

The use of case-study method in foreign language lessons

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Abstract: This article describes the case-study method, points out the importance of this method in teaching foreign languages, and also provides examples for applying this method in an English lesson.

Keywords: case-study, study of the situation, speech activity, non-traditional teaching methods, situational technologies, unambiguous solution

The changes taking place in education puts special demands on both teachers and students. Teachers are aware that in modern conditions it is necessary to constantly improve pedagogical skills, study new domestic and foreign trends in education, it is also necessary to change the content of lessons and approaches to learning, apply innovative educational technologies, etc. In general, it is necessary to form such teaching conditions so that students strive to acquire new knowledge and acquire relevant competencies.

As a result, the role of the teacher is also changing. Its task is to organize the work in the classroom in such a way that students learn to independently extract knowledge, extract the necessary information, identify the problem and develop ways to solve it, and work in pairs and in groups.

The creation of such an environment is facilitated by the use of communicative and situational technologies, including the "Case Study" method (from the English "study of the situation"). For the first time, the case-study method appeared in the United States of America in 1924 at the Harvard Business School. At that time, the dean of the school offered teachers, in addition to the usual methods, new ones, which consisted in solving the tasks set in specific situations.

T.Yu.Aikina gives such a description of the case-study method - it is "a method of active problem-situational analysis based on learning by solving specific problems of the situation" [1, 58].

In European education, this method began to be applied at the Manchester Business School. They took the ideas of this technology from the Harvard School.

The Manchester School offers a variety of solutions to the problem, while the Harvard one is the only correct solution. The case-study method came to our country together with foreign students. This method, obviously, can be successfully used in foreign language lessons, since this method is complex, and it involves all types of

speech activity (listening, speaking, reading and writing), various forms of work: pair work, group discussion of situations, and also formulating conclusions in a foreign language. The appeal to the case-study method in this case is “one of the possibilities for the formation of a “linguistically interesting personality” who is able and willing to participate in communication at the intercultural level” [2, 255].

According to V.P. Bespalko, the use of cases in the process of learning a foreign language is an additional step towards integrating our education system into the international educational space [3, 336].

If we consider the case-study method in relation to teaching foreign languages, then it can be argued that it solves a number of important tasks:

1. Creates a language environment and gives motivation to communicate in a foreign language.
2. Affects all activities (listening, speaking, reading and writing in the event that the final result of the work is required to be presented in writing).
3. Helps to form communication skills, including official ones.

Students have a real opportunity to communicate in a foreign language, which is carried out in the course of interaction with the teacher and with group members [4, 734].

The essence of "case-study method" is to create learning situations that focus on defining the problem and finding ways to solve it with further discussion in the classroom.

Working with case-studies, as a rule, goes through the following stages:

| Type of work | Regulations | Student activities |
|---------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Individual work | 30% of the time | 1) familiarization with the situation (by text or story) 2) identifying problems 3) generalization of information 4) information analysis |
| group work | 50% of the time | 1) clarification of problems, establishment of their hierarchy 2) formulation of solution alternatives 3) compiling a list of the advantages and disadvantages of each solution 4) evaluation of alternatives |
| Individual and group work | 20% of the time | 1) substantiate your point of view 2) preparation of a report (speech or presentation of results) |

Working with a case involves the "introduction" of the student into specific conditions, his own awareness of the situation, discussing the situation, identifying the problem and its content. The student then decides how to proceed.

At the end of the work, you must explain your point of view.

When using this teaching method, certain requirements should be observed when compiling a case, taking into account the age characteristics of students, observing organizational rules, and also correctly determining the role of the teacher in this type of work (for example, interlocutor, observer, facilitator, organizer) [6,182]. This is due

to the fact that the role of the teacher in working with case methods differs from the classical one.

The activity of the teacher when working with cases implies two sides. The first is the creation of a case and questions for its solution and analysis, as well as methodological support. The second side is the teacher's speech at the beginning and end of the lesson, the organization of work in groups, and the evaluation of results.

Cases can be presented in a variety of forms: from a few sentences on one page to a large number of pages. But it must be remembered: large cases cause certain difficulties for students.

In general, the case should contain information that would help students understand the essence of this problem and provide all the necessary information to solve it [5, 1428].

There is no specific requirement for the content of cases, just as there is no unambiguous solution to them. As a rule, cases are offered in printed or electronic form. But you can also include charts, photos, tables in them. Electronic or printed information is easier to work with than audio or video data.

Here are a few examples of cases that we make use of while teaching methodology for our students:

Problem 1

Often when her class are about to embark on an activity it occurs to her that all the whispers and puzzled faces mean that they haven't a clue what to do.

Possible reasons

- a) instructions weren't clear for students;
- b) instructions were too complicated;
- c) classroom management wasn't on a proper level;
- d) pre-task activity was omitted;
- e) task is not appropriate for the students' knowledge.
- f) few auditory learners in the class.

Solutions 1

a -b) make clear, short and slow instructions again; use visual help; use body language, gestures, eye contact, facial expressions; don't speak low monotone or a high-pitched voice, it can be difficult to understand or grating to the ears; speak on the right volume, don't speak too fast..

c) solve problems with discipline, insist on attention during the lesson (even if you must dedicate to it the whole lesson), explain your students that their poor knowledge is the result of their disorganization.

c) work in groups, monitor and help weak pairs. Call the strongest pair to the blackboard to present their work to the class.

d) do the pre-task activity with the class, translate or explain in English the new vocabulary.

e) check if students are ready for the task according to their previous knowledge.

f) use a lot of visual support and flash cards.

Problem 2

One group of students has no interest in learning English and she wonders why she is wasting her time.

Possible reasons

a) this group of students have fallen behind their study;

b) the activity doesn't cover their learning style;

c) the group was formed from one learning style students or students all with the same low learning skills

Solutions 2

a) uninterested group of students needs extra work to cope with their educational problems;

b) a teacher has to adopt the activity to her 'uninterested group' learning style;

c) correctly reform the group.

Move properly

- Sitting behind a desk or standing on a dais creates a "distance" between the teacher and the students. Try to have an aisle and enough space between the rows so that you can easily reach those at the back. This way you can talk to individual students, allow the shy ones to ask questions quietly without the fear of embarrassment, as well as check their work and help them.

Some movement on your side is essential, because it allows the students to focus on you.

- Stepping forward to emphasize a point, small steps towards different sides of the class lets the student feel that the teacher is taking genuine interest in what he or she is saying.

Problem 3

Every time she puts the students in groups but they just talk in their L1 and usually about topics unrelated to the class

Possible reasons

a) the topic is not interested to the students;

b) students have little vocabulary to speak the topic;

c) bad group formation, no leader;

d) low motivation and little control from the teacher.

Solutions 3

a) find the topic challenging the age group of your students;

b) practice the new vocabulary, use different aids to support all types of learners;

c) change group members to balance their group work, avoid close friends in the group.

d) Monitor, advise and motivate the students with brilliant marks and praise. Students are provided with teaching aids related to this topic.

Thus, when working with cases, the student not only uses his knowledge, but also demonstrates personal qualities, namely the ability to work in a group, and also shows the level of knowledge of a foreign language. Success in working with a case depends on how much its participants were immersed in the work.

So, in the methodology of teaching foreign languages, in addition to classical methods, sufficient attention is paid to non-traditional teaching methods, such as case studies. However, we must not forget that the maximum result can be achieved only with the correct use of classical and interactive techniques, if they are interconnected and complement each other.

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