

**THE IMPORTANCE OF INDEPENDENT
STUDENTS' WORK IN THE PROCESS
OF GETTING HIGHER EDUCATION
IN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY**

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Nowadays graduating students should have not only academic knowledge but also ability to get knowledge and develop in their sphere. The so-called Bologna process, introduced by the European Union, aims to implement the GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services) agreement throughout Europe. According to the GATS agreement, all services, including first and foremost education, are to be strictly subject to the dictates of the free market. Thus one of the tasks of higher education is to teach students to work independently, gain and use the necessary knowledge. In the state standard of Russian education it is said that the quality of training future specialists must be obtained through the extension of quantity and quality of independent work.

It should be noticed that scientific knowledge is open-ended, versatile and it is constructed by the learner referring to his/her experience. Accordingly students should be offered independent practical training work using different objective information resources. Practically such kind of independent work can be identified as problem based learning which takes place through critical and creative thinking.

The effectiveness of independent work is defined through a number of conditions.

Firstly, from the first lessons students should be accustomed and taught to ap-

proach any task constructively and make up plans.

Secondly, this work should be well-organised. In other words, students ought to be given individual tasks connected with the subjects they are studying. The contents of these tasks must be modern, cognitive and interesting. Moreover, these tasks must systematize stored knowledge.

In addition, the tasks must be followed by questions for comprehension control, contributing to theory understanding and providing independent work. Constituent part of independent tasks is abstract work as it is one of the motives for independent material perception. As a rule, the number of lectures at the majority of universities is not enough for broad elucidation of topics connected with philosophy, history, literature and so on. Therefore a student having written an essay or a report independently gets certain knowledge. Preparation and defence of a report adds considerable number of marks to the rating of a student and can be taken into account at the exam. Besides the fulfilment of individual tasks is a good training for passing any exams.

Thirdly, students should be taught to look at problems analytically, argue and carry their points. This approach not only makes students think, but also orient them at tolerant attitude to other views and opinions, favours the forming of tolerance and "democratic personality".

Fourthly, students should be taught to analyse advantages and drawbacks of their work. The ability to see the merits and demerits of the solution is one of the abilities that should be constantly developed be-

cause it will help students to solve problem tasks in their future professional work.

It is important to note that individual students' work should be checked regularly as it helps to see the results and furthers the subsequent creative work. Lessons should be planned so that students could have the chance to demonstrate their individual work and discuss it. In some cases teachers might have hours for individual consultation for those students who need and want them.

Additionally, oral communication should occupy the main part of any lesson. If written work prevails over oral one, the process of teaching deteriorates. It goes without saying, that written work gives a certain idea about the level of students' knowledge, their ability to reason. But practice shows that sometimes students who have got quite good written work, turn out to be helpless when they have to do oral statements and presentations.

It should be said that computer program PowerPoint gives a great potential as a teaching tool at foreign language lessons. It helps to acquaint students with interesting information and serves as visual support while speaking teaching.

The use of PowerPoint at lessons has the following advantages:

- it combines various use of visual methods;
- it combines independent classroom with out-of-classroom activities;
- it helps to save study hours;
- it forms teacher-and-student computer competence;
- it develops students' creative abilities.

The practice of PowerPoint presentation helps students learn to make their pres-

entation focused on a particular type of audience, learn what information to include in the presentation, understand how to keep the audience interested, and learn how to deal with questions.

As students make their presentation, the teacher should assess their performance. The following criteria can be used for assessment:

- material structure;
- logicity and succession;
- adequacy of visual means;
- slide accordance with a stated problem;
- information novelty and originality;
- language accuracy;
- phonetic and intonation accuracy;
- ability to keep the audience interested;
- ability to deal with questions.

Systematical individual work makes for the development of logical thinking substantially. Furthermore, ability and habit of individual work will undoubtedly help students in their future professional activity.

A certain potential for the solution of educational problems has the introduction of computer-aided teaching, the use of the Internet. Its basic purpose is to make teaching and learning more efficient and productive. With the help of computer programs students can check their knowledge, do different exercises and communicate in a written form. With access to the Internet students can communicate with native speakers (or other language learners) all over the world, search through millions of files around the world and access authentic material that answer their personal and professional interests.

Using a computer program a teacher can easily notice the mistakes which a student does. On the top of that, the work with a computer provides the following opportunities, it can:

- give a student the ability to work in an individual way;
- give a chance to return to any task which was left or omitted and correct the answer;
- give several exercises in which a certain structure, rule is trained;
- provide a chance to involve every student of the class in a studying process;
- show the results of the work as soon as the task is done;
- give the possibility to organise a self-dependent work.

But in spite of all these advantages the role of a teacher in the educational process is still important. We should remember that a computer program, like any other tool used in teaching (e.g. authentic books, DVD and CD players, television, resource packs, computer classes where students do laboratory work, projectors, etc.), does not bring improvements in learning itself. Moreover, there is no any unique book or computer program that can be suitable for everyone. That is why a teacher must select programs which answer definite requirements and purposes.

To summarize aforesaid, it can be emphasised that independent work is a part and parcel of the study process. Therefore, it is important to remember basic didactic principles of its methodological background: education scientific character, systematic learning, accessibility of learning, aware and active learning, knowledge consolidation,

use of learning means, reflexive learning, creative and developing learning. Independent work helps to develop skills of applying theoretic knowledge in practice, train how to solve future problems and make decisions.

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SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL SELF-EDUCATION OF A FUTURE TEACHER

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The researches in the area of social ecology, psychology and pedagogic theory and practice show us that the main term of a rising generation training for the solution of modern social-ecological problems is an orientation of their future tutor to the problems of the interaction between the society and nature. In this connection a great need for his appropriate training arise. One way of such training is a social-ecological self-education. By this we mean the creation by a tutor the conditions for an independent acquiring knowledge in the area of the environment, forming needed in this case skills and abilities (self-reliant targeting and planning, self-organization, self-control, self-regulation, and self-correction), creative activity, not only within the process of self-education, but also in practical creative process in nature; development of emo-