

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL DETERMINANTS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONING OF THE EDUCATIONAL SPHERE

TEACHING DISCUSSION SKILLS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES

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A lot of scholars recognize the significance of discussion in foreign language teaching (E. Shantarin, S. Miloradov, W. Skalkin, G. Wiser, N. Ges, etc.). Nowadays one of the main goals of teaching foreign languages is the development of students' communicative competence. The discussion is considered an effective means of communication skills and abilities formation. It models a real situation of foreign language communication, creates conditions for motivated speech activity and determines the conditions under which "not the attitude to the object, but the attitude of people to one other concerning the object is in the center of the educational process" [1, p. 27]. That's why the subject matter of our research is considered relevant today.

The aim of our research is to analyze the main features of the discussion method in teaching, describing the stages and types of students' activity.

Material and methods. The material of our research is scholars' theoretical works, their fundamental states and conclusions. The methods of our research include the comparative method, the descriptive method and the method of the analysis and synthesis of information.

Findings and their discussion. The learning process, based on teaching discussion, is focused on the implementation of active work. This one is aimed at the development of reflective thinking, foregrounding and organization of listeners' speech experience as a starting point for communicative activities, focused on joint work on solving a problem. According to researchers' views, the features of discussion organization in teaching are:

- 1) participants' group work;
- 2) participants' interaction, active communication in the process of work;
- 3) verbal communication as the main form of interaction in the process of discussion;
- 4) structured and guided exchange of views, with the appropriate place and time of work provided, but based on participants' self-management;
- 5) focus on the achievement of learning objectives [2, p. 12].

The integration of discussion into the learning process requires the organization of several stages of training: the pre-discussion period, the discussion itself and the stage of control and correction. Some scholars

(P. Gurvich, E. Santorin) identify the following interrelated parts of discussion teaching: exposition (the introduction to the subject), pre-discussion (the identification of different viewpoints on the subject matter), the concept specification, fundamental information gathering, information analysis and its additional investigation [3, p. 153].

At the pre-discussion stage of training connected with a text analysis which is the basis of the upcoming discussion students are invited to do the following tasks:

- 1) express your point of view, providing a proving thesis;
- 2) pick up arguments and counterarguments for a thesis;
- 3) prove / refute a thesis, keeping it until the end of the argumentation;
- 4) make up inductive / deductive (direct, indirect) evidence;
- 5) choose some arguments to justify or to refute a thesis;
- 6) add new arguments to the current ones, relying on the additional material;
- 7) think over possible counterarguments, the supporter of other viewpoints could put forward to justify their views and try to refute them;
- 8) make up your own speech, consisting of three parts: a) your own point of view on the subject of the dispute and its substantiation; b) forestalling of counterarguments; c) their refutation.

On the pre-discussion stage organized, the discussion itself should be conducted, according to the projected plan or students' roles, if a discussion game is arranged. The main problem of this period is discussion management. All other issues are solved in the process of its preparation.

According to research works, devoted to discussion arrangement (K. Lines, L. Woods, K. Livingstone, L. Alekzander, etc.), the management of students' activity is limited to the pre-discussion period, the discussion itself is carried out with participants' full independence. Studies show that discussion management is carried out: 1) by the distribution of roles, whereby each participant has to perform their own task; 2) the partial distribution of roles, when team leaders are elected (if participants are divided into groups) and the moderator, who guides the discussion, gives the floor to opponents, summarizes the arguments and sums up the main points of discussion. These methods of discussion managing do not stir controversy among scholars.

At the stage of control and correction it is important to analyze the discussion course, the contribution of each participant to its development, as well as the mistakes made (E. Shantarin, A. Mirzoyan, E. Argustyanants, A. Shadrin, etc.). It is desirable to record the discussion with the help of a dictaphone, which helps to analyze and to conduct a detailed analysis of the discussion subsequently (F. Hayworth, K. Livingstone).

The control and correction of the discussion should be carried out in the following sequence: a proper analysis of the discussion and a postponed analysis, including thorough revision and correction of errors, made by students in the course of the discussion.

Authors of textbooks offer various forms of discussion: a free discussion and a spontaneously arising discussion; a discussion, based on some text material, conducted under the direct supervision of the teacher (L. Alexander), and a discussion between two groups of students, managed by team leaders or a specially elected moderator (H. Leong); dramatization of debates (F. Hayworth), etc.

According to the typology of educational discussions in a foreign language, there is a unison discussion, an opinion exchange discussion and a confrontational discussion [2, p. 83].

The unison discussion aims at justifying some points of view on the subject of discussion. It is conducted in the form of a "round table discussion" and presupposes strictly limited educational material and full individual management of activities by means of role cards.

The opinion exchange discussion aims at consideration of a wide range of views on a problem. That's why it should be arranged on the basis of a variety of educational material.

The confrontational discussion is conducted in the form of negotiations on a relevant issue or debates. It requires in-depth knowledge of the two main viewpoints on the subject under consideration. Consequently, the material should contain a large number of details that could be used to justify or refute a certain point of view.

Conclusion. In the process of our investigation we've studied scholars' research works on the subject matter and identified the general features of the discussion in the teaching process, its main stages (the pre-discussion stage, the discussion itself and the stage of control and correction). Our research proves that teaching any type of the discussion (a unison discussion, an opinion exchange discussion, and a confrontational discussion) cannot be considered an extracurricular activity only. It is one of the most important components of communicative language teaching. The discussion can stimulate students' mental activity, enhance motivation of learning a foreign language and create favorable conditions for achieving ultimate goals of education if the mentioned above educational peculiarities and methodological recommendations are taken into account.

1. Miloradov, S. Teaching discussion in a foreign language: dis... PhD: 13.00.02 / S. Miloradov. – Moscow, 1999. – 144 p.
2. Dianina, N. The methods of teaching discussion on social-political matters at a foreign languages faculty / N. Dianina. – Moscow: Nauka, 1990. – 185 p.
3. Shantaran, E. The methods of foreign language discussion arrangement in senior years of the foreign language faculty / E. Shantaran, P. Gurvich. –Vladimir: Nash Gorod, 1973. – 178 p.