BG Pulse Journal USA
ISSN:1947-2536 http://www.bgpulseusa.com/index.php/bg

DISCUSSION METHODS IN TEACHING THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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doi:https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23855241

Abstract. This article examines the role and significance of discussion methods in teaching the Russian language to university students. Particular attention is paid to the pedagogical potential of educational discussions, debates, round-table discussions, brainstorming, and problem-based learning activities. The article highlights the importance of discussion methods in developing students' communicative competence, critical thinking, argumentation skills, and independent speech production. Practical recommendations and examples of implementing discussion technologies in Russian language classes are also presented.

Keywords: Russian language teaching, university students, discussion methods, interactive learning, communicative competence, educational discussion, debates, critical thinking, speaking skills, language education.

Introduction. In the context of contemporary higher education, improving the effectiveness of language instruction has become one of the important objectives of educational development. The modern approach to teaching Russian requires not only the acquisition of grammatical knowledge and vocabulary but also the development of students' ability to use the language effectively in academic, professional, and everyday communication.

One of the main challenges in teaching Russian to students is overcoming the language barrier and creating opportunities for meaningful communication. Traditional teaching methods, which are often focused primarily on explaining theoretical material and completing reproductive exercises, do not always provide sufficient opportunities for independent speech production.

In this regard, discussion methods are becoming increasingly important as an effective means of organizing interactive language learning. They encourage students to express their opinions, exchange information, defend their positions, analyze different perspectives, and participate in constructive dialogue.

The relevance of this research is determined by the need to improve students' communicative competence through interactive educational technologies and to identify effective methodological approaches to developing their oral communication skills in Russian.

The purpose of this article is to examine the theoretical and practical aspects of using discussion methods in teaching Russian to university students and to identify their educational potential in developing communicative competence.

The methodological framework of the research is based on communicative, activity-based, and learner-centered approaches to language teaching.

The research employed the following methods: analysis and generalization of scientific and methodological literature, comparative analysis, pedagogical observation, systematization of discussion techniques, and methodological interpretation of interactive teaching practices.

Particular attention was paid to identifying the educational potential of discussion methods and determining their role in developing students' speaking skills, critical thinking, and communicative competence.

Discussion methods constitute an important component of interactive language education. They involve the purposeful organization of students' communicative activities through the exchange of opinions, consideration of problematic issues, comparison of different viewpoints, and collective decision-making.

In the process of teaching Russian, discussion methods perform several important functions:

- Communicative function – develops the ability to engage in dialogue, ask questions, and maintain conversations.
- Cognitive function – broadens students' knowledge and contributes to a deeper understanding of various topics.
- Developmental function – improves logical and critical thinking.
- Motivational function – increases students' interest in learning Russian.
- Educational function – develops respect for others' opinions, communication culture, and tolerance.

An important advantage of discussion methods is their ability to integrate different types of speech activities: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. For example, before discussing a particular issue, students may read a short text, identify its main ideas, formulate their own opinions, and then present them during a group discussion.

Educational discussion. Educational discussion is one of the most effective techniques for developing students' oral communication skills. It involves the collective consideration of a problematic issue, allowing students to express their opinions and support them with relevant arguments.

For example, during a lesson on the topic "The Role of Education in Modern Society", students may discuss the following questions:

- Why is education important in modern society?
- Can professional success be achieved without higher education?
- What qualities should a modern specialist possess?
- How do digital technologies influence the educational process?

During the discussion, students use expressions such as "In my opinion...", "I believe that...", "I agree with this statement because...", and "I would like to express a different point of view".

This technique develops coherent speech, enriches students' active vocabulary, and improves their ability to formulate logical statements.

Debates. Debates are an organized form of discussion in which participants defend opposing positions on a particular issue.

For example, the topic "Artificial Intelligence in Education: Opportunities or Threats?" can be used to organize a debate.

Students are divided into two groups. One group presents arguments in favor of using artificial intelligence in education, while the other identifies possible risks and limitations.

During the activity, students develop the ability to formulate arguments, provide examples, analyze opposing viewpoints, and defend their positions.

Round-table discussions. The round-table method involves the collective discussion of an актуal issue, allowing all participants to express their opinions and contribute to the discussion.

For example, students can discuss the topic "The Russian Language as a Means of Intercultural Communication".

This activity helps students develop public speaking skills, confidence, and the ability to communicate effectively in academic and professional contexts.

Brainstorming. Brainstorming is a technique aimed at generating ideas and finding creative solutions to a particular problem.

For example, students may discuss the question "How Can We Make Learning Russian More Effective and Interesting?"

Possible suggestions include watching Russian-language films, reading literature, participating in language clubs, communicating with native speakers, and using digital educational platforms.

The method encourages initiative, creativity, and independent thinking.

Problem-based discussions. Problem-based discussions involve analyzing a specific situation and identifying possible solutions.

For example: "An international student experiences difficulties communicating with teachers and classmates because of insufficient knowledge of Russian. What recommendations could help overcome these difficulties?"

Students analyze the situation, identify communication problems, and suggest practical solutions.

This method develops analytical thinking and prepares students to use Russian in real-life situations.

Table 1.

Didactic potential of discussion methods

Discussion method	Main objective	Skills developed
Educational discussion	Exchange of opinions	Expressing personal viewpoints
Debates	Defending a position	Argumentation and persuasion
Round-table discussion	Collective consideration of issues	Public speaking
Brainstorming	Generating ideas	Creative thinking
Problem-based discussion	Finding solutions	Analytical and communicative skills

The effectiveness of discussion-based learning depends on the appropriate organization of the educational process. The following stages can be distinguished:

Stage 1. Preparatory stage. The teacher selects the topic, formulates the discussion question, prepares learning materials, and introduces the necessary vocabulary.

Stage 2. Motivational stage. A problematic situation is presented to stimulate students' interest and encourage them to express their initial opinions.

Stage 3. Communicative stage. Students participate in discussions, exchange opinions, present arguments, ask questions, and respond to opposing viewpoints.

Stage 4. Analytical stage. The teacher and students analyze the discussion, paying attention to vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, logical consistency, and the coherence of statements.

The results are summarized, difficulties are identified, and students assess their participation and communication performance.

The implementation of these stages ensures the systematic development of students' communicative abilities.

The selection of discussion methods should correspond to students' levels of Russian language proficiency.

For beginner-level students, it is advisable to use short questions, prepared expressions, and structured dialogues. Intermediate-level students can participate in group discussions and problem-solving activities, while advanced students can engage in debates and discussions on professional and academic topics.

Professionally oriented discussions are particularly valuable in higher education.

For students majoring in education, the following topic can be suggested: "What Qualities Should a Modern Teacher Possess?"

For psychology students: "The Influence of Social Networks on the Psychological Well-Being of Young People".

For economics students: "Advantages and Risks of the Digital Economy".

Such topics enable students to combine language learning with the development of professional knowledge.

Table 2.

Examples of practical discussion activities

Lesson topic	Problematic question	Practical activity
Modern education	Can online learning replace traditional education?	Present arguments for and against
Young people and social media	Do social networks have a positive or negative influence?	Organize a group discussion
Artificial intelligence	Does AI promote independent thinking?	Conduct debates
Professional development	What qualities are essential for a modern specialist?	Organize a round-table discussion
Reading culture	Can electronic books replace printed books?	Defend a personal viewpoint

An important condition for the successful application of discussion methods is the creation of a positive psychological environment. Teachers should encourage students' initiative, respect different opinions, and avoid interrupting communication because of minor language mistakes.

Language correction should be conducted tactfully, without reducing students' willingness to participate. Particular attention should be paid to the ability to communicate meaningfully, formulate arguments, and interact effectively with other participants.

Discussion methods should also be combined with traditional teaching techniques. Such integration provides a balance between theoretical knowledge and practical language activities.

Conclusion. Discussion methods play an important role in improving the effectiveness of Russian language teaching in higher education institutions. Their systematic application creates opportunities for active communication, independent thinking, and meaningful interaction among students.

Educational discussions, debates, round-table discussions, brainstorming, and problem-based activities contribute to the development of communicative competence, critical thinking, argumentation skills, and independent speech production.

The effectiveness of these methods depends on the relevance of discussion topics, students' language proficiency, systematic methodological organization, and the creation of a supportive educational environment.

Therefore, the integration of discussion methods into Russian language instruction should be considered an important pedagogical strategy for developing students' communicative competence and preparing them for effective academic and professional communication.

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