Application of Problematic Situational Tasks Method at Russian as A Foreign Language Classes in Technical High School

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Abstract

The article discusses application of situational tasks method in teaching Russian as a foreign language course in technical high school. Being educational, situational task is formulated in terms and conditions student may face in future professional activity. The task is a problem solution which foreign students need to find by independent analysis and synthesis of necessary information and providing an answer in Russian. Particular emphasis is placed on the improvement of speaking skills. The method promotes vocabulary expansion, vigorous speech development, working out appropriate speech behavior in real communication. Solving problematic situational tasks students learn about peculiarities of implementation of technical discourse in engineering activity. Practical orientation of situational tasks involves solution of them by using obtained knowledge in different topics in practice. Topics are closely connected with acquiring qualification. Components included into a task, requirements and methodology of tasks development have been described as well as examples of such tasks provided.

Keywords: Russian as a foreign language, situational task, language development, language for specific purposes, technical discourse.

1. Introduction

Modern higher school is in the permanent state of redesigning and is a subject to endless changes. So it has to appeal to new forms and methods of teaching that would let achieve its objectives on training highly qualified graduates with developed competences mentioned in the state educational standards on main majors.

Educational process demands permanent improvement since priorities shifting and social values changes are going on. Independent learning activity and creative thinking as the key elements of education result are the main features of it. Both practitioners and theorists of
education started to look for the most effective forms and methods of teaching. Method of situational tasks could be classified as one of the most interesting and demanded. The development of active teaching methods, in particular, situational tasks, stems from the fact that today education has different goals. They are acquisition of knowledge by students as well as professionally oriented thinking, communication and creative skills development and training of personal vision on occurred problems.

- Situational tasks method as a systematic application of tasks aimed at solution of practicable situation that targeted at conscious acquisition by students of the content of studied subject and oriented at building necessary for future profession competences.
- Situational tasks encourage future specialists to activate mental activity and are aimed at self-determination of students who create new (heuristics) problem solution.
- Situational tasks let foreign students develop skills which are important for their professional, educational and vocational communication competences.

Teaching in technical higher school is becoming more practically oriented. Application of mentioned situations in higher school let imitate as real as possible the communication in the conditions of professional activity which may happen in real life of future graduates.

For a long time method of situational tasks was used only in teaching technical disciplines (Budarin, 2010; Verevkina, 2014; Vishnyakova, 2011). Nowadays we can notice the tendency of application the mentioned method in foreign languages teaching, in particular, Russian. That is why the goal of our research is to identify the essence and effectiveness of situational tasks method which is applied in the process of teaching in higher school. Also it is used to create a set of situational tasks which helps to build the main language, speech and communication competences at students of technical department studying Russian as a foreign language.

Research objectives:

1. to determine the content, peculiarities and place of situational tasks method in the system of teaching methods in modern higher school;
2. to determine the potential of situational tasks method application in teaching Russian as a foreign language.

The present article discusses the potential of situational tasks method application in teaching Russian as a foreign language course. The emphasis is put on practical orientation of situational tasks which let improve speaking skills in classroom conditions almost similar to real ones. In the process of solving a situational task students figure out peculiarities of technical discourse in professional activity.

2. Methodological procedures and theoretical base of the research

Two approaches lie at the core of the research. Person activity approach defines subjective position of a student in the process of learning. The development of personality undergoes through enrichment and transformation of subjective experience. Inclusive approach strives to the learning and transforming of pedagogical activity. Ideas of outcome-based approach in education are taken as foundation of selection and content of professional education.

Theoretical base of the research is made up of papers devoted to the development and application of situational tasks method in modern pedagogics (Budarin, 2010; Khalilova, 2012; Ovchinnikova, 2014; Verevkina, 2014; Zapevina, 2014; Zharavina, 2014; Zhuikov, 2014, and others), case method (Adonina, 2012; Fesenko, Fedyaeva & Bestsennaya, 2017; Leonhard, 2012; Passov, 2010, and others), in teaching foreign languages (Chernyshov, 2015; Glazyrina, 2014; Lah,
Situation tasks method in teaching Russian as a foreign language hasn’t been described in details. So, it is a matter of concern for further studying and description (Kirova & Melnik, 2019; Shtekhman & Melnik, 2018; Shtekhman & Usatuk, 2018; *Simulation methods in ...*, 2017).

In the process of the research methods such as analysis, synthesis, generalization (after studying scientific literature, regulations, educational standards of higher school, curricular documents), development of experimental situational tasks on topics of practical Russian as a foreign language course were used to solve the problem.

3. The main body

3.1 The method of educational situational tasks

In the scientific society the question of identifying the place of situational tasks is still being discussed. First of all, there are several names for the mentioned phenomenon in pedagogics. The method of situational tasks may be named as situational analysis (Volkova, 2014; Rozanova, 2013), particular situations analysis (Vishnyakova, 2011), method of solving particular professional situational tasks (Budarin, 2010), method of situational analysis (Sychev, Yakina & Kurnayeva, 2013), case method (Volkova, 2014), and case-study method (Adonina, 2012). There are examples of simultaneous use of these terms: situational task and case method (Savelyeva, 2013), situational task and case (Poddubnaya, 2015) etc. We believe that situational tasks method is a combination which joins peculiarities of active, interactive and problematic methods of teaching.

Situational task is a teaching method which includes a complex of conditions aimed at the solution of practically important situation with a goal to form components of education. Another definition may be the following. It is a type of an educational exercise imitating situations that may occur in real life.

The solution of situational tasks demands engaging of extra information that makes it effective. It promotes the development of creativity, speech and communication skills of students.

The value of situational tasks is in expanding students’ worldview, performing by them intensive cognitive activity in order to apply acquired competences and understand the essence of a task.

Situational tasks are oriented at activating the most universal ways of work with information. Experience has shown that peculiarity of situational task is in its clearly pronounced practical orientation. Still for its solution it is necessary to have particular subject knowledge. A compulsory element of a task is problematic question that should to be formulated in such a way that a student wants to find the answer and becomes aware of work method. In the process of situational task solution both an instructor and a student pursue the objectives. For a student it is finding a solution suitable for the given situation. For an instructor it is learning by a student of the work method and understanding of its essence.

The main goals of situational tasks application are:

– the development of all kinds of speech activity; and

– mastering communication skills.
3.2 Structure and components of situational task in Russian as a foreign language

In teaching Russian as a foreign language situational tasks method has some peculiarities. It deals with the structure of the task itself and also with the use of this peculiarity in teaching process. It is explained by the fact that the main goal of situational task is the development of communication skills and text formulation in studied language (even if the material of the task is professional terminology). That is why the professionally-oriented vocabulary isn’t used in the problems formulation (A1, A2, B1 level) or becomes secondary (B2, C1, C2) (State Standard in ..., 2009). In other words building of professional competence is not the goal of situational tasks method in teaching Russian as a foreign language. Still, in our opinion, situational tasks may become helpful in teaching professionally-oriented Russian as a foreign language in technical higher school.

The structure of the task could be the following (Zhuikova, 2014: 155):

1. Task name.

2. Personally relevant communication or speech (rarely profession addressed) question, addressed directly to each student. If the content of the question is professionally-oriented, to solve it will be necessary to engage speech and communication experience and skills. This is the most important condition of the formulation of the question in situational tasks in Russian as a foreign language.

3. Set of texts represented in different versions (borrowed from newspapers, mass media, documents, books, diagrams, audio and video materials, template for filling in, etc.). It is worth noticing that modern discursive practices are one of the richest sources of sociolinguistic material in teaching students, including technical major (Issers, 2015, The role of mass media in ..., 2017).

4. Text tasks (suggested material) solution consists of introduction, understanding, application, synthesis, situation evaluation that aimed at building communication skills and competence in general.

5. Final report. The final report after solution of a task is represented in the form of communication and/or text. Both processes are often performed within frames of one task. In this case all formulated goals are reached.

Thus, the logic of situational task is the following: introduction, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation (Ovchinnikova, 2014).

(1) Introduction (reproduction or finding exact elements of information).

(2) Understanding (learning the sense of presented material).

(3) Application (use of rules, concepts, principles, theories and ideas in new situations).

(4) Analysis (separation of information into compounds and trace of interconnections).

(5) Synthesis (generation of different ideas about a new and unique product or plan).

(6) Evaluation (evaluation of material importance or ideas based on definite criteria or standards).

The most important issue in the structure of situational task is the problem solving when a student becomes creative individual, who stands on his or her ground, finds solution of
some problems which all is important in the modern world. It is really important for situational task to be interesting for a student and trigs emotions. The tasks may be oriented on working out the skill of text formulation (both verbal and written), develop communication competence. Examples of situational tasks will be provided below.

3.3 Types of situational tasks

According to different researches, there are the following types of situational tasks.

1. On the content (Yusupova, 2010):
   - Problematic situation, which is supposed to state and solve a problem;
   - Evaluative situation, in which taken solutions need to be evaluated;
   - Illustrative situation, which could serve as an example in studying course or topic;
   - Situation-exercise, which teaches to solve tasks using analogy method.

2. On the way of representation:
   - Classical situation;
   - “real”;
   - Case;
   - Analysis of service documentation;
   - Following the instructions.

3. On the impact of main sources (Khalilova, 2012: 143):
   - Practical situations which reflect real life problems;
   - Educational situations, aimed at teaching;
   - Scientific and research situations targeted at performance of research activity.

4. On the subject of situation (Khalilova, 2012: 147):
   - Personalized situations where particular individuals take part;
   - Institutional situations are characterized by the participation of organizations;
   - Multi-subjective situations usually involve several acting subjects.

5. On the time needed to solve situation (Khalilova, 2012: 147):
   - Mini-situations. Usually it is about one or several pages and is supposed to be worked at the part of two-hours class;
   - Middle size situation usually takes 2 hours class;
   - Extended situation is up to several dozen pages and may be used at several practical classes.

6. On the use of appendix (Khalilova, 2012: 147):
   - Situations with appendixes (are supposed to form skills in calculations and analysis of statistic information),
   - Situations without appendixes.
7. On type of methodic part (Khalilova, 2012: 147):
   – Containing questions, which demand from a student to give answers to the questions as a solution;
   – Situational tasks which formulate target or challenge.
8. In praxeological sense problems an instructor faces with in everyday professional activity might be divided into (Budarin, 2010: 178):
   – Typical;
   – Non typical;
   – Creative;
   – Improvisational.
   The choice of particular situation type depends on peculiarities and kind of studied topic, goals of topic study, training level of a student and an instructor, requirement to illustrative material and/or technical facilities, computers, etc.

3.4 Criteria for formulation of situational task
   While selecting material for situational task an instructor should takes into account the following criteria (Budarin, 2010: 178; Ovchinnikova, 2014: 49; Zharavina, 2014: 958).
   – Situational task should be formulated in the form of a short text;
   – Topics of situational task should be relevant for a student (Shtekhman & Melnik, 2018: 155);
   – The task should reflect a real situation which trigs emotions;
   – While creating situational task it is necessary to take into account the age of students;
   – Problem stated in the situational task should be clear to students;
   – The content of situational task should include issues which demand situation analysis, coming to the logical conclusions, expressing personal opinion, formulating and justifying personal position on stated problem;
   – A task should have several possible solutions which give a student a chance to find the best one.
   While choosing situations an instructor should take into account interests of students, their willingness to discuss problems and its relevance (Issers, 2019; The role of mass media in ..., 2017). Experience has shown that the most successful topics are connected with professional activity of students. Application of professionally-oriented situational tasks creates the atmosphere of their future activity and promotes professional competences building.
   The use of situational tasks at different levels of teaching Russian as a foreign language let improve the quality of education, give a chance to adapt to real and professional lives. In the process of solution of situational task a student shows his or her creativity and increases level of knowledge in studied subject.
3.5 *Stages of solution*

In order a student has an opportunity to work on situational task successfully it is necessary to make students acquainted with basic stages of solution hitting up in advance.

The basic stages of situational task solution are:

1. Studying of its content and primary analysis.

2. Debate. Debate is divided into three stages. The first one is identification of a task problem, opinions exchange, formulation of objectives and demands to the solution. At first, to identify and analyze problems and formulate goals students might consult with an instructor. But later it is really important for students to do it on their own. An instructor should just provide some help. His or her role should only consist of managing the discussion. An instructor should arrange the process of decision making from the systemic approach position.

Using systemic approach students should define the place of analyzing issue as an element in the system, carry out the analysis of general goals and conditions, find the main problems of analyzing issue, levels of problem emergence and decision making, formulate the task, finds restrictions and requirements to the solution, propose ways of search and take into account the analysis of extra information.

In the second stage of debates students with the help of instructor discuss solutions adopted, evaluate them from the point of view of requirements. Students choose one or two variants of solution which are possible to perform in given situation and which meet all requirements as well as evaluate possible consequences of the solution implementation.

Table 1. Scorecard to assess solutions of situational task

| Assessment criteria                                      | 50 points |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| **Communication**                                        |           |
| 1. Understanding of presented information (task)         | 10        |
| Appropriateness of communication task solution          |           |
| 2. Suggestion of the way to solve problem                | 10        |
| 3. Reasoning of the ways to solve problem (own choice)   | 5         |
| 4. Suggestion of alternative variants.                   | 10        |
| **Language**                                             |           |
| 1. Completeness of presented information (-5 points for missing out relevant informative fragment, -2 points for missing out of an important semantic fragment). | 5         |
| 2. Accuracy of information presentation (-5 points for a significant misrepresentation, -2 points for misrepresentation of an important semantic detail). | 5         |
| 3. Coherence and consistency of information presentation (-1 point each mistake). | 5         |
| 4. Communication relevant mistakes (-1 point each).      |           |
| 5. Communication nonrelevant mistakes (-0.5 point each). |           |
| 6. Serious violations of phonetic and intonation standards (up to -1 point). |           |
| **Total**                                                |           |

In the third phase of discussion an instructor assesses the quality of done work and some students under the guidance of instructor sum up discussion results. The solution of present of similar manufacturing task (situation) at the particular enterprise might be presented to the audience as well as further discussion of it. It is also recommended to arrange presentations on the problem by a consultant (one or several) and a factory representative, where the task
(prototype of the situation) was successfully solved. In the third phase teamwork conclusions are formulated finally.

As an experience has shown after the second class students have already mastered method of systematic solution of problems. As a rule, they don’t need further help of instructor.

An instructor fills an assessment list and shows it to students in order to contribute to their motivation to study Russian as a foreign language.

### 3.6 Methods of situational tasks solution

*Solution of situational tasks* lets to find out the level of familiarity with material and also develop students’ skills on usage knowledge in a particular situation. Solution of tasks could be performed verbally or in writing. Methods of solution might be different.

1. Suggested condition without answer examples so a student has to find the solution himself

2. Situation might be represented in the form of a picture, photo, graphically. The task and/or question are given. The task of a student is to characterize or analyze the situation, find the correct solution.

3. Each student is supposed to solve a situational task individually based on studied material.

4. It is possible to suggest finding the solution of a situational task in groups of 3-5 people.

The work with situational tasks doesn’t contradict the principles of professional education, which strives to develop sequential mental action: ability to analyze, determine the main and secondary characteristics, to generalize, to relate on meaning, to coordinate mental process within frames of stated task (the development of cognitive activity, the development of emotional-volitional sphere).

### 3.7 Advantages and disadvantages of situational tasks method

As we can see, the methods of situational tasks application in teaching Russian as a foreign language needs the further elaboration. Nevertheless, there are requirements to the structure of tasks, principles of its formulation are known, and stages of finding solutions have been described. Still before apply the presented method, one should take into account some disadvantages (Balkovskaya, Pankratenko & Shurakova, 2003: 55; Barbashova, 2014: 16; Budarin, 2010: 178; Zharavina, 2014: 959; *Simulation methods in ..., 2017: 30-32*).

Advantages of situational tasks method for students:

1. Encouraging the interest to the subject, stimulation of educational motivation;

2. Development of students’ self-dependence and activity, ability to set realistic goals;

3. Personal enrichment;

4. Enhancement of the effectiveness of studied material acquisition;

5. Development of team work, communication and feedback skills;

6. Development of skills in problems solution, foreseeing the consequences of made decision, ideas about methods of problem investigation, decisions making and proving;
(7) Teaching of mechanism of decisions taking and its argumentation scheme;
(8) Activating of students’ social position which promotes stress resistance development, ability to react on changes;
(9) Increase of experimental ability, generating hypotheses and finding proves;
(10) Accumulation of experience in working with information, problems solution and decisions making;
(11) Modeling of future professional activity.

Advantages of situational tasks method for an instructor:

(1) Development of creative potential of an instructor while searching new possibilities to demonstrate educational material;
(2) Direct application of science to real situations and conditions;
(3) Performance of integration educational material within frames of particular topic on different levels (cross-curriculum, meta-curriculum, personal). It lets engage several functions such as educational, pedagogical, managing and research).

Difficulties of situational tasks method application:

(1) Creation of situational tasks is always creative process which demands from an instructor “erudition, teaching skills, time to find suitable real life material that may model professional situation and reflect all knowledge and skills student needs to master”;
(2) It is impossible to apply the mentioned method at first levels of studying material. The application of situational tasks method is useless without knowledge acquisition in the specific area.

4. Examples of the use of technical problematic situational tasks

As was mentioned above, the use of situational tasks is highly effective only if students are doing well in studied subject. It means that the use of situational tasks will be the most effective at the first certificate level. Situational tasks that have practical orientation doubtlessly help to consolidate professional vocabulary, terms, slang. Let’s have a look at some examples of situational tasks connected with technical field.

**Situational task 1. “Gold” (Weight of the body)**

Stock company “Gold M” has decided to multiply its capital by buying gold somewhere near the equator and sell it in Antarctic. Help to the management of the company to assess actuality of this idea.

**Vocabulary for the task**

- Spring scales
- Balance scales
- Mass of the body
- Weight of the body
- Coefficient g
- Direct method to measure mass
- Indirect method to measure mass
Answer the questions:

1. Why could such idea arise from physics point of view?
2. What scales (spring or balance) should he use?
3. What scales (spring or balance) measure mass by direct method and which ones by indirect?
4. What physical quantity will be equal body mass if we measure it with the help of spring scales?
5. What formula could be used to calculate weight of the body?
6. What is coefficient g in the formula?
7. What does g depend on?
8. What is g at the equator and in Antarctic?
9. Where is the weight greater? At the equator or in Antarctic? How much more?

**Situational task 2. “Who is right?” (Non-uniform movement. Speed)**

You have witnessed the conversation between a traffic inspector and a driver.

The inspector has measured the speed of passing by car with the help of a device. The device has shown the number 70, so it means the speed of 70 kilometers per hour. He stopped the car. The inspector told the driver that he had speeded. The driver disagreed. He left the city at 8 a.m. Now it is 1 p.m. He has driven 100 kilometers.

**Vocabulary for the task**

| Vehicle                  |
|--------------------------|
| Permissible driving speed|
| Speeding                 |
| Non-uniform movement     |
| Trip ticket              |
| Device for speed measurement|
| Speedometer              |
| Radar                    |

1. Who is wrong in this dispute and why? Explain your point of view.
2. How did the inspector measure the speed?
3. How did the driver measure the speed?
4. What device measures speed in a car?
5. What was the speed measured by driver according to trip ticket?
Situational task 3. “Mysterious thief” (Thermal phenomena)

On the road from Saint-Petersburg to Moscow several meters of expensive phone and telegraph wire are gone every winter. An offender is well-known but nobody seeks and punishes him. Why?

Vocabulary for the task
Electric power line
Thermal phenomena
Wire
To steal, thief
Physical phenomena

Answer the questions:
1. Who is to blame for the gone wire?
2. What physical phenomenon is described?
3. Does it influence on the telephone connection?
4. If every winter 500 meters of wire disappear, what time will it take to be completely gone?
5. Is there a way to prevent the problem?
6. It is possible with other technical objects like rails or bridges?
7. Shall engineers and constructors take into account the fact when they project and construct technical objects and buildings?

Situational task 4. “Natural disaster”
(Fuel generator work principle)

A dam failure took place after natural disaster (flood, volcanic eruption, earthquake, industrial disaster etc.). Power plant was out of order. You got a task to arrive to field hospital and provide uninterrupted electrical power supply. You need a fuel generator for this reason. You have an assistant who doesn’t know the principle of fuel generator work. Explain to him what is it, its construction, and give examples of this device operation for energy generation.

Vocabulary for the task
Natural disaster
Power plant
Petrol generator
Internal combustion engine
Electronic module
Control devices
Main ring
Fuel tank

1 A clue. Copper telephone wire becomes 1.5 times longer than steel because of heat. There are no empty gaps. That is why we may be sure the telephone line Moscow – Saint-Petersburg is 500 meters shorter in winter than in summer. A cold “steals” almost 0.5 meters of wire every winter. When it becomes warm a wire comes back.

But if such shrinkage because of cold happens with bridges, consequences might be tragic. The case reported by newspapers in 1927: “Unusual for France colds for several days caused serious damage to the bridge over the Sienna right in the middle of Paris. Pass through the bridge is temporary restricted”.


**Situational task 5. “At the university”**

You are the leader in the group of foreign students. The minister is going to visit your university. The meeting with the rector has been planned. An interpreter will accompany the minister. The interpreter is your friend from your country. (A) You need to write a formal letter to the interpreter to give place, time and goal of the meeting with the university rector. Also ask him to help with dormitory problem. (B) Write an informal letter to the interpreter to give place, time and goal of the meeting, tell about how to greet, arrange informal meeting after the event.

**Vocabulary for the task**

Sir;
I bring to your attention;
Destination;
Specified period;
Initiate appropriate activities
Please do not ignore;
Thank you for cooperation;
Dear;
Meet;
Will have fun;
Will be happy;
Bye.

**Situational task 6. “Auto racing”**

In 1990 KAMAZ trucks participated in the most famous and prestigious Paris-Dakar rally. Today the team from Naberezhnye Chelny is the most award-winning rally team in the world among trucks. But in 1990 the main world rally wasn’t so easy and not everything was alright so the victory was only a dream. Some technical problems were on the team’s road. As you know, the weather in the desert is extremely hot and almost calm. Explain to your friend why the team could win the race and what weather conditions (e.g. high temperature) influence the engine work.

**Vocabulary for the task**

KAMAZ
Race
Dust
Sand
Heat
Engine
Engine overheating
Filters
Cooling system
Fuel
Motor oil

**Situational task 7. “A difficult trip”**

Participants of Paris-Dakar rally got into trouble. Their cars got stuck in the dunes. An engine of one of the cars is seized up, another has its crankshaft broken. Speak about your actions in this situation.
Situational task 8. “To cross the river”

You are a participant of an expedition. Your task is to cross the river. Find the most suitable place for crossing (a ford, low coast, hard bottom). Explain your choice to the expedition leader.

Vocabulary for the task

| Crossing         | Crossing | To cross | To overcome an obstacle | Water obstacle | A ford | Low coast | Hard bottom |
|------------------|----------|----------|--------------------------|----------------|--------|-----------|-------------|

Situational task 9. “An advertisement of car accumulators”

You have decided to buy an accumulator. Read the advertisement. Ask the consultant about extra information.

Dear customers!

Today auto accumulators are the goods in demand for population. It is because every driver knows that there are no cars with eternal accumulator. What accumulator can provide? Sooner or later car owners understand that the life of accumulator is over and it’s time to buy a new one. Accumulators for cars have a number of characteristics and features which determine maximum effectiveness. First of all, it is a capacity. Modern car accumulators provide ignition system functioning, as well as electrical equipment, but, the most significant, engine start. What
shall we know when buying accumulator? While choosing accumulator for a car which often starts in a cold weather, an owner should consider an accumulator with the capacity not less than 5-10 ampere-hour.

Buying accumulators from us you can be sure that it is not counterfeit as we work directly with manufacture and we have distribution certificates. It is also the reason of good prices due to the broker’s margin absence.

We are selling high quality accumulators (over 7 years) which quality is confirmed by international standards.

We suggest you to buy an accumulator wholesale and retail. One of advantages of cooperation with us is low prices.

For retailers we provide:
Free accumulator diagnostics if any troubles emerge. You come to us and we find the reasons.

Free assistance in accumulator installation.

In case of defect we are authorized by manufacturer to replace accumulator immediately.

We provide ACCUMULATOR CHARGING. We offer an accumulator for temporary replacement while yours charging, so you can drive your car.

**Vocabulary for the task**

| Accumulator  |
|--------------|
| Ampere hour  |
| Size         |
| Clamp        |
| Diameter     |
| Battery marking |
| Accumulator service |
| Charging current |

**Situational task 10. “Inspection of mechanisms”**

Everyday technical inspection is necessary process regardless of model or type of the car. Crossovers, electro cars, trucks etc. demand the service. Regular inspection of machines lets prevent potential problems or solve existed ones at the very beginning. It would reduce damage and cost of repair works as well as replacement of spare parts. You are a mechanic (an engineer). Your task is to perform auto inspection and report the result to the chief.

**Vocabulary for the task**

| Everyday technical inspection |
|-------------------------------|
| Walk-around inspection        |
| Oil level                     |
| Windscreen washer level        |
| Fuel availability             |
| Working fluids leakage traces |
| Typical indications of breakdowns (tear of a dust cap, tubes) |
| Tyre pressure                 |
5. Conclusion

Modern methods of teaching in higher school vary greatly. They may be classified by different reasons. Situational task is considered as a combination of active, interactive, problematic and professionally-oriented elements of teaching.

We define situational tasks method as a systematic application of tasks aimed at solution of practicable situation. Such situations are targeted at conscious acquisition by students of the content of studied subject. They are also oriented at building necessary for future profession competences.

In the foundations of situational task should be a problem which gives a chance to choose and demands reasoning. Situational tasks don’t suppose to have ready solutions and patterns of behavior. They encourage future specialists to activate mental activity. Also they are aimed at self-determination of students who create new (heuristics) problem solution.

Situational tasks let foreign students develop skills which are important for their professional, educational and vocational communication. Also they help to develop the following competences:

(1) Speech (acquaintance with vocabulary for application in verbal and written speech in educational and professional communication);

(2) Discursive (ability to create statements of different type depending on communication situation);

(3) Sociolinguistic (ability to use language means and patterns of etiquette in sociocultural situations properly).

Not each situation may become educational.

In the creation of situational task it is necessary to take into account the specific features of a major, goals and objectives, and peculiarities of application of situational tasks method in the course of Russian as a foreign language. The goal of application is the development of communication skills aimed at formulation of written or verbal texts in Russian.

The application of situational tasks method in teaching Russian as a foreign language should base upon a number of principles differ from each other on priority. On the first place one puts principles of «new versions», «lack of information», «information abundance». Situational tasks are able to realize different educational goals depending on which an instructor always has an opportunity to choose that type of the task that would let obtain the most effective result.

While working in the class a particular attention is paid to the improvement of speech skills as the given method of work promotes vocabulary enrichment, activates speech development, works out an appropriate speech behavior in the conditions of real verbal communication. In the process of solution of situational task students find out peculiarities of technical and engineering discourse. Practical orientation of situational tasks lets apply obtained in studying of different topics knowledge which are closely related to major.
The present article provides examples of technical tasks. Each described situational task has the following structure:

– Description of the situation;
– Formulation of communication goal(s);
– Vocabulary necessary for communication task solution; and
– Helpful text material (if necessary).

The material of presented research could be useful for practicing instructors of Russian as a foreign language who work in technical higher schools. Research prospects are performance of diagnostic experimental research on application of situational tasks in technical higher school, creation of comprehensive training manual based on the research results.

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