discussion, students try to constructively criticize existing points of view, produce various solutions to the situation, and also formulate and justify their thoughts as accurately as possible, correctly using concepts and terms for this, as a result of which they master the techniques of evidence-based polemics.

Conclusion

Thus, having studied and analyzed the methodological literature on the topic of "discussion as a means of teaching communication in a foreign language", we can draw the following conclusions: Students are taught in situations that are natural for communication or as close to them as possible. The implementation of the principle of communicative focus lies in assimilating the learning process to the process of real communication. Communicative skills are creative in nature, since the conditions of communication are never identical and all situations differ from each other. It is also necessary to take into account the patterns and features of communication when modeling a foreign language situation, this will help to successfully teach speech activity. Discussion is an effective means of teaching in the upbringing of children and adolescents, serving the formation of communicative competence. This chapter revealed such concepts as competence, competency, discussion, etc. The structure of communicative competence was considered, which includes the following concepts: speech, socio-cultural, pragmatic, discursive, educational and cognitive and compensatory competence. Age characteristics of senior school

students are described, tips and practical recommendations for relationships with older adolescents are given.

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