

Dramaretska Larysa, Senior Instructor of the Department of Foreign Languages of the National Academy of Internal Affairs

USING CASE-STUDY METHOD IN TEACHING

Modern teaching demands the using of techniques resulting in high level of wide information learned. Such techniques are called interactive ones as teaching is based on mutual activity and discussion when students develop skills in analytical thinking and reflective judgment by reading and discussing complex, real-life scenarios and concerning alternative points of view. Role playing, brain storms, parliamentary debates, interviews are the examples of these techniques.

Case-study becomes actual method in professional education due to the following tendencies [1]: a) modern education aims rather special competency forming, intellectual activity developing, than getting some knowledge; b) one of the requirements for specialist's competency is ability to behave in optimal way in different situations.

One of case study pros is involvement students to participate in principles definition process through abstracting from specific examples. It develops skills of problem solving, analytical techniques using, acting in controversial situations. Another valuable feature is implementation of problem-based learning, which is a tool for decision making in real life because of demanding not only knowledge but its usage while forming own point of view and solving the problem. As the educational strategy case study is: "... a bridge between theory and practice and between education and work." [2, p.182]

Case studies are stories. They present realistic, complex, and contextually rich situations and often involve a dilemma, conflict, or problem that one or more of the characters in the case must negotiate. A good case study is: ".the vehicle by which a chunk of reality is brought into the classroom to be worked over by the class and the instructor. A good case keeps the class discussion grounded upon some of the stubborn facts that must be faced in real life situations." [3]

Case study range in duration and amount of information and may be considered and analyzed with the use of diverse ways depending on the case per se and the purposes defined.

There may be different sources to find the case. The material for a case study can be drawn from instructor's professional experiences, from current events, from historical sources, etc. Whatever the source, an effective case study is one that: tells a "real" and engaging story; raises a thought-provoking issue; has elements of conflict; promotes empathy with the central characters; lacks an obvious or clear-cut right answer; encourages students to think and take a position; portrays actors in moments of decision; provides plenty of data about character, location, context, actions; is relatively concise [4].

There are many variations in how case studies can be utilized, but these steps-recommendations for an instructor - provide a general structure for how to lead a case-based discussion:

Give students full time to read and think about the case. If the case is long, assign it as homework with a set of questions for students to consider.

Introduce the case briefly and provide some guidelines for how to approach it. Clarify how you want students to think about the case.

Create groups and monitor them to make sure everyone is involved.

Have groups present their solutions/reasoning.

Ask questions for clarification and to move discussion to another level.

Synthesize issues raised. Be sure to bring the various strands of the discussion back together at the end.[5]

Case studies can be used in any discipline when instructors want students to explore how material they have learned applies to real world situations. This method can be effective teaching tool in course of English for professional purpose. It is possible to present cases as video- or audio material, as well as in reading. Depending on the complexity of material and the students 'level of English an instructor may duplicate the content.

Cases come in many formats ranging from simple comprehension questions (e.g.: Who are the characters of the case? Where do the events occur? What does every participant do?) to general or detailed description of the case with accompanying data to analyze. Whether to use a simple scenario-type case or a complex detailed one depends on your course objectives.

A major advantage of teaching with case studies is that the students are actively engaged in figuring out the principles by abstracting from the examples.

List of references:

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