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Business games as key interactive learning for successful students' professional and communicative training

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ABSTRACT

The article canvases the methodology aspects of the business games in language learning. The important thing is that future specialists are getting their professional communication skills, skills of listening to interlocutor and skills of communication intercourse formed. It is justified this kind of interactive learning is one of the efficient tool to teach students how to express their view point and take a stand, have the holistic idea about professional activity, social experience. The usage of role-play and simulation games helps to form professional basic skills and activate creative abilities of a person and they can be the means of training for certain specialists as well as a team. Moreover, these interactions are a kind of non-formal communication which helps students to combat some stress and language barriers. The emphasis is made on interaction of participants for objective achievement, taking into account personality wishes and individual peculiarities of students. Some business game activities and options for language learning are presented.

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1. Introduction

In today's global world there is an urgent need to develop the person-oriented curriculum and teaching technologies aimed at efficient professional training of a future specialist. A traditional system of education does not provide with the necessary means of learning process activation and cognitive activity stimulation so interactive technologies or business games are an important part of the learning process. These types of activities also make possible to use all levels of knowledge.

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2. Analysis of recent research

The problems of students' stimulation and motivation for foreign languages with game elements were presented in the scientific researches of many scholars, among them there are I. Bim, S. Zanko, S. Polat, Ye. Passov, V. Filatov and others. V. Anisimova, L. Kabanova, P. Pidkasystyi and other pedagogues and psychologists are paying a lot of attention to the problems and possibilities of game activity introduction and implementation.

3. Statement of research objectives

The objectives of the article are analyzing the methodology aspects and the peculiarities of business role-play, games and simulations usage, revealing their potential for stimulation of the learning process in higher education establishments as well as outlining the forms and means of introducing into teaching foreign languages for professional and communication training of future specialists.

4. Results

The use of modern interactive pedagogical technologies in teaching promotes the quality improvement of future specialist training, among which there are business role-plays, games, simulations, case-study, training discussions or debates, trainings and project method. Considering various kinds of games we have to point out that it is a role game with different interests of its participants and necessity of making decisions by the game results.

In professional education a business game is a kind of game when the content of future specialists' professional activity is simulated (modeled) in imaginary situations. The main attributes of a business game are as follows:

- simulation of chosen aspect of goal-oriented human activity;
- roles for each participant;
- rulemaking for play activities;
- transformation of space-time characteristics of the simulated activity;
- game conditionality;
- action evaluation of game participants (Shcherban 2004).

There are various business games, such as brainstorming, innovation, imitation, organization-activity, organization-communication ones and others. The advantages of business role-playing games as a teaching method are close-to-real-life communication during the play; practicing professional skills by the game participants; revealing of the skill level, mental process peculiarities, communication skill level, personal qualities of participants.

During this process students learn to formulate their ideas correctly, present reasons and take a stand and other. The important thing is that future specialists are getting their professional communication skills,

skills of listening to interlocutor and skills of communication intercourse formed. They also will be able to express and take a stand, have the holistic idea about professional activity, social experience etc. Game technologies ensure the unity of emotional and rational in study as they correspond to natural wishes of participants.

The methodology of business games is of many-sided character. However, games are held according to a proper model which has the following stages: preparation of game participants; study of situations, instructions, recommendations and other extra materials; game-playing; analysis, discussion and evaluation of game results (Ocheretna 2013).

In active learning process system some modifications of business role-playing game are used. Simulation games. At lessons the activity of certain company organization or its department is simulated. The events, a certain activity of people (a business meeting, plan discussion, having a talk) can be simulated as well as the environment and conditions of the place where an event or activity takes place (Manager's Office, Meeting room). The scenario of simulation game, with the exception of activity plot, contains the structure description and assignment of certain objects, normative acts which determine the activity specifics, surrounding description where the event takes place.

One example of a simulation game is a meeting of the management teams to present different kinds of recommendations after learning the fact file, making analysis, comparing the advantages and disadvantages of each solution of a problem. During the meeting after the presentations made by all the groups the participants have to discuss the recommendations together and reach a final decision.

Operation games. They help to work out the implementation of specific operations, for example the respondent survey, taste tests of goods in a shop. In operation games a corresponding process is modeled. Such games are held in the conditions imitating the real ones.

A more complex task is to combine a simulation and an operation game, for instance, a designing evaluation questions and an interview in the HR of a company. First, students have been asked to design the list of questions for the behavioral interview that will be used by all the hiring managers. The questions should focus on the following areas as conflict, authority, ambition, networking, sociability, stress and resourcefulness. The group has to decide the order in which the questions will be asked and prepare an evaluation grid for the managers to enter their marks out of five (5=excellent). After designing the 6 interview questions to evaluate the behavior of the candidates the interview will last a maximum of 30 minutes. The next task is to enter an evaluation of the quality of the candidate's response directly into a computer (Trappe 2011).

Role playing (acting). In these games the behavior tactics, a certain official's function and duty performance are practiced; so for the games with roles it is necessary to develop a model-play of a situation and distribute roles among students.

A useful role-playing activity would be "Dilemma & Decision" (Intelligence Business), for example, taking part in a discussion forum on the subject of the Camisea project at Wild Earth Conference. The various groups involved in this project (Group A – Consortium representatives, Group B – Peruvian government representatives, Group C – Amazon Watch) have opportunity to present their different viewpoints. After reading the given information each group has to prepare arguments to present at the forum. Once each

group has presented, the class should try to agree if and how Camisea project should continue. After finishing discussion and making final decisions students could write a short report to outline the key issues concerning the Camisea project and recommend the best course of action using Style guide to the Course book (Trappe 2011).

The foreign language learning process organization in higher education establishments with usage of game-playing situations requires the thorough preparation work of a teacher and development of theoretical and practical skills on game designing. A teacher has to determine didactics goals, selection of teaching material, methods, means, forms of study, organization, stimulation and relaxation, control, analysis of game process and obtained results etc.

Some books on professional training include elements that could be used to develop various types of role-play games. The section of problem-solving strategies outlines strategies, policies, and tools for solving international business challenges, and develops problem-solving attitude and skills. In some books each chapter begins with opening cases, i.e. motivational questions followed by a brief case illustrating the core concepts presented in the chapter. This attunes the student to the material that follows, making subsequent reading more efficient. Additional short cases on a country and industry serve to illustrate on phenomena and enable the student to find relevance to their areas of interest. Special cases, of varying length and complexity, provide a comprehensive framework that can be adjusted to student level and progress. Together with cutting-edge technology, these cases provide all-inclusive learning package (Shenkar 2004).

There are eight main qualities of managers formed during a business role-play game:

1. Skills to communicate in formal and informal situations and interact efficiently on equal terms.
2. Leadership skills.
3. Skills to orientate in conflict situations and resolve them.
4. Skills to obtain and process the necessary information, evaluate, compare and master it.
5. Skills to make decisions in uncertain situations.
6. Time management skills, skills to assign tasks and make time efficient organization decisions.
7. Skills to demonstrate entrepreneur business qualities: to set prospective goals, use favorable opportunities.
8. Skills to evaluate the consequences of their own decisions and learn from mistakes (Shcherban 2004).

So business role-play and games form professional basic skills and activate creative abilities of a person and they can be the means of training for certain specialists as well as a team. Having acquired the necessary knowledge students are able to master professions connected with economic and managing mechanisms.

5. Conclusions

Thus, the usage of business role-play and simulation games in teaching foreign languages at higher education allows to intensify the learning process, reach a proper level of mastering by all participants and solve various educational and developing goals. These kinds of activities not only provide students with

scientific comprehension results, but also form independence, develop and improve their creative abilities. These interactions are a kind of non-formal communication which helps students to combat some stress and language barriers. The usage of business games at lessons in higher educational establishments enables to determine and observe peculiarities of participants' psychology and make a psychological diagnostics of personality characteristics of group representatives possible.

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