Peculiarities of Using Game Activities for Raising Students’ Socio-Cultural Competence

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to highlight the importance of enhancing socio-cultural competence in foreign language teaching and to highlight the benefits of using play activities in the classroom to develop social and cultural competence. As an object of scientific work, game activities aimed at developing the socio-cultural competence used in the lesson are indicated. In order to uncover the essence of the topic, a group was selected for the practice and results were obtained through inspection and observation processes.

Keywords

Competence, Social Cultural Competence, Component, Spiritual Values, Strategy, Staff, Cognitive Sphere, Game Activities.
Introduction

Nowadays, in our country the radical improvement of the system of training of young generation to foreign languages, introduction of advanced methods of teaching with the use of modern pedagogical and information-communication technologies, training of specialists who can speak these languages freely. As a result, much work is being done to create conditions and opportunities for them to achieve the benefits of world civilization and the wider use of world information resources, to promote international cooperation and dialogue. One of the most important factors in teaching foreign languages is to increase the knowledge and skills, as well as to develop their competence. Language, in turn, contributes to the development of society. That is, it is a topic of discussion, which includes a great deal of content. Every position pronounced in a particular language contains culturally specific meaning which can be easily overlooked unless one is familiar with the culture. Foreign language learning also means learning the foreign culture because one cannot separate one from the other. There are many professional competencies but one of the most important competences for communication is Socio-Cultural Competence. These reinforce the illusion of involvement in the authentic speech environment and provide the required quality of speech skills that are being formed. Formation of lingual, socio-cultural and spiritual values of a different ethnic reality is the basic content of speech. The formation of socio-cultural competence constitutes a whole lesson, and its developments of which depends on the techniques, quizzes and activity games carried out in the course of the lesson. The more interesting the games aimed at increasing socio-cultural competence, the more actively they are played by students. Efficiency also sometimes depends on activity.

These questions can be discussed in the research:

a. What is the role of social-cultural competence in language teaching?

b. How game activities can be used for development of socio-cultural competence?

c. What is the importance of game-activities aimed at developing socio-cultural competence and what are its practical consequences?

The subject of the research is students studying in this education system, the purpose of which is to select some of the game methods used in the process of teaching a foreign language and highlight their importance in the development of socio-cultural competence. The results show that language is closely related to culture, and if students are given a lot of information about the culture, origin and social status of the language they are learning
through topics based on the enrichment of social and cultural knowledge in the language, teachers can further develop their socio-cultural competencies in the learning process.

The Role of Play Activities in the Development of Socio-cultural Competence

In terms of the internationalization of all aspects of social life the importance of Socio-cultural competence for socialization of modern students and their preparation for intercultural communication at the level is very significant.

Socio-cultural competence is a body of knowledge about the country whose language students study, as well as the ability to use national-cultural component of the language for the purpose of communication (Roman, 2005). According to (Hudson: 2001) the Socio-cultural competence refers to the speaker's ability and knowledge structure of how to express messages appropriately within the overall social and cultural context of communication, in accordance with the pragmatic factors related to variation in language use. The importance of socio-cultural competence is highlighted as a factor that provides the younger generation with the necessary communication process for their activities, and the game method is of great importance in the measures aimed at forming social and cultural competence in students. It also not only engages students in the learning process through play activities, but also provides them with knowledge and skills.

The game is a specially organized activity requiring tension of emotional and mental forces. A game always involves making a decision - what to do, what can I say ... The desire to solve these issues exacerbates the intensive work of the game participants. Same occurs when using the role-playing method when learning a foreign language. In this kind of activity rich learning opportunities lurk. The fact that through the game there is a development of the cognitive sphere of the child: perception, memory, imaginative thinking, the development of speech, is proved, but this position is equally can also be attributed to the formation of speech skills and skills in teaching a foreign language, because mastering the speech skills of a foreign language is similar to mastering the speech skills of a native language.

Kramsch emphasizes the importance of creating an authentic context for communication in class. "By failing to take advantage of the full range of contextual possibilities, the teachers often unwittingly constrained classroom discourse to superficial, linguistic exchanges". Kramsch criticizes the teacher whose class she visited for requiring the students to present the outcomes of their preceding discussion, which was rather unnatural. The goal of this activity should be the discussion itself, not a subsequent summary. Kramsch believes that the teacher should have let the students perform the
discussion and also stopped concentrating on correcting grammatical mistakes. By discussing the issue students can practice the communicative style appropriate for the given language – typical expression, turn taking, etc. instead of giving a summary of the discussion.

The quality of teaching depends on how it is conducted and different games, techniques, assignments and handouts are used depending on the teacher’s skill. Game methods aimed at developing this type of socio-cultural competence will play an important role in the development of socio-cultural competence of students that are future generation. The quality and outcomes of education depend on how the lesson is organized and conducted, which requires excellent socio-cultural competence in English teachers. In addition, the various game methods used by the teacher in the teaching process not only increase the student's interest in science, but also form in them socio-cultural competence.

Methodology

A. Research Design

The importance of subjects as well as English in the formation of socio-cultural competence in teaching process, the importance of various techniques and games used in teaching these subjects is great. Different games are a fun process and activity that helps to consolidate knowledge on a topic as well as develop students’ ability to apply information in their minds and practice. The most effective games that serve to promote socio-cultural perfection are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of activity-games</th>
<th>Suggested by…</th>
<th>Game organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Constructs</td>
<td>Kramsch</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Play</td>
<td>Kramsch</td>
<td>Group work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behind the looking Glass</td>
<td>Kramsch</td>
<td>Independent task (turn by turn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructing Cultural Context</td>
<td>Kramsch</td>
<td>Whole group discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Card Game</td>
<td>Jennifer Schumm</td>
<td>More than two small groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Assimilators and Cultoons</td>
<td>Henrichsen</td>
<td>Individual or group discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two societies</td>
<td>Henrichsen</td>
<td>Two groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folklore</td>
<td></td>
<td>Individual task or group discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Forehead</td>
<td>Yuldashova Nargiza</td>
<td>Two groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truth or Lie or You are Liar</td>
<td>Yuldashova Nargiza</td>
<td>Two groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Game is a specially organized activity that requires the strain of emotional and mental forces, which includes decision-making, self-confidence, working with the community, and developing speaking skills. The desire to address these issues enhances the intensive
work of game participants. The development of a student’s cognitive range through play: cognition, memory, imaginative thinking, speech development has been proven, but this position may also apply to the formation of speech ability and skills. Mastering a foreign language’s speaking ability in a foreign language teaching is similar to mastering a native speaker’s speaking ability. When it comes to the essence of the games, the focus on the development of socio-cultural competence is high, they are: Personal Constructs, Role Play, Behind the looking Glass, Constructing Cultural Context, A Card Game, Cultural Assimilators and Cultoons, Two societies, Folklore, Large Forehead and, Truth or Lie or You are Liar. These kind of games have proven to be effective in the research process, helping to rise the socio-cultural well-being of English language teachers in the future. The quality of teaching depends on how it is conducted, and different games, techniques, assignments, and handouts are used depending on the teacher’s skill.

B. Participants

The population of this study consisted of Uzbek students studying in the first semester of the 1st year and in the second semester of the 1st year at the Tashkent Institute of Irrigation and Agricultural Mechanization Engineers. Including two semesters, the course was aimed at determining the development of socio-cultural perfection of the participants in the subject "English" from the beginning to the end of the semester. These students were candidates for English teachers and they learned English as a foreign language. Therefore, we selected only 2 groups for analysis. Special play activities were conducted with a group of students to elaborate on the socio-cultural capabilities of the English Language Teaching specialties, but in Group 2, these play methods were not used. For the development of socio-cultural competence through using of games in the lesson of "English" was held 10 types of special game tasks with the group (group 111 studying in the field of “Economy”).

C. Instruments

During the study we used our traditional teaching methods: theoretical and empirical. We applied theoretical analysis of the literature, analysis of basic concepts and research terms of study, construction of experimental hypotheses as theoretical methods. Empirical methods are intended for creating, collecting and organizing empirical material. These include questioning, the method of measurement and control, pedagogical experiment.

D. Data Collection and Analysis

In the course of the lesson, it was planned to involve all students in science by holding such games, as well as to increase their socio-cultural knowledge and develop their socio-
cultural competence. Therefore, after each game lesson, students' feedback on the game was heard. Different game techniques were used in each lesson. A questionnaire was distributed to determine the effectiveness of these games, and all students participated in the survey.

Figure 1 Effectiveness of games for development of Socio-cultural competence

Through this research, the reciprocal quality of the types of games that motivate them to be active and increase their socio-cultural perfection was identified. And the final questionnaire poll was conducted. In this survey, the following characters were asked to
rate their views on the types of games: “very effective game”, “very interesting game”, “I gained a lot of knowledge”, “game that develops socio-cultural competence” (Figure 1).

The distribution of the number of participants explaining the collected data and the ones involved in the analysis are given in the Table 1.

| Table 1 Participants on the Socio-cultural competence’s games. |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Participants      | Names of games    |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| Group №111        | Personal Constructs | Role Play      | Behind the looking Glass | Constructing Cultural Context | A Card Game | Assimilators & Cultoons | Folklore | Large Forehead | Two societies | Truth or Lie |
| Participants      | 9                 | 13               | 13               | 13               | 14               | 13               | 12               | 14               | 14               | 14               |

There were 14 students in the group, sometimes some students of them did not attend classes. To determine the activeness of the game method, we use the following formula.

\[ S \times 100 / P = R \]

- \( P = \) An amount equal to 100%
- \( R = \) result to be obtained
- \( S = \) quantity to be determined.

14=100%
13=?

\[ 13 \times 100 / 14 = 92.8571 \]

We can conclude as using the game method, 93% of the student group participated actively and effectively.

![Pie-chart 1 Actions on the games of Socio-cultural competence](http://www.webology.org)
Results

In addition to the importance of subjects on the teaching foreign language that the importance of various techniques and games used in the teaching of these subjects is high. Different games are an interesting process and activity that helps to strengthen the knowledge of the subject, as well as to develop the skills of applying information in the minds and practices of students. As for the socio-cultural abilities of the participants, their knowledge and skills about the country-wide sciences, language learning level and culture of the country where the language is studied were formed through games and the importance of games in developing socio-cultural competence was examined.

It was also our important task to obtain the previous and subsequent results of the group we practiced and to compare it with the results of the other group, that is, the group in which the game methods were not used. The aim is to reveal the effectiveness of the proposed play methods for the development of socio-cultural competence and to highlight the need for more use of these types of play methods in the teaching process. We also decided to examine the extent to which the socio-cultural competence of the group 111 and other groups undergoing the experiment had changed using the following methods: Survey, Experiment, and Observations. Prior to the completion of the Developing Intercultural Competition, both groups were given a test with the same type of questions, as well as oral question-and-answer interviews. Conducting these two types of tests: written and oral, is also a necessity of socio-cultural competence. The written test reveals the extent to which students have mastered socio-cultural knowledge, while the oral test shows the extent to which students have developed communication skills. As noted above, socio-cultural competence is the most important part of this dialogue, as is the ability to have all kinds of information related to language, to have an understanding of the state society and culture in which the language is studied. means. Communication is one of the most important factors for future English teachers, which is why it is important to increase their socio-cultural competence in the training and education of future English teachers. Related disciplines play an important role in the development of socio-cultural competence, and the tasks and games used in the teaching of this type of subject also contribute to the development of teacher-specific competencies. We can see this from the results of the following two groups (see figure2).
Figure 2. Beginning and final results of analyses of between games used group and not used group

As you can see from the graphs above, it is more effective to teach in a classroom using a variety of unusual play methods than in a simple classroom. In the context of the topic, we can increase the students’ socio-cultural competence through the use of game methods aimed at building socio-cultural competence. The games proposed to develop the socio-cultural competence used in Group 111 as an experiment have indeed shown their effectiveness. In other words, we can conclude that a variety of unusual and interesting, goal-oriented games increase students' interest in science, encourage them to be active, increase their knowledge, develop skills, and contribute to the acquisition of skills, and develops socio-cultural competence as well as the professional competence of future generation.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this research, we explored the specifics of formation of the social and cultural competence through teaching English, as well as discussing the challenges that need to be addressed. As a result, there is a need to develop a methodological manual for English teachers that enriched with topics based on the formation of socio-cultural competence
and containing examples of various interesting activities and games. This is a great achievement not only for linguistic activities, but also for methodological research.

Thus, socio-cultural competence of generation is considered as the possession of and the ability to apply a set of multicultural knowledge, skills and qualities in the process of intercultural communication in the specific conditions of life with the connection of society and tolerance towards people of other nationalities. So, developed socio-cultural competence will help a person avoid difficulties communicating with different nations. After all, often difficulties are differences in cultural concepts about any phenomena and subjects. So in the process of teaching a foreign language, the teacher develops a personality student in such a way that at the end of the course a new ready social type of personality. We conclude from the results that language is closely related to culture and if students are given a lot of information about the culture, origin and social status of the language they are learning through subjects based on the enrichment of social and cultural knowledge in the language teaching process and we can develop their socio-cultural competence.

The development of students' socio-cultural abilities through interactive games has been proven experimentally that teaching through play methods increases knowledge, improves memory, develops speech, encourages imaginative thinking, encourages free behavior in the community and society, and enhances a logical approach, teaches flexibility in a variety of situations, and most importantly, develops socio-cultural competence. When it comes to the essence of the game, great attention is paid to the development of socio-cultural competence, which are: personal constructions, role-playing, behind glasses, building a cultural context, card games, cultural assimilators and cultures, Two Societies, folklore, big forehead and truth or lie or you are a liar. These types of games have proven to be effective in the research process, helping to increase the socio-cultural well-being of future stuff. The quality of teaching depends on how it is conducted and different games, techniques, assignments and handouts are used depending on the teacher’s skill. Game methods aimed at developing this type of socio-cultural competence will play an important role in the development of students’ socio-cultural competence.

References


