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Topical Issues of Linguistics and Teaching Methods in Business and Professional Communication

**DEVELOPING TRANSLATION SKILLS THROUGH CASE-STUDY
TECHNIQUE**

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Abstract

The study deals with modern techniques of teaching. Interactivity, innovative forms and teaching tools employed contribute to the creation of an activity-oriented training process for future translators. The aim of the article is to present the effectiveness of case-study technique in developing future interpreters' professional skills through interactive classes. The article presents potency of the scheme for solving translation tasks by analyzing problem situations (case-study), which results in students' progress in acquiring translation skills. The students were provided with the worked-out algorithm to solve specifically chosen cases containing translation blunders, in four weeks of the experimental training they demonstrated deeper understanding of the diversity of cases, improved their skills to listen to and evaluate their peers' ideas and the ability to draw conclusions through discussion. The implementation of the case-study method has proved its effectiveness in the process of training future translators, significantly facilitate creation of student-centered and motivating educational environment.

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1. Introduction

Today, it is important to highlight that the educational process of translators should be aimed not only at acquiring academic knowledge, but at mastering certain professional skills. The traditional approach and the teacher's assessment should have a shift of emphasis to independent work, self-control and self-assessment of students; along with traditional textbook, modern technical means of teaching should be used. In this respect, interactivity, innovative forms and teaching techniques employed contribute to the creation of an activity-oriented training process for future translators. Moreover, properly chosen teaching model is to be applied to solve practical challenges the students may come across in their future career.

2. Problem Statement

Concerning what has just been mentioned, among interactive forms used in the educational process, there is a technique called case-study, or the case analysis method, which refers to non-game imitation active learning methods.

- i. The case analysis method was first introduced at the Harvard Business School at the beginning of the 20th century and became widespread in educational institutions when training specialists in various professional fields. This method is based on a certain so-called “problematic situation” or a “case” that causes difficulty for students and requires creative approach to analysis and solution. It should be noted that the problem-analyzing-and-solving tasks are acceptable only when students are willing to perform specific types of mental and practical activities independently.
- ii. Until now, the case analysis method has been widely used in the process of training specialists, mainly in the field of management, politics, law, dealing with clients. Recently, there have appeared scientific works devoted to case technologies in teaching foreign languages. Thus, Ilina (2019) stresses that case study improves “the logic of thinking, creativity and communication” (p. 73). Nae (2019), in her turn, points out that originally “designed for non-linguistic disciplines, the case method found its place in language teaching”, and became “a source of more effective and motivating language teaching methodology” (p. 27). In addition, case technology “increased learner participation”, and boosted students' motivation and “attitudes toward language study” (p. 27).
- iii. However, very few works are devoted to the use of this method in the process of training translators. Vu Phi Ho (2015) stands for the need for “some innovation” in educational process “to help make the learning activities more effective” (p. 85). He underlines that working on cases “students learn from one another, improve knowledge and translation skills in order to enhance the quality of the translated versions (p. 93).

3. Research Questions

How to test the effectiveness of case-study technique in developing future interpreters' professional skills through interactive classes?

Can case-study technique be employed in educational process to improve students' ability work in a team, think critically, and complete tasks with due reflexion?

4. Purpose of the Study

The goal of the study is to prove the effectiveness of case-study technique in developing future interpreters' professional skills through interactive classes.

5. Research Methods

According to Klassen et al. (2015) the case study proves to be resultative in some special translation trainings which "help to raise the quality of translation" (p. 243).

Pushkina (2016) finds it expedient to implement case-study method in the process of teaching consecutive interpreting. She claims case technique is one of the most effective tools for students "to master practical translation experience" (p. 104). The use of the case-study method in the educational process undoubtedly combines many theoretical aspects of training translators with practical tasks (certain real-life cases) that need to be focused on. As Robinson (2007) notes, it is important for students to improve their ability to solve problems, it is necessary to be able to flexibly and reasonably switch from practice to rules and vice versa, consciously keep the balance between activity and analysis (p. 241).

Undoubtedly, analysis is an essential part of translation and a regular process involving language transformations which implies their analysis and conscious implementation, and therefore contributes to the development of students' approaches to translation problem solving.

Dolgorukov (2014) offers a classification of cases based on the goals and objectives of the educational process, and also distinguishes practice-oriented exercises among others. Such exercises contain a specific problematic situation that requires finding ways to solve the problem.

Girina (2010) recommends performing a number of the following actions to solve cases:

- 1) evaluate the problem;
- 2) analyze the problem;
- 3) propose and discuss possible solutions;
- 4) choose the best solution;
- 5) present the decision and comment on your choice (p. 168).

Taking into consideration the existing recommendations of experts in this sphere Pushkina (2016) developed the following scheme for analyzing and solving cases when teaching translation. When doing tasks students are supposed to use the consequence of several steps (pp. 104-105) (see Table 1).

Table 1. Case-solving scheme

No	Step	Possible choices
1.	Are there obvious violations of the language	yes/no

norm in the case?		
2.	Determine the nature of these violations.	semantic/syntactic/stylistic/ pragmatic
3.	Determine the reasons for the violations identified.	spelling errors, due to which the word acquires a different meaning/ gross lexical inconsistencies or grammatical deviations/ lack of logic/ etc.
4.	Determine the semantic intention of the case.	in case of complete misuse of language norms, which may cause misunderstanding of the text
5.	Offer your options for solving the case. Translate it into your native language.	Minimum two options.
6.	Choose the best solution to the case. Give your reasoning.	

According to the table, students are required to analyze the case by joint efforts of a group or subgroup. They are to find possible solutions (give several variants of translation) and, after evaluating the proposed solutions, choose the best one for this very case. It should be noted that cases can be presented in various forms — from one sentence to a short story; it depends on the students' level of English, the better they do it, the longer the case.

It goes without saying, it is better not to make up cases for practice in class on purpose but to take them from real life. It means that to work in class we select slogan, ads, instructions, signs containing gross translation errors, the so-called translation blunders. It was them that we focused on when choosing materials for cases.

6. Findings

To test the effectiveness of the case-study scheme in improving students' translation skills we took two groups of the third-year students specializing in linguistics and translation. During four weeks students practiced in solving translation tasks by analyzing problem situations (case-study) in interactive format.

Here are some examples of cases to solve (Crocker, 2007):

Case 1.

A private school in Nairobi, Kenya:

No trespassing without permission.

Case 2.

Switzerland:

*It is defended to promenade the corridors
in the boots of the mountain in front of six hours.*

Case 3.

Italy:

Please report all leakings on the part of the staff.

Case 4.

Hue, Vietnam:

Toilet was cleaned and spayed.

Now, we present the students' performance of Case 2, which was conducted in English and recorded by the teacher.

Student 1. Look at it. Of course, there are a lot of violations in this case.

Student 2. Yes, they are obvious. I think that the violations are of the semantic character.

Student 3. Is it all? What about stylistic violations?

Student 2. No, it is all right. Only semantic ones are wrong.

Student 1. Right you are. It looks like calque. It should be ski boots but not the boots of the mountain.

Student 2. Oh, I've missed it. The words "forbidden" and "promenade" look out of the place. I'd better put "prohibited" as they always use this word in signs.

Student 3. Sure. And "promenade" is not suitable here. I'd say "wear boots" because the idea of walking in the ski boots inside the hotel sounds very strange and funny.

Student 1. Ok, let it be like that. But haven't you noticed the wrong preposition here? And it seems to me that they made a word-by-word translation from French. It must be "till" and "o'clock".

Student 2. So, what is the correct variant? I'd say "Do not wear ski boots in corridors till six o'clock."

Student 1. Can we make it more laconic? It's a sign.

Student 3. What about this? No ski boots till six a.m.

Student 2. Sounds great. No corridors, as it's clear that the sign is in the hotel.

Then, the students suggested their variants of translation of the case and chose the best one according to the rules and norms of the Russian language.

The experiment showed that four weeks later the students demonstrated deeper understanding of the diversity of cases, improved their skills to listen to and evaluate their groupmates' suggestions and the ability to come to the conclusion through discussion. Besides, such type of team-work not only boosted the students' motivation, helped them to overcome psychological barriers, but encouraged them to be more flexible and open-minded.

Moreover, such interactive activities significantly contribute to the acquisition of professional experience of students, their self-evaluation and self-confidence.

In order to develop the translator's skills and abilities, it makes sense to regularly resort to such case-study-based tasks. The more often students face challenging translation tasks, the more accustomed they become to extraordinary situations and more easily recognize the intention of the message.

7. Conclusion

Thus, the implementation of the case-study method has shown its effectiveness in the process of training future translators. Case technologies develop students' abilities to formulate hypotheses, reveal their personal potential and master their skills to get the essence of the message which leads to the proper choice of a translation technique and, finally, to correct translation.

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