

Seminars as a Tool of Students' Formation of Cognitive Activity Motivation

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Abstract: There is a didactic model of effective opportunities' implementation of problem seminars (discussion-seminar, research-seminar) in the motivation formation of students' cognitive activity. As a psychological basis the dynamic structure of the activity and its motivational basis are taken. The possibilities of motivation methods are revealed, structured in accordance with the basis of motivational activities, upgrades, reinforcement and development of students' cognitive activity motivation.

Key words: Seminar, motivation of cognitive activity, motivation techniques, stimulating mechanism of cognitive activity, reinforcement

INTRODUCTION

Formation of the student's personality including its motivational sphere, takes place in the normal course of activity (S.L. Rubinstein, A.N. Leontiev, V.V. Davydov, A.K. Markov, M.I. Makhmutov, etc.). Therefore, students need to be involved in this activity for the formation of their cognitive activity motivation. One of the basic forms of university studies organization by definition, involving students' active cognitive activity is seminar. In this connection, it is the question of theoretical and practical interest of didactic tools pursue seminars' opportunities in the formation of students' cognitive activity motivation.

USE CONDITION OF THE SEMINARS' MOTIVATIONAL POTENTIAL

To identify the state of seminars' practice opportunities in the formation of students' motivation of cognitive activity we conducted observations of classes (40 classes) on a particular program as well as a survey of tutors (15 tutors) and students of first and second courses (106 people) of law faculty studying towards bachelor "Pedagogical Education" with two training profiles-teacher of law and foreign language (English).

Analysis of the material showed that the majority of seminars (80%) teachers insufficiently realize their motivational potential. This is reflected in the formal relation to the preparatory phase of the seminar-seminar assignments are given without motivating rationale excluding the requirements of the principles of professional orientation training, individualization and

differentiation. In addition, tutors often function as comptroller and auditor general at the seminars and not as the organizer of the cognitive activity of students. Thus, only 15% of attended tutors resorted to unconventional forms of class organization. Thus, where it has occurred, playing forms has been used. Techniques of creating problematic situations, the organization of cognitive activities for their permission have been used only at 10% of classes. Why do we have such a situation? Research has shown that some of the tutors (45%) explain this situation by their habit ("as I was taught in my time the same way conduct seminars"), others (24%) see the reason for the lack of didactic and methodological literature for the classes in the high school, others emphasize that they do not possess the technology to ensure motivational seminars.

Data derived from the questionnaire of students are interesting. They note that the seminars "held uninteresting" (49.0%), "does not contribute enhancing of mental activity" (58.8%), "not encouraging creative activity" (68.0%). Also, it is alarmingly that students' initiatives in seminars are discouraged (40.3%). As we can see in practice seminars perform insufficiency of the encouraging function they are constructed in such a way that it is not stimulating an independency and creative activity of students. The main form of seminars remains as before, the traditional preparation of students on the issues identified in advance, followed by performances at the seminar and tutor's value judgments. Students prepare for seminars in order to "not get bad mark" (72%) "to keep up with course mates" (15%) and only 11.3% of the students indicated such factors as "the desire to deepen and expand their knowledge".

Thus, the study of the implementation practice of seminar classes in high school leads to the conclusion that firstly, training and seminars conducted in the traditional way with the result that the potential of seminars cannot be adequately realized on the formation of cognitive activity motivation; secondly, the important reason for this condition is the unwillingness of the majority of teachers to meet the challenges for the implementation of motivating function at seminars on the use of the opportunities for problem-based learning and its variants; third, analysis of the practice leads to the conclusion about the lack of didactic and methodological work on seminar classes in high school.

THE STATUS OF THE SEMINAR CLASSES IN LEARNING THEORY

Problem of seminars as learning forms in high school is presented in a few studies. Among other major publications can be called a monograph by S.I. Zinoviev, V.M. Vergasova and A.A. Verbitsky in which seminars issues devoted to particular parts of books. In foreign pedagogic the revitalization of seminars devoted to the works (Wain, 1993; Jessup, 2009).

Speaking of seminars goals S.I. Zinoviev notes that they help to strengthen interest in science and researches, develop creative independence of students, promote the production of practical skills. In addition while the seminar classes, students acquire scientific apparatus, acquire skills of registration of scientific papers, master the art of oral and written presentation of the material, the ability to argue and defend positions and develop scientific conclusions. The research emphasizes that the seminars as an independent form, closely related to the lectures, however "in their educational opportunities seminars are much richer than lectures, although, dependent on the lectures as a fundamental principle of scientific knowledge". However we note that the research considers the seminars of traditional positions within existing at that moment in history explanatory and illustrative (or as it is written now-traditional) learning.

From the standpoint of the principle of problem seminars considered in the following's research V.M. Vergasova, A.A. Verbitskogo, N.A. Bakshaevoy, etc. For example, A.A. Verbitsky and N.A. Bakshaeva rightly point out the main shortcomings of traditional seminars-performing, reproducing the activity of students, the small number of actively working students in the seminar, low motivation and many others and offer to introduce new types of seminars to remove them based on the implementation of the problem principles and the context. Among the base he distinguishes three types

of seminars: discussion-seminar; research-seminar; debate-seminar. These types of seminars initially suggested another, comparatively higher to traditional seminars, activity level and motivation of students. Taking this into account we consider educational opportunities or discussion-seminars and research seminars more detailed in the formation of students' motivation of cognitive activity.

DISCUSSION-SEMINAR AND ITS IMPACT ON THE MOTIVATION OF COGNITIVE ACTIVITY

First of all, we emphasize that the seminars really has great pedagogical possibilities but the realization of these opportunities requires special effort on the part of the teacher as an organizer of seminars. What accounts for the pedagogical possibility of seminars? First of all, the fact that the seminars require active independent learners in the process of preparation (work on primary sources and other literature, formalization, etc.) and while the performing (the report, message, asking questions, evaluative judgments etc). Inherent in the seminars by definition more active position of students creates objective and subjective possibilities for realization of the seminar methods, forms and ways of revitalizing the students' activity, organizing discussions, micro researches, debates and other forms of active interaction of students with each other and with the tutor.

Within the framework of our research objectives we conducted a search of didactic methods and ways of strengthening the motivating function of discussion-seminars. This question arose in connection with the revealed facts, according to which even at the discussion-seminars, not all students participate in active learning activities. Thus, our observations showed that about 30% of students are inactive at these seminars. This means that tutors need to think specifically the question of how to ensure the activity of the majority of students in discussion-seminars. From our point of view while preparation and holding of discussion-seminars we should provide the motivational basis for the activities of students. Since, the seminar includes two organizational stages-preliminary and basic so far it is necessary to ensure the students' activities on each of them. It should be borne in mind that the activities at each stage are in its holistic, complete nature so all the elements of the dynamic activities structure require attention.

The main objective of the preliminary phase is to ensure each student's willingness to participate actively on the main stage of the discussion-seminar (in a particular role). How to achieve this? Based on the

requirements set forth in modern psychology and pedagogy (Yepifanova, 2000; Shakurov, 1996) we orient tutors to the use of such funds which would disclose the significance (personal, professional and others) of upcoming activities for each student. The system of proposed recommendations and techniques relied on the structure of incentive mechanism of activity which is a holistic system of objective and subjective factors which interaction motivates activity of the subject. The essence of the incentive mechanism is that the requirements for the individual become motivating factor of quality activities only if they (requirements) undergo a series of "filters". Such filters R.H. Shakurov identifies five: the personal factor that determines the quality requirements (validity, accuracy, clarity, credibility, competence, etc.); evaluation factor (the presence of clear criteria and reliable measuring instruments); individual personality traits; production ecology (real-material, sanitation-hygienic learning environment, quality of the organization of cognitive activity, socio-psychological climate); features of performing activity (the content, object, means, the result, the degree of tension, etc.) (Shakurov, 1996).

In accordance with this the motivational provision of the preparatory phase of discussion-seminar included the following sequence of instructions:

- A clear, understandable to students, objectives' statement of upcoming seminar and its preliminary phase. Highlighting of the conditions under which the preliminary phase will be successful
- Presenting of questions and problems, both general and individual, taking into account the interests and abilities of students
- Instructing students in order to create their belief in the possibility and the high probability of achieving the goal to prepare reports, etc.
- Provide a list of basic and additional literature which should be available to students, e.g., it should be in the library collection and in sufficient quantities
- Limit the number of major issues and reduce them to 3-4 questions
- Assist in independent work with literature: familiarization with the rules of the literature search, analysis, selection of the key, fixing an abstract-plan, reference-charts, etc.

In the second main stage of discussion-seminar, motivational basis of cognitive activity of students is enhanced by methods, adequate to the dynamic structure of the activities and structure of the incentive mechanism. For example, there was used such methods of motivation

as vivid, emotional opening remarks; disclosure of professional, personal importance of the forthcoming activity; connection with the life experience; the creation of the problem situation; statement of unexpected, interesting questions for students; motivation to critical analysis and generalization; providing the opportunity to speak on the subject under discussion; welcome constructive confrontation; encouragement, praise; clear evaluation criteria and others.

Techniques composition inducement effects are not exhaustive and cannot probably exhausted all the necessary and possible set of them. It's not a set of techniques and methods of motivation it is known that often one and the same device can perform different functions to motivate, educate, train, manage and others. And at the same time can serve several functions. On the other hand, hardly ever possible to determine the full composition of the respective methods of motivation, since so many factors that depends on the composition. More importantly here, namely the fact that the tutor should keep in mind that his/her actions to implement the motivational potential of seminars should more or less correspond to the dynamic structure of the activity and its motivational basis.

RESEARCH-SEMINAR AND ITS IMPACT ON THE COGNITIVE ACTIVITY MOTIVATION

Research-seminar as a form assumes that students are engaged in formalization of problem abstract at the preliminary phase which differs in that it is the result of research work of students for the problem solution. Tasks can have both theoretical and practical character. Students' actions are that they independently solve problems with an objective to learn new concepts and methods of intelligent action. Thus, the basic techniques of teaching are highlighted: setting learning tasks, goal-setting; basic techniques and exercises: independent research of creative type; independent acquisition of various facts; analysis, formulation of problems and their solutions.

While solving the problem the students must carry out the same search steps which makes the scientists: to consider the issue; build a suggestion; outline the way to check its validity; consider setting the expected experience to conduct their own experience; record the results of observation; formulate conclusions to compare them with the original hypothesize to report on the progress and results of experience to prove the correctness of that conclusion. It is obvious that in these methods of training activities are motivation enhancing of cognitive activity opportunities of research-seminar.

Motivating function of the research-seminar is enhanced by forms features of implementation (research tasks of different types, drawing algorithms, conducting independent and group researches, independent development and production of experiments and others). The specific of the research method at the seminar is primarily in the fact that it allows you to activate the self-action practice of students. At the base of such actions is an activity caused by internal motivation, consciousness of the aim, the interest in the process and results of operations. While independent practical actions, sense of responsibility arises and becomes stronger, the desire for self-examination there is need appears for introspection.

As research activity requires appropriate training, the level of students' preparedness, so far research-seminars were conducted, firstly, after the students have gained some experience of independent work of reproductive and creative nature and secondly to prepare for this type of seminars have been allotted not 3-4 days (as is done traditionally) but much longer time (up to several weeks or more). Valuable attitude toward the stated problem was stimulated by a special selection and creation of practically important situations (actually took place in one's life), demonstrating their personal values for each student, their professional, academic and social growth.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the study shows that the active forms of seminars have considerable motivational potential compared to traditional. But it does not give the desired effect without any special research on its identification and enhancement. We propose a didactic model of effective implementation of problem seminars opportunities (discussion-seminar, research-seminar) in the formation of students' cognitive activity motivation. As a psychological basis the dynamic structure of the activity and its motivational basis are taken. The possibilities of methods of motivation are revealed, structured in accordance with the basis of motivational activities, upgrades, reinforcement and development of students' cognitive activity motivation.

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