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APPLYING CASE STUDY METHOD WHILE DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH

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Annotation. One of the most innovative methods of learning/teaching a foreign language is case study method. It integrates such skills as one's ability to analyse, think critically, search for solutions and make decisions. The article deals with concepts of professional English development and case analysis. It summarizes the findings of the research into students' attitude towards case study as a method of developing one's professional English communication. The research highlights the problems and peculiarities of applying the method. It has revealed that students have a positive attitude towards assignments involving case study method. They believe that such assignments help develop one's communication skills of the professional English language.

Keywords: case study, Professional English, communication skills

INTRODUCTION

Due to continuous changes as well as travelling, economic, political and social cooperation the significance of a foreign language as a medium for rendering information grew significantly. The description of language teaching policy states that practical aims of teaching/learning foreign languages require the entire teaching process to be of communication nature. Learners are supposed to gain skills of independent work, be able to apply their skills and knowledge in newly encountered situations, use dictionaries, reference books, up-to-date technologies[1]. European Commission document[2] states that linguistic competences are a part of general abilities, which ensure opportunities of each citizen's employment, education and personal improvement. These abilities should be regularly renewed and replenished. When teaching foreign languages, we develop learners' social and cognitive performance and creativity. The publication "Treasury of European Languages"[3] claims that a variety of languages is the main feature of European identity and, thus, EU institutions in Brussels and European Council promote learning of foreign languages.

[1] Kalbų mokymo politikos aprašas: kalbos, įvairovė, pilietiškumas:Lietuva 2004-2006. Švietimo aprūpinimo centras.
[2] First European Survey on Language Competences (2012). European Commission. Education and Training.
[3] Europos kalbų lobynas. Daugiakalbystės politikos ir praktikos tendencijos Europoje (2012). Britų Taryba.

Today each specialist has to be able to communicate appropriately and speak fluently. When communicating with people, he/she is supposed to take into account persuasiveness, culture and style of his/her language. According to Daft[4], inefficient communication can cause the problems such as lack of innovations, poor performance, failure in the case of a problem, and threats when dealing with it. Employers, who have faced communication problems, try to improve their communication skills, correct their own mistakes and eliminate drawbacks. For this reason not only existing methodologies are used but also new ones are designed. Currently case study method, already acknowledged as the alternative to traditional forms of learning and teaching, is gaining more popularity[5].

Case study, a learning method, was first used at Harvard University's Business school during the first decades of the 20th century in the process of business administration. It was based on descriptions of real decisions made in the real world, which were introduced to learners as cases. Learning/teaching based on this method focuses on cooperative learning principles grounded in the mechanism of self-regulation as well as using cases in conceptual, analytical, and presentation learning dimensions. It develops the main eight transferred abilities, namely analytical thinking, decision-making, application, oral communication, time-planning, interpersonal/social, creative, written communication. Lithuanian (L.Kaminskienė. R.Česynienė, M. Laužikas, N. Saugėnienė, etc.) and foreign (S.P. Nair, P, Range, N.L Bolsunovskaya, M.H.Haley, etc.) scientists have shared their experience of using case study method when learning/teaching foreign languages.

Case study method is successfully used for professional English training in Mykolas Romeris University. Students are introduced to the method frequently applied in foreign universities. Video examples of simulation cases analysed in courts are provided and discussed. Moreover, students get acquainted with the requirements posed for court process participants. Later real cases are selected, i.e. cases which have free access on the internet or simulation cases included in specialized publications. Students are divided into groups and analyse the material of the selected case in detail. It is proceeded by acting of the selected case.

Research aim is to identify the importance of case study method when developing one's communication competence of the professional English language.

[4] Daft, R. L.(2008). New Era of Management.Vanderbilt University.
[5] Erskine, J. A.,et al (2001). Learning with Cases. The University of Western Ontario, London, Canada.

Research objectives are as follows: a) to introduce the analysis of professional English competence development concept b) highlight the impact of case study method on the development of this linguistic competence and c) to find out students' opinion about the use of case study method in training of professional English.

Research methods: analysis of scientific literature was conducted in order to theoretically base the concepts of case study and communication competence; written survey, which helped identify what impact case study method makes on the development of students' communicative competence in their professional English language. During practice students selected summaries of case studies, analysed them, identified the problems and searched for different ways to deal with them.

REVIEW OF SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE

Communication competence is the ability to use languages according to EU, school and learners' needs and possibilities. Communication competence is a complicated psychological, pedagogical, social, physiological process enabling the individual to communicate, accept and render information as well as to become a full-fledged member of information society, culture, business, manufacturing[6].

The word communication (Latin *communico*) means to communicate appropriately in writing and orally. The ability to communicate is a motivated internal activity of a learner, his/her regular immediate pursuit when dealing with problems emerging during communication[7].

Jucevičienė[8] claims that the environment where a student learns determines success of a certain student. Students adopt the information rendered passively but actively establish their knowledge and skills and develop their competences. The environment which could support and encourage student's motivation, build his/her self-confidence and ensure a deeper attitude towards studies. Students should be provided with a possibility to tackle real problems and feel responsibility for their decisions. In addition, there should be a possibility for reflection, which could enable the individual to think about why he/she acts in a certain way and even gains

[6] Beckisheva, T. G.(2014). Case Study as an Active Method of Teaching Business English. Procedia. Social and Behavioral Sciences, p. 292-295.
[7] Šernas, V. (2006). Komunikacinės kompetencijos, jų ugdymo(si) kai kurios strateginės ir taktinės problemos. Santalka. T. 14, Nr. 4.
[8] Jucevičienė, P., et al (2010). Universiteto edukacinė galia; atsakas XXI amžiaus iššūkiams. Kaunas, Technologija, p. 212-213.

information about his/her efficient activity. When reflecting one's experience, a possibility to amend one's erroneous understanding and fill in the gaps of knowledge is provided. Reflective practice is success of high quality learning. In the opinion of Zuzevičiūtė et al.[9], certain skills, for instance, the ability to improve one's learning, is a significant component of final learning outcomes.

According to Jucevičienė[10], learning is supposed to happen in social context – when listening to and accepting different attitudes, comparing them and replenishing one's understanding. If learning by communication, students think critically, analyse and evaluate the situation differently, and, thus, choose a reasonable position, i.e. conduct analysis of their activity.

When developing linguistic competence, one's motivation, values, and considerations about career are important. Motivation includes person's demands, desires, interests, attitudes, beliefs. When developing a linguistic competence, personal values and characteristics are also important. If a student treats learning of a foreign language as a value, he/she will seek it.

Different learning/teaching methods can develop a competence. This article deals with case study method. This innovative learning method provides conditions to create a favourable and attractive learning environment for learners, when theoretical and practical knowledge as well as experience gained are closely related while new knowing is established on this basis and it is verified in the imitated or even real practice. In such a way real practice analysis is relevant, i.e. learning from existent and newly gained knowledge by constructing and reconstructing it.

The use of case study method when learning professional English positively affects development of active and passive linguistic skills as it is an integrated method. It develops other skills and competences as well, for instance, problem solution, presentation-making, team work. Stake[11] emphasizes that case study requires analytical skills. By providing students with a possibility to make decisions, their knowledge in the area under discussion is enriched. They are encouraged to understand the complexity of the situation.

Case study method is regarded as the method which develops one's communication competence. It is a method based on active participation, cooperation, and democratic

[9] Zuzevičiūtė, V., Teresevičienė, M. (2007). Universitetinės studijos mokymosi visą gyvenimą perspektyvoje. Monografija. Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas, Kaunas.
[10] Jucevičienė, P., et al (2010). Universiteto edukacinė galia; atsakas XXI amžiaus iššūkiams. Kaunas, Technologija, p. 212-213.
[11] Stake, R.E. (2006). Multiple Case Study Analysis. The Guilford Press, New York, London.

discussion within a group. Discussion, if applied appropriately, encourages acquisition of knowledge, abilities and approaches. There is no unanimous method of case study. There are plenty of them to be applied in different situations for dealing with various problems.

SUMMARIZING RESEARCH FINDINGS

The research was conducted in 2016/2017 during autumn term. 74 students of Law and Pre-Trial Process study programme participated in the research. Respondents were allowed to choose a colleague to work in pair. The pairs selected the topics for case study. Firstly they had to analyse the case provided, think of solutions and provide recommendations. Three weeks were given for the assignment. Students had to present their assignment in public: introduce their group friends with the case analysed, provide options for solutions. Respondents could individually select the forms of visual aids. The teacher encouraged a creative approach towards the assignment and quest for brave solutions, emphasizing that there are no incorrect answers. The main attention was paid to a foreign language. During the course students learn legal English terms, using all types of linguistic activity, namely reading, writing, speaking and listening. Research participants were warned that primarily they were evaluated for argument-based solutions, well-made presentation in English using legal terminology as well as application of public speech rules and preparation of visual aids.

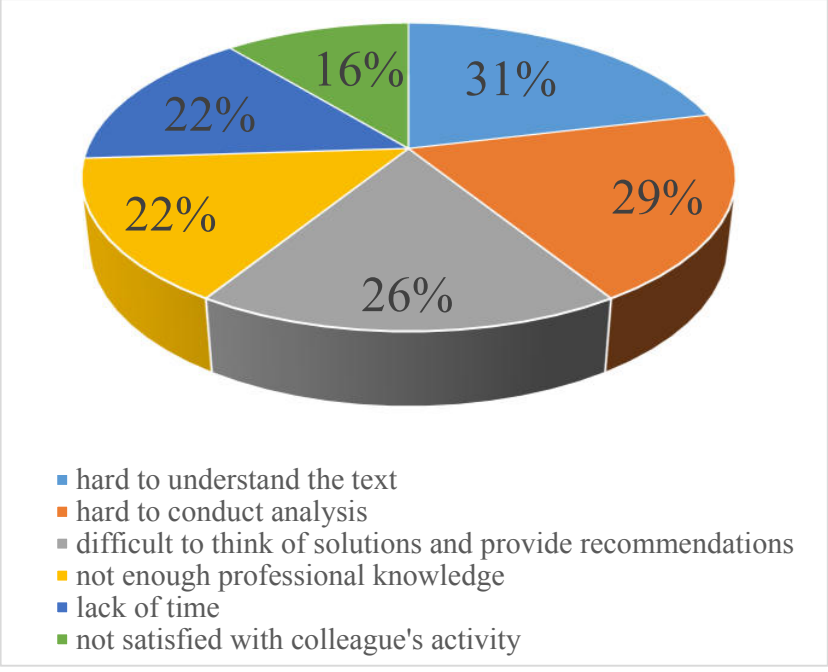


Figure 1. Difficulties when conducting case study analysis

In the first figure one can see what difficulties respondents faced by fulfilling the assignment. They were provided statements so that it could be easier to summarize their experience.

31 % of the respondents agreed with the statements saying "*It was hard to understand the text*" whereas 29 % claimed it was hard to conduct analysis. 26 % of the respondents selected the statement "*It was difficult to think of solutions and provide recommendations*" while 22 % said they did not have enough professional knowledge. The same number of participants (i.e. 22 %) complained about the lack of time for the assignment while 16 % were not satisfied with their colleague's activity.

It was of crucial importance to find out if the assignment was relevant for students. Distribution of answers to the question "*Was the assignment useful and relevant?*" is displayed in figure 2.

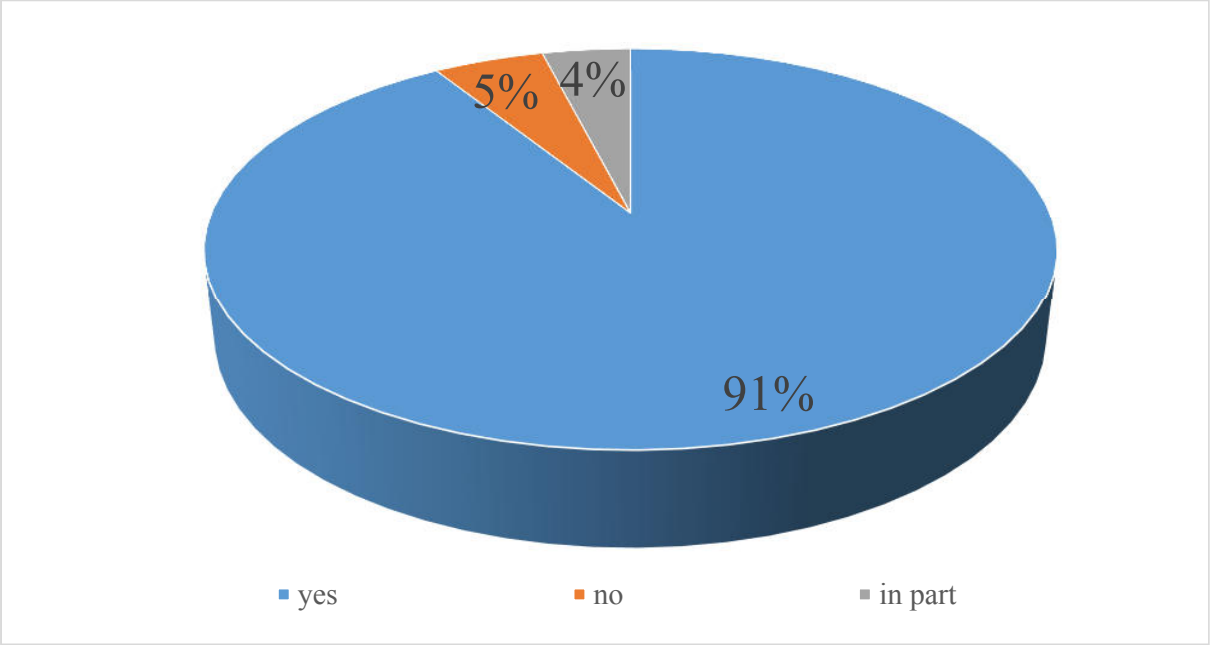


Figure 2. Was the assignment useful and relevant ?

91% of all respondents answered in favour of the task. 5 % said "*No*" whereas 4 % chose the option "*in part*". Research findings have shown students' understanding that assignment analysis, search for solutions, use of professional terminology as well as the ability to work by cooperating and giving presentations is efficient.

CONCLUSION

Theoretical and practical provisions of the research revealed that competence of professional English is of crucial importance to future law enforcement officer's successful career and professional development. Case study method helps develop professional English competence, requires analytical skills, provides numerous solutions and teaches students think positively. Furthermore, it improves knowledge in the area of professional training and helps perceive complexity of the situation. Students learn describe the existing situation, identify problems, provide arguments and make decisions. They are also able to discuss advantages and disadvantages of selected decisions and draw conclusions.

The research has shown that case study is one of the most efficient methods, which helps establish skills of professional English in an easier and more rapid way.

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ATVEJO ANALIZĖS METODO PANAUDOJIMAS TOBULINANT PROFESINĖS ANGLŲ KALBOS KOMUNIKACINĘ KOMPETENCIJĄ

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Santrauka

Vienas naujausių šiuolaikinio užsienio kalbų mokymo(si) metodų yra atvejo analizės metodas. Jį naudojant į studijų procesą integruojami tokie įgūdžiai kaip gebėjimas analizuoti, kritiškai mąstyti, ieškoti sprendimų ir juos priimti.

Taikant atvejo analizės metodą besimokantiesiems suteikiama galimybė lavinti visus kalbinius įgūdžius gyvenimiškoje situacijoje. Atvejo analizė padeda ugdyti profesinės anglų kalbos kompetenciją, reikalauja analitinių gebėjimų, teikia daugybę sprendimų, moko studentus mąstyti pozityviai, gerina žinias profesinio mokymo srityje, padeda suvokti situacijos sudėtingumą. Studentai išmoksta apibūdinti esamą padėtį, identifikuoti problemas, argumentuoti pasirinkimus, daryti sprendimus, aptarti jų privalumus ir trūkumus bei pateikti išvadas.

Straipsnyje pateikiamos profesinės anglų kalbos ugdymo ir atvejo analizės sampratos. Mokslinių darbų analizė parodė, kad profesinės anglų kalbos kompetencija yra labai svarbi būsimojo teisėsaugos pareigūno sėkmingai karjerai ir profesiniam tobulėjimui.

Respondentų apklausa (raštu) išaiškino studentų nuomonę apie atvejo analizės metodą, taikomą ugdant profesinės anglų kalbos komunikacinę kompetenciją. Apibendrinti apklausos rezultatai nustatė šio metodo naudojimo problemas ir pranašumus. Studentai teigiamai vertina atvejo analizės užduotis. Jų įsitikinimu šios užduotys padeda tobulinti komunikavimo profesine anglų kalba gebėjimus..

Atliktas tyrimas parodė, kad studentams atvejo analizės metodas yra vienas efektyviausių metodų, padedantis lengviau ir sparčiau tobulinti ir įtvirtinti profesinės anglų kalbos komunikacinius įgūdžius.

Pagrindinės sąvokos*:* profesinė kalba, mokymosi strategija, mokymo principai

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