

GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND THEIR ROLE IN THE TEACHING PROCESS IN HIGH SCHOOL SEMINARS

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Аннотация. Данная статья посвящена вопросу групповых дискуссий в образовательном процессе на примере образовательного процесса в вузе. Авторы статьи считают дискуссию одним из наиболее продуктивных способов ведения семинара. Также в статье приводятся различные примеры дискуссионных занятий, и авторы рассуждают о возможных причинах неудач при их проведении.

Ключевые слова: дискуссия, вуз, работа в группах, образовательный процесс.

Abstract. This article is dedicated to the question of group discussions in the teaching process in high schools. The authors of the article believe that discussion is one of the most productive methods of a seminar. Also there are some examples of discussion lessons types in the article, and the authors argue about possible reasons of bad results in discussion seminars.

Keywords: discussion, high school, group work, teaching process.

The contemporary teaching process in high schools alongside with different educational strategies involves significant expansion of students' educational activity. This agenda is particularly relevant today, as the educational process should be hold like communication, interaction, exchange of opinions between students or between students and a tutor.

Today the process of education in many high schools is organized with the help of group, interactive methods of training, which is discussion, role-playing, and simulation game. The educational discussion is the most common method. Its main task is to identify the existing diversity of participants views on any problem and, if necessary, to perform their comprehensive analysis.

According to M.V. Klarin discussion is a method of debate and resolution of controversial issues [1, c. 117]. Currently, it is one of the most widespread forms of educational activity that

stimulates the initiative of students and reflexive thinking. In contrast to the debate being an exchange of opinions, discussion is a debate-dispute, some conflict of opinions. Discussion should be an equal debate between tutors and students concerning questions of different nature.

In our opinion, the discussion should be a leading method of training in the learning process of disciplines where there may be ambiguity in the explanation of phenomena.

It is clear that for better assimilation of knowledge, it is necessary to discuss it with somebody. L.S. Vygotsky, S.L. Rubinstein and many other researchers proved that intellectual growth is a product of both internal and external, or social processes. They promoted the opinion that a higher level of thinking arises from relationships expressed through a dialogue between people. M.V. Klarin writes that when generated and debated together, people start thinking differently, far superior than if doing the same individually. In groups and in private conversations, they consider problems from different angles, agree or argue, monitor differences, resolve them and weigh the alternatives [1, c. 86].

According to E.N. Korneeva the main types of discussion are free discussions, focused discussions, the council of experts, debate on professional and life incidents, metaplan and brainstorming [2].

Each participant of a *free discussion* takes the floor when his or her opinion is ready to be expressed, and he or she is encouraged to share the thoughts with others. When these two conditions are present, a mature performance may be performed. A distinctive feature of this form of discussion work is the lack of strict regulation of work time, the number of speakers and their performances.

Focused discussions are most often held on political, economic, scientific, social, ethno-cultural, religious and other topics. In high schools students choose speakers in advance, prepare for their performance, select the material for it, think over the form of performance. The overall success of focused discussion largely depends on properly prepared speakers. The tutor also has to encourage the rest of the group to active support. This type of discussion allows to form a panoramic view or consciousness among students, critical thinking and contributes to the development of personal citizenship.

Any *council of experts* is aimed to work out a union decision. Here a tutor has to prepare a decision draft. During the discussion on this draft the students are divided into two groups according to disagreement with opinions. This type of discussions can take place at high school seminars, round tables during scientific conferences, symposia.

During *debates on professional and life incidents*, a tutor creates problem situations, borrowed from professional practice not yet available to students. Students are required to provide a full analysis of the situation and make an appropriate decision. The advantage of this type is that real practice really can help in decision-making.

While having a *metaplan* a tutor suggests writing briefly on the special cards the number of questions that are thought to be profitable for discussion. The discussion is held on the question that had scored the most.

The organization of *brainstorming* can be represented by the following steps such as formulation of the problem, formation of an expert group, training intellectual warm-up, actual “brain storm”, evaluation and selection of results, and their synthesis.

As for the results of discussion – it can be successful or not. Our teaching experience has proved that sometimes tutors, being afraid to lose group management during a lively and chaotic discussion, turn the lesson into a boring superintendence. However, they should encourage a self-organization.

We think that holding discussions as a part of seminars helps to break the ice and achieve better understanding with students. In case of unsuccessful discussion a teacher should not quit, but practice the skill further.

V.A. Slastenin claims that studies on the use of discussion in different training environments have shown that it is inferior to the direct presentation in terms of information transfer effectiveness, but highly effective for remembering information, creative understanding of the studied material and the formation of value orientations [3, c. 102].

It should be noted that the method of discussion provides the development of spirituality and formation of morality. Discussion is one of the most difficult options for interactive seminars. Successful discussion is always based on preliminary students’ work. The topic chosen for discussion should be interesting and relevant for students. What is worth noting is that the emotional state of a tutor is directly reflected onto the behavior of students. That is way discussion is thought to be one of the most important forms of education that contributes to the development of the child's personality.

Discussion requires the student to mobilize all skills, encourages the development and deepening of new knowledge, expands horizons and makes one master a whole range of communication skills. In General, the discussion can be held in other classes, training activities, as part of them. For example, the method of discussion, along with role-playing games, may precede the method of projects or be part of the project work. Any kind of discussion can be used in higher education.

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