

Case Method as an Important Aspect of the Modern Educational Process

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Abstract—Case-method is a system that allows describing a specific real situation compiled in a certain format and aimed at teaching students to analyze different types of information and group it, at obtaining skills to pose a problem and develop possible solutions to it in accordance with the conditions. Case learning technology is learning through actions aimed at solving the problem. The case-method essence is that the knowledge mastering and the skills formation occurs due to vigorous students' independent activity, such as deal with conflict, resulting a deeper and more accurate understanding of the problem posed and the mastery of professional knowledge, skills and abilities. That in turn allows in a competitive format to easily grasping the essence of the problem and finding ways to solve it.

Keywords—case method, education process, methodology

I. INTRODUCTION

Russian education system has shifted towards the Federal State Educational Standards. This involves the introduction of a competence-based approach, which determines the results-based orientation of professional education. In terms of the competence-based approach implementation the problem-situational training using case studies is one of the forms of effective training technologies. The introduction of case studies in the practice of Russian education is currently a very urgent task.

The fast-evolving process of IT penetration in modern society poses the urgent question of introducing innovations both in the general education process and in the higher education system. [1]

The amount of the studied information is constantly increasing; the requirements for the specialists' qualifications of both narrow and wide focus of training are increasing. Today it is not enough for a specialist to have knowledge and skills in a narrow aspect of his specialty, it is necessary to use new technologies of his practical professional activity. It is necessary to be able to competently operate with his knowledge,

analytical indicators, and most importantly, he possesses a high degree of logical thinking, which in turn would allow him: [2]

- solving problems of any level of complexity;
- solving the problems of the novel;
- self-educating constantly and to be interested and able for professional reorientation [3].

Career guidance is a scientifically justified system of social and pedagogical measures to provide young people with personality-oriented assistance in identifying and developing abilities and aptitudes, professional and cognitive interests in choosing a profession, as well as the formation of demand and readiness for work in conditions of market's high competitiveness, multiple forms of ownership and entrepreneurship.

It is implemented through the educational process, extracurricular work and campus activity with students. The career guidance is designed to ease the particular specialty choice.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

During the study, we conduct an experiment. Two groups of students were taken and given the task: to master an unknown specialty, one group had to do this by means of a case method; the other group was offered the usual handouts in the form of booklets, books and video material.

At the end of the experiment, we analyzed the obtained information, concerning the proposed specialty. It was revealed that students who mastered the specialty using the case method were 57% more aware of it than the students who were offered handouts.

It should be noted that a variation of the case-study method is the method of analyzing cases and casuses (lat. Casus is a tangled or unusual case). This is the most appropriate interactive technology for short-term learning, because it is

aimed more at developing new psychological qualities and skills than at mastering knowledge, this method allows students participating in the experiment to learn a new specialty with little difficulty and high interest in a short time. [4]

Thus, the case method includes materials prepared for students and detailed instructions for their use in the educational process.

The most common types of cases are practical cases. This kind of cases reflects the most approximate situation. The purpose of any case focused on the educational process is to teach students how to apply the theoretical knowledge that he can in practice in the reality. [5]

III. PROBLEM STATEMENT

This study is addressed to both school teachers involved in career guidance activities and teachers in further and higher education.

The experience of case methods (method of analyzing the situation), as well as the method of board games, based on the manipulation of a relatively small set of objects that can be completely placed on the table or in the hands of the players, have been studied.

It is worth noting that these two methods joint use in order to create and conduct career guidance games can lead to easier and more complete understanding of the students proposed for the development of specialties.

This technique is designed to assist not only school teachers, but also elementary school teachers in presenting material about different specialties, by adding elementary actions. Speaking about the development of any specialty, it is important to understand that it is important for students to see all its aspects.

IV. RELEVANCE OF RESEARCH

The relevance of the research is to justify the gaming and analytical method implementation in working with the primary vocational education, secondary vocational and higher education contingent.

V. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to provide methodological assistance to practicing teachers in conducting career guidance activities.

The peculiarity and novelty of this work involve precisely analyzing the combination of the existing progressive teaching methods, which ultimately allow obtaining a synergistic effect from this technique use.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study appears to be a professional guide for teachers. The game method implementation into training is important for personal development. In the game process there is living through the experience situation. The participant of the game is involved in the competitive process and search for the right answer while being active.

As experience proves, such situations allow approving oneself not only to brilliant but also to low-performing students. The experience of the game method effective implementation is used in learning foreign languages, since the perception of new information is easier. [6–8]

The game form of education provides the following. Development: mental and volitional activity, attention, memory, cognitive activity; formation: positive motivation, ability to work on the result, general educational skills; education: tolerance, respect for the interlocutor, the opponent.

Speaking of the training method, known as the case-method (Case study), the method of analyzing situations, in this instance, the main focus is on the development of analytical work, because the main problem of the case-method is optimization, which is an integral part of many specialties.

This method is used not only in educational organizations of different levels, but also in operating leading enterprises. It means that this method is a practice-oriented. [9]

Mastering the method of combining the game and the analytic allows forming and developing the understanding of specialty's aspects by means of elementary actions in students.

Also this study can serve as the basis for carrying out activities in different areas of training, which will lead to a deeper understanding of the specialty and professional erudition of students.

Procedure for constituting the case.

The basis of the case constructing is problems, relevance and need to find solutions to these problems in a particular activity. Initially, the case-method was applied in jurisprudence, where real cases were taken from legal practice, and students demonstrated an individual approach in problem solving. Thus, the case method includes specially prepared teaching materials and a special technology for using these materials in the educational process.

This method includes the main stages:

- a case developed by a teacher and taken from the practice;
- the review of the students' cases (discussion in subgroups);
- development of specific solutions to the case;;
- discussion of the proposed solution together with the teacher, and the discussion process is sometimes more important than the decision itself.

Considering case technology in the widest aspect, the teacher's purpose is to teach the student: the case study solution does not incapacitate student in the ways of implementation, which should only adhere to a certain (minimal) plan.

International practices

It is known that "case-technology" has been successfully practiced abroad for about 100 years. Two classical case-study schools, Harvard (American) and Manchester (European), coexist abroad since the advent of this technology.

Considering the Harvard features, it is worth noting that the purpose of the "case method" is to learn how to find the only

correct solution, a Manchester feature is the versatility of the final result. [10, 11] It is also necessary to say that the volume of American cases is considered to be larger as the text of the case occupies 20-25 pages, plus 8-10 pages of illustrations. European cases, on the contrary, are considered more compact and 1.5-2 times shorter. It should be noted that during the existence of the case technology, its main ideas were identified:

- case technology does not designed to gain knowledge in the exact sciences, but in those areas where the truth is relative, meaning there is no unambiguous answer to the question, but there are several alternative options according to the degree of reliability;
- the purpose of teaching in the method under consideration immediately deviates from the classical scheme and aims at obtaining not the only truth, but all of its variants, and transferring them into to their problem zone;
- the focus of education is not aimed at mastering the finished product in the form of knowledge, but at comprehending it, at the creative process of the student and teacher. [12] This is the fundamental difference between case technology and traditionalist methods – a democratic approach to the process in order to obtain knowledge, student has the right to have his own opinion and to advocate their views in the process of discussing problems with other students and teachers;
- the eventual result of the case technology application is not only knowledge, but also skills and abilities of professional activity;
- the “case method” technology is fairly simple.

The specific situation model is developed according to certain rules. This situation can easily be encountered in real life or at work, and reflects the complex knowledge and practical skills that players need to receive in the final result. This model is a text document from one to several dozen pages, which is called a “case.” [13]

The proposed case is preliminary introduced to the students, using accumulated lecture course materials and other possible sources of information. After this, the content is discussed. The teacher acts as a moderator, at the moment, he generates questions, fixes the answers, supports the discussion, in other words hi acts as the curator of the joint creative process.

The inalienable advantage of this method, apart from the acquiring of knowledge and the formation of practical skills, is the development of students’ value system, professional and life positions, some professional attitude and world outlook [14]. Classical traditional learning stereotypes, characterized by bare and emotionless material presentation, has been overpassed. There are emotions, competition and even creative struggle, so well-organized discussion of the case resembles a game management duel [15].

VII. CONCLUSION

It is important to emphasize that today in the education system the process of introducing new technologies is actively undergoing.

By new technologies we consider learning-oriented strategies that allow one mastering not only certain knowledge, but also acquiring skills, which aggravates the methodological work of the educational process. We can say that this is not a completely traditional educational process. In this case, these are innovations in the educational process, which are becoming increasingly common in the system of higher education [16].

The case method, in its modern form, has its origins in the 1870s at the Harvard Law School, and in business education the first references to this teaching method appeared in the 1920s.

This technique was used by scientists, not businessmen, higher school teachers were faced with a lack of tools for teaching students, and lectures and textbooks were not enough for the training of competent specialist in their field. [17]

Interviews and workshops with leading entrepreneurs, top managers, became a textbooks’ countertype, as well as the use of detailed reports written from their words about how they solved a particular situation, as well as factors affecting their activities. The era of the business situations analytics, which had a huge role in the training future managers system in business schools, began precisely with this. [18, 19]

So, “case” is a description of a specific situation or incident in any field of activity: social, economic, medical, etc. Usually, a case is not only a description, but some problem or contradiction based on specific facts.

Accordingly, solving a case means analyzing a specific problem and finding the best way to solve it. There are the signs of specific specialties that are most often encountered with case technology:

- A doctor solves case studies every time he makes a diagnosis and prescribes a treatment.
- The lawyer solves the case, delving into the depth of the case and offering the client an optimal solution.
- The manager solves the case throughout its activities: what product to launch, where to sell it, how to attract customers, which suppliers and partners to choose.

It was not until fairly recently that the method of solving cases has gained high popularity in education, becoming one of the most effective technologies in the educational system.

This method has several advantages compared with traditional teaching methods, so it is worth noting the main differences:

- Practical orientation. The case method allows applying theoretical knowledge in practical problems solution. Such an approach compensates exclusively academic education and gives a broader view of business and processes, rather than lectures at a university or practice in a narrow area of work.
- Interactive format. The case method provides a more efficient learning of the material due to the high emotional involvement and active participation of trainees. Participants are totally immersed in the situation: the case has a main character, in whose place the team puts themselves and solves the problem on its behalf. The

emphasis in training does not put on mastering ready-made knowledge, but on its development.

- Specific skills. The case method allows developing and constantly improving “soft skills” that are not taught at the university, but which turn out to be extremely necessary in specific activities. Joint analysis of life situations is a universal way of learning, therefore analogs for solving case studies can be found even in antiquity. For example, the Spartan youths discussed the battlefield situations with their mentors, and the debating on the “cases” with their students was the favorite method of Socrates. [20]

Pedagogical practice has not solved the problem, considering the age characteristics of students and the characteristics of leading educational and professional activities. There are no studies devoted to the use of teaching methods specific to the further education system. [21–23] Nevertheless, the new Federal State Educational Standard of further education provide the wide use of active and interactive, including situational, teaching methods (case method).

In conclusion, it should be noted that the case method application is aimed at performing several functions:

- training;
- educational;
- organizational and research.

In practice, these functions are often used separately from each other; in the process of using cases, their complementarity is observed. The case-study method is a kind of combination of other methods, each of which has its own educational tasks and a role in the whole process.[24]

Thus, this study had the following tasks:

1. To study and summarize the main forms introduced in the scientific literature, methods and the role of case technologies in the educational process.
2. Determine the content of the “case method” concept and identify the most common form.
3. Experimentally prove the effectiveness of mastering the specialty by using the considered methods.

Based on experimental studies, it can be concluded that the “case method” technique is effective.

The accelerated social development is a key social change influencing the situation in the field of education. As a result, the higher school must train specialists for the realities of life, which the school itself does not know exactly. In today's fast-paced world, an increase in the volume of knowledge is no longer a sign of an increase in the level of education. The success of the educational system consists in an integrated approach, i.e., student-centered education [25]. And the case method, as proved by the experiment conducted in the course of the research, is the first and very significant step towards development in this direction.

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