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EUROPEAN SCIENTIFIC DISCUSSIONS



**ABSTRACTS OF I INTERNATIONAL
SCIENTIFIC AND PRACTICAL CONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 28-30, 2020**

**ROME
2020**

EUROPEAN SCIENTIFIC DISCUSSIONS

Abstracts of I International Scientific and Practical Conference

Rome, Italy

28-30 November 2020

Rome, Italy

2020

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CASE STUDY METHOD: WHY USE IT?

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Abstract. The issue of teaching a foreign language was been raised long time ago, but today, with the growing role of the English language, the issue of communication in English is being explored even more deeply. Scientists pay considerable attention to the concept of “communicative competence”. This concept emerged in the teaching of foreign language in the 80's, proposed by his American scientist D. Himes, who interpreted communicative competence as an integrative entity, which includes not only linguistic but also socio-cultural components.

Introductions. Case Method, or Case Study, in its modern sense, was first applied at Harvard Business School, which is well known for its innovations. At the beginning of the twentieth century, at Harvard, professors began, in addition to lectures and tutorials, to encourage and organize students to discuss various situations related to their future professional activities. A professor “presented a problem, or a situation”, students were given a task and considered different options for solving it. Therefore, quite often the case method is called a situational technique. [11, p. 17-22]

A new wave of interest in Case Studies emerged in the 1990s. Reforming the economy generated significant demand for professionals who were able to act in situations of uncertainty, high risk, and could analyze and make quick and adequate decisions. Massive updating of disciplines and courses was launched in higher education institutions (universities). Management, marketing, political science, and sociology began to flow into educational process, which in its turn entailed the widespread introduction of interactive teaching methods. The changes that have taken place in education have been described by many analysts as a transition from

classical to post-classical education. This transition was a change in the goals and values of education, when the emphasis is on the individuality of learners, innovative, creative and unique ways of solving problems, and the purpose of learning is determined by competence and independence.

Aim. Some experts and scholars who have researched the method of Case Study, believe that the basis of each case should be grounded on a real situation that a real person has encountered. They also tend to think that the mix of real and invented in the case is not allowed [13, p. 109-117]. However, others believe that the case can be created based on generalized experience, i.e. not necessarily reflect real situation, problem, action, etc. [1] Here we need to add that we believe that the case may in any event present more realistic picture of events with few made up facts. In this case, the account of real and fictional events will erase the differences between them.

Materials and methods. In a communicative approach, it is extremely important that the topics are related to everyday life and problems that occupy students and learners [7, pp. 24-28]; the situations should be familiar to students, should correlate with their experience and preferably their point of view.

Unlike classical methods, which are based on repetition and memorization, classes that are taught using communicative methods depend primarily, on students themselves: depend on their answers, reactions, motivation, desire to participate, etc. That is why communication is meaningful, only when topics are relevant. [5, P. 336]

There are several problems that need to be solved in the analysis of the situation: implementation of problematic structuring, which involves the selection of complex problems of the situation, their typology, characteristics, consequences, ways of resolution; definition of characteristics, structure of the situation, its functions, interaction with the external and the internal environment; identification of the causes that either caused or led to such situation and the consequences of its deployment; [10, p. 177] diagnostics of the content of activity in a situation, its modeling and optimization; construction of a system of assessments of a situation, its components, conditions, consequences, actors; preparing predictions for the likely,

potential and desirable future; making recommendations on the behavior of actors in the situation; development of programs of activity in this situation [12, p. 113-120]

Of course, most of the lessons are spoken, although reading and writing are also studied. Teachers, for the most part, do not speak but listen and direct the course. As with other approaches relevant to communicative teaching methods, teacher's role is reduced to a facilitator and monitor.

The main question that arises while communicating is whether it is worth correcting students' errors in spoken language and if it is, then what is the best way to do it. Some researchers believe that only the most basic mistakes should be paid attention to, others prefer not to interfere at all, while others say that it is important to teach grammatically correct language. [2, p. 34-36]

The purpose of the communicative method:

- ✓ To enable students to express their opinion freely;
- ✓ To help them believe in their own ability to communicate productively;
- ✓ To learn to establish partnerships with other students. [4]

As for the structure of the case itself, the style of presentation should ensure prompt familiarity with the material. The volume of the case depends on the specific target group to which it is offered. The cases used in the first class should be simple and short. Cases written for the final classes of the course may be complicated: may contain more information, some of which will be deliberately redundant to complicate the problem. Or, on the contrary, some important information will be removed from the case, forcing participants to think more productively, forcing them to think about what analysis of the available data will allow them to reproduce the missing link in the information chain.

Results and discussion. As the focus is on independent thinking, the ability to convey their thoughts to the audience and respond constructively to criticism of their colleagues, this method (situational or Case Study method) is ideal for teaching a foreign language because it gives students the opportunity to creatively apply the learned language material. Based on their knowledge. It should be noted here that the use of the Case Method is limited by the level of language training of students, since

it requires a high level of proficiency in three language aspects (phonetics, vocabulary, grammar) and all kinds of speech activities (reading, speaking, listening and writing). [6, p. 29-40]

This method (Case Method) can be represented as a complex system into which other, simpler methods of cognition are integrated. These include modeling, system analysis, problem solving, game methods, and other forms and methods of teaching. [3, p. 57]

The case method is not just a methodological innovation, because the spread of the method is directly related to changes in the current educational situation. It can be said that the method is aimed not so much at mastering specific knowledge or skills, but at developing the overall intellectual and communicative potential of the student and teacher [20]

With all the variety of types of cases, they all have a typical structure. As a rule, the case includes [8]:

- ✓ Situation: case, problem, real life story;
- ✓ Context of the situation: chronological, historical, context of the place, features of the action or participants in the situation;
- ✓ Comment on the situation presented by the author;
- ✓ Case study questions or tasks;
- ✓ Add-ons.

Here are some of the problem areas that a teacher should first pay attention to.

1. The source of the case material can be either real-world situations, or taken from secondary sources, such as the media, or fictitious; the latter occurring most frequently. But in any case, the learning situation is specially prepared (written, edited, constructed) for the purposes of learning. The methodological handling of specific situations used for discussion or other learning purposes should establish creative, purposeful, and controlled atmosphere in the discussion process. Tracking this is one of the main tasks of a teacher.

2. There can be many educational situations, but in any of their varieties, working with them should teach students to analyze specific information, trace cause-

and-effect relationships, identify key problems and (or) trends, and find an independent creative solution. The availability of real, up to date, in terms of learning, information is necessary, though not enough condition for the presence of a learning situation.

3. Finally, thorough but not undue scrutiny is necessary. The role of a teacher, in particular, the teacher of a foreign language, is not to constantly monitor the factual and linguistic correctness of the students' statements, but to help promptly solve problems without interrupting the discussion. What has been done wrong or not done at all can be discussed at the final stage of the Case Study, since it just requires a comprehensive critical analysis. [9, p. 88-92]

Conclusions. To draw a conclusion, it should be said, that under circumstances when speaking out one's professional point of view in a foreign (most commonly English) language is getting more and more pressing, it is worth applying the Case Study method, while teaching and learning a foreign language. Cases, when written properly, by a teacher, with taking into account all the necessary aspects, will enable students to express their opinion freely on the one hand, and on the other will help them master a foreign language in an easier and more productive way.

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