

THE USE OF INTERACTIVE TEACHING TECHNOLOGIES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES AT THE UNIVERSITY

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Abstract. In the article, the authors write about the role of interactive learning technologies in the modern educational process and, in particular, about the possibilities of their use in practical foreign language classes at a university. Definitions of the interactive teaching method are given; the purpose and objectives of interactive learning are defined; multiple interactive teaching techniques that are effective in teaching foreign languages are given, and are briefly characterized. The conclusion is made about the positive impact of interactive learning technologies on the efficiency of mastering educational materials by students, as well as on their motivation to learn foreign languages.

Key words: interactive learning, interactive methods, foreign language teaching techniques, motivation in teaching foreign languages, “round table”, “brainstorming”, “dispute”, “creative project”, “business role play”.

ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ ИНТЕРАКТИВНЫХ ОБУЧАЮЩИХ ТЕХНОЛОГИЙ НА ЗАНЯТИЯХ ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА В ВУЗЕ

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Аннотация. В статье авторы рассказывают о роли интерактивных обучающих технологий в современном образовательном процессе и, в частности, о возможностях их использования на практических занятиях по иностранному языку в вузе. Даны определения интерактивного метода обучения; определены цель и задачи интерактивного обучения; приведены и кратко охарактеризованы различные интерактивные обучающие техники, являющиеся эффективными при обучении иностранным языкам. Сделан вывод о положительном влиянии интерактивных обучающих технологий на эффективность освоения учебных материалов студентами, а также на их мотивацию к изучению иностранных языков.

Ключевые слова: интерактивное обучение, интерактивные методы, техники обучения иностранным языкам, мотивация в обучении иностранным языкам, «круглый стол», «мозговой штурм», «диспут», «творческий проект», «деловая игра».

Nowadays, science has become an object of informatization, and information technologies have taken the main place in the education system. As a result of using informational approaches in teaching, the systems of forms and methods of teaching have changed. A large amount of software has appeared in the education system to support the process: information repositories of any kind, various databases, reference and information systems, computer-based programs and resources, as well as programs to administer the educational process.

Many universities have already used the latest achievements in the field of information technology in their educational work, especially when teaching a foreign language [4]. To prepare qualified specialists in the areas of everyday and professional communication, who are able to speak any foreign languages, and are capable of professional growth while using new information technologies, is an urgent need of any modern society. There are many opportunities to establish foreign language contacts, both in terms of direct communication with native speakers, and by means of electronic media communications. It makes a difficult task for foreign language educators to teach students to receive information and process it, using a foreign language as a tool not only for communication, but also *for cognition* [1]. A foreign language is an educational subject that involves the most flexible various technical educating techniques. It is due to its specificity, since it is necessary for educators to create some artificial language environment due to the lack of the natural one, so that the students can be involved in it. This can be achieved by using new opportunities in the foreign language teaching by means of information technologies in education, as well as using multimedia educating tools.

The *interactive method* implies the ability to make a dialogue with something (electronic media) or somebody (a teacher or a group mate). Therefore, *interactive learning* is the dialogue-making process for the students and the teacher to contact [3].

Interactive learning is aimed at cognitive activity. The *goal* of interactive learning is to create comfortable conditions for the students to be aware of their success and intellectual viability, which makes the educating process effective. The *objectives* of interactive educating types are: 1) to arouse students' interest in the topic being studied; 2) to effectively master the educational material; 3) to encourage students to independently look for ways and options to solve the educational task; 4) to encourage students to team work, and to be tolerant of any point of view; 5) to form students' professional skills, and to strive to reach the high level of students' conscious competences [4, p. 297].

The interactive educational process is organized in such a way that each student in the group is engaged in the cognitive process so that everyone makes their own possible personal contribution, while there is an exchange of thoughts, knowledge, and activities between students. Thus, interactive learning eliminates the dominance of the only speaker's ideas, and eliminates the predominance of any single student's opinion over other points of view. The interactive learning mode makes students thoroughly think, analyze, and solve complicated problems, participate in discussions, consider alternative opinions, communicate with other people, and make thoughtful decisions based on collective opinion. To do this, the teacher organizes individual, pair and group work in the classroom; he / she can also effectively apply any methods of research projects, and role plays; besides, any work with documents, papers, and various sources of information should be considered effective. In addition to the types of work listed above, the teacher often uses some creative forms of work [2].

Today, teachers have already developed many forms of group work for interactive learning. These teaching techniques are effective in discussing problems that the trainees have already encountered from their personal experience [5]. The teacher, as a rule, selects topics for discussion that are relevant, interesting, and are in students' demand, allowing them to move from particular questions to a broad problem statement.

Those teachers who use interactive teaching techniques in practice have developed a number of rules to follow, which allow them to achieve maximum results in teaching: 1) All participants should take part in interactive work to some extent, for which the conversation or discussion techniques are aimed to include all trainees in the work. 2) There should not be many students within the group. The number of participants and the quality of training are directly co-related. 3) The teacher needs to psychologically prepare students for interactive work. As a rule, not all students are psychologically ready for instant participation in certain forms of work due to stiffness or language barriers. In this regard, warm-ups, constant encouragement of students for active participation in work, and providing them with opportunities for self-realization are useful. 4) The teacher needs to thoughtfully prepare a room for interactive work. Trainees should be able to change their places easily to work in small and large groups. 5) The teacher should think over, and offer students certain regulations of interactive work. For example, both the students and the teacher can come to the agreement that all the participants must show tolerance for any point of view, respect the right of everyone to freedom of speech, and show respect for his / her dignity.

In general, modern researchers [1; 2; 6] consider interactive learning an active and non-stop interaction, in which the students are engaged in co-action while the learning process is on. The methods and forms of interactive learning include those that contribute to the involvement of students in the active process of obtaining and processing knowledge: any kinds of group work, mini-lectures, project methods, case-studies, video conferences, interactive tours, etc. [4, p. 296]. The foreign language teacher can independently

develop his / her modern interactive types of work, taking into account the purposes of the lesson. For a foreign language, the following types of interactive tasks are considered most effective:

“*Round table*” is a group educational discussion organized in the form of an imitation game; it is a meeting of equal-minded participants discussing the stated problem in order to find its optimal solution.

“*Discussion*” is a group reason-providing discussion of a controversial issue or problem, contributing to the activation of the educational process, or helping participants to understand a complex topic.

“*Mini-lecture*” is a brief (no more than 10-15 minutes long) visual and expressive presentation (explanation) by the educator of new teaching material for students.

“*Interview*” is a learning activity, teaching communicants to collect and analyze information on a specific topic in the conditions of speech interaction.

“*Business role play*” is a group learning activity to imitate some aspects of real activity. Each participant in the business role play gets a specific role to play, and performs it throughout the game, which is considered the major incentive of the game. The business role play has a set of obligatory rules to follow. The main components of a business role play are: concept, script, staging, presentation, evaluation and analysis of the game results [6].

“*Presentation*” is an informational message presented on the electronic media. It consists of several related slides, to which the speaker refers during his / her speech. To facilitate the perception of information, presentations may have sound or video files, as well as animation.

“*Communicative training*” is a specially organized type of communication with the simulation of some real situation, aimed at developing students’ communication skills in similar real situations (e.g.: “At the airport”, “In the hotel”, “Getting acquainted”, etc.).

“*Creative project*” is a type of educational activity aimed at developing a certain topic in a creative way. It develops students’ outlooks as well as their creative thinking.

A “*quiz*” is a form of intellectual communication game in which participants try to correctly answer questions on one or more different topics.

“*Big Circle*” is a communication game. It is organized as a gathering of a large number of like-minded people connected by a joint search for a solution to a certain designated problem. This is the best form of group study aimed at quickly finding a specific way to solve a given problem.

“*Debate*” is an intellectual communicative game in the form of a reasoned dispute on a topical and interesting problem.

“*Brainstorming*” is a collective search for ideas, an exchange of thoughts to solve a problem. It teaches students group communication in a creative and active way.

“*Excursions*” allow the trainees to observe, investigate, analyze and comprehensively discuss various real phenomena studied in natural conditions.

“*Talk show*” is one of the types of discussion or debate, aimed at a comprehensive consideration and discussion of the current problem, and the search for various options for solving it. It teaches students to reason, contemplate, and search for truth.

Interactive methods are based on compulsory feedback. For students an environment of educational communication is created, which is characterized by openness, interaction of participants, equality of their arguments, accumulation of joint knowledge, the possibility of mutual evaluation and control.

The student’s experience is the main activator of learning cognition when taking part in interactive learning. It is important to keep in mind that the teacher’s role differs when applying interactive teaching techniques. Thus, being an organizer, he / she divides students into subgroups, encourages them to systematize and analyze data on their own, coordinates the task-making progress, encourages intergroup communication, etc. As an information supporter, the teacher answers students’ questions, presents textual materials, demonstrates educational video films, provides competent instructions, analyzes the obtained results, etc.

To conclude, we should note that multimedia technologies involve the use of interactive learning tools: presentations, multimedia discs, sound recordings, educational video films or clips, and various web resources on the Internet. The use of multimedia interactive technologies can improve the students’ efficiency of mastering lexical and grammar materials. It increases the students’ enthusiasm for learning a foreign language, promotes cooperation between the educator and trainees. In general, all these factors are facilitators to increase both the motivation to learn a foreign language, and the effectiveness of handling educational materials by students.

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