

**ACTIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES:
THE DEMAND OF TODAY'S EDUCATION**

Moroz O. L.

*Candidate of Philological Sciences,
Associate professor of the English language department for Deck Officers
Kherson State Maritime Academy
Kherson, Ukraine*

Having chosen the way of European and world integration, Ukraine realizes and acknowledges the need of considerable alterations in all spheres of life including the educational one. It has been recognized that the traditional educational approach of the previous century cannot provide the required quality of professional education anymore as the nature of the professional activity itself has changed greatly and nowadays it doesn't show as much stability as a few decades ago. Thus, the dynamic changes of the job marketplace cause the need for the development and adjustment of the content, the methods and the approaches in the sphere of professional education. We need to concentrate on the ability of the future specialists to thrive and succeed in the competitive environment of both national and international employment. The majority of scientists and researchers (A. Holovenkin, V. Kremen, N. Nychkalo, S. Sysoieva and others) nowadays agree on the need of the drastic modernization of the educational system in general and the sphere of professional education in particular because they don't meet the current requirements and can't provide the efficient training and preparation for the future professional activity.

The global aim of today's education is the development of key competences which will enable the graduates to effectively perform their professional duties, to easily adjust to new trends and changes in their sphere, to readily develop and grow both as professionals and personalities. That's why the Ukrainian system of education is now transiting to the new format of state educational standards which are grounded on the basic principles of the competency-based approach [2, p. 196].

Another yet not the less important principle to be realized while modernizing the Ukrainian system of higher education and integrating it into European context is the implementation of continuous education which provides the possibilities for the constant deepening of academic and professional training, achieving of the integrity and succession of the educational process, transforming the education in the process that never finishes and lasts as long as person lives. Such type of education becomes

the objective demand of today's modern rapidly changing world and the essential component of the social and economic policies of the country [4, p. 22]. In the Framework of professional training development, adopted by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in July 2004, it is emphasized that the technological progress, vast implementation of science-based informational technologies enforce the intense quality promotion of professional training. In compliance with the requirements stipulated by the European Council to implement the competency-based approach we, as teachers, need to remember about the need to develop along with the professional competencies also some basic competencies such as the ability to speak a foreign language, the ability to work in a team, the ability to learn. These basic competencies will enable them to form and effectively use the mechanism of deliberate information search, analysis, transformation and usage for the achievement of specific practical purposes, to act independently and improve their knowledge, to master new skills and new technologies remaining flexible, up-to-date and competitive specialists.

The transition of humanity to the new mode of being, more complicated and unpredictable, necessitates the change in the type of thinking, demanding it to become creative, innovative and productive. As the President of The National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, V. Kremen states, we need to shift to the creative paradigm of education today thus rethinking the way educational establishments are acting and incorporate such educational technologies and methodologies that can stimulate students' creative research, will enable then to see the results and perspectives of the education [3, p. 6].

All the above mentioned needs and trends should also apply to the education and professional training of future seafarers which must be aimed not only at gaining of minimum required skills and competencies but at the provision of creative activity to enhance cadets' abilities of critical thinking and promote their intellectual development that will enable them to adapt and adequately react to the unpredictable and challenging situations and circumstances of their complicated professional environment. This means the need to search for and implement such new technologies and educational models which will make the process of continuous education in and outside the classroom possible, provide for the information access and effective interaction with all the participants of the educational process [1, p. 86]. That is why we strongly believe that promoting *active learning strategies* while developing communicative skills of future seafarers at different levels of education is the key to the effective and productive educational environment as it allows for the realization of the principle «From teaching to learning».

Active learning refers to a broad range of teaching strategies which actively engage students as participants in their learning with the course material through discussions, problem solving, case studies, role plays and other methods. It focuses on how students learn, not just on what they learn. Such strategies help to promote higher order thinking skills such as application of knowledge, analysis and synthesis, thus enabling students to apply and transfer knowledge better. Among the proved to be effective active learning strategies used in our practice there are some the most frequently used while developing communicative skills of future seafarers.

Blended learning as the means of integrating traditional classroom teaching and computer-based on-line learning proved to be an efficient approach as it meets today's students' interests who can't imagine their lives without modern gadgets and digital environment [5, p. 79] and in such a way increases their motivation. Plus, it enables independent solo process of finding and learning new information to be carried out at home and provides for the possibility to use classroom time for students' active engagement in collaborative interactive activities.

Case-study is widely used for critical analysis of incidents and accidents which still unfortunately happen at sea. Such technique usually starts with the detailed study of the facts, events, actions takes prior, while and after the analyzed accident. Then cadets are asked to interpret the received information, to make some assumptions on the reasons of the described actions and/or events, to decide who was guilty and justify that opinion. At this stage of analysis, cadets work in groups, sharing the ideas and trying to persuade the team-mates or developing new perspectives or visions of the situation based on what they hear.

Project-based learning enables students to use theoretical knowledge in the context of their future professional activity by means of analyzing the situation and facts, predicting all possible challenges and, finally, suggesting the action plan to be used for completing a specific professional task.

Inquiry based learning is about gaining new information and developing it into knowledge and skills by exploration and questioning. Here cadets have to seek for the information and knowledge themselves rather than being provided with it. The main idea of this approach is to stimulate and provoke cadets' curiosity on the item and then, by guiding them with the help of the chain of questions, give them the possibility to gain the knowledge by creating hypotheses, gathering material, developing more questions of their own and finding the answers.

No matter which of the strategies is preferred or how it is called, the most important thing is to make sure that all basic principles are followed when

the lesson is planned and conducted. Number one here, in our opinion, is the role of the teacher. As it was stated above active learning is about shifting from teaching to learning, so a teacher of the 21st century is not an expert or knowledge transmitter any more, but rather a facilitator and guide who arranges the process, prepares clues and accompanies students on their active way to knowledge. The key to success here is the ability to ask the right type of questions. That is another basic principle of active learning: the questions cannot be factual or close-ended (the ones that have one possible 100% correct answer). Instead it is necessary to become an expert at asking strategic questions, the open-ended ones (such that will also lead students to questions of their own). No less important is to give students the chance to investigate the problem, to consult different sources of information and then discuss their findings in groups and, in such a way, in collaboration, to come to agreement and create a meaningful professionally-related product. And, above all, it should be always kept in mind that the educational process must be student-centered, i.e. all the tasks, activities, technologies and methods a teacher might want to apply must be aimed at developing students' skills and competencies and meet their needs in terms of education and personal enhancement.

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