

## ENHANCE THE SKILL OF USING GROUP DISCUSSION METHOD IN TEACHING SOCIAL SCIENCE IN TELECOMMUNICATION UNIVERSITY – VIETNAM

*M.Dao Van Kha, Dr. Nguyen Anh Tuan, M. Nguyen Duy Trong, M. Nguyen Thi  
Trang, M. Nguyen Son Ha*

*TELECOMMUNICATION UNIVERSITY - VIETNAM*

**Summary:** Group discussion method is a teaching method in which the lecturer organizes for students to debate and discuss together to achieve a common goal in learning. The group discussion method plays an important role in teaching, which is most focused on the effectiveness of student's learning activities, the effectiveness of teachers' teaching activities and the educational quality of schools.

**Key words:** skill; group discussion method; social science.

In the 4th Industrial Revolution era, teamwork is more necessary than ever. Practice has shown that cooperation in groups makes the productivity and efficiency of work many times higher. When working in groups, many people working together will promote each person's strengths and cover each other's shortcomings. Each member will have the opportunity to learn from the experience of other members when listening to their presentation and also when they debate. Thus, the work result will be better than each person working separately then putting it back together.

### **I. The role of group discussion method in improving students' capacity**

A group is an assemble of two or more people, working together to accomplish a goal set forth by the group; teamwork is a group of individuals with complementary skills who are committed to taking responsibility for a common goal. Team members interact with each other and with the team leader to achieve a common goal. Team members depend on each other's information to do their part; Group discussion is the process of discussing among members about a particular issue.

The group discussion method has the role of improving the cognitive capacity of students, equipping them with knowledge, developing technical skills - professional skills, social skills such as cooperation skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, synergistic skills, ... for students; promote the active learning of students; creating an atmosphere of democracy, openness, comfort and equality in learning. This is a teaching method based on the cooperation of many individuals, thereby creating collective intellectual power to help solve problems in learning. Group members have the opportunity to share and exchange information, students have the opportunity to absorb and refine good ideas in many different situations, as a basis for the development of students. The group learning method helps students to practice techniques and skills with the support of the teacher, students must participate directly in controversial issues, give and defend their own ideas with other people. Thereby helping to detect and handle problems flexibly and quickly.

The group discussion method fundamentally changes the traditional teaching method from the monologue presentation method to the teaching method based on the interaction among students and between students and lecturers.

## II. Requirements, process for implementing group discussion method

In order to improve the skills of using the group discussion method effectively in practice, the teaching process of social sciences at the Telecommunication University nowadays needs to meet many basic requirements. In which, the most important are requirements for lecturers, students and for the program content.

For lecturers, they will not directly transmit knowledge, perform techniques and skills but act as a guide, help and create conditions for students to learn effectively. Thus, in the group discussion method, the teacher both plays the role of guiding and serving the students to ensure that students reach their learning goals. To perform their role well in implementing group discussion, lecturers must have specific conditions:

Having extensive knowledge in many aspects, knowledge of scientific specialties, general knowledge of other scientific subjects such as: Philosophy, Psychology, ... plus practical life experiences diversity.

Have a comprehensive understanding of group discussion method theory. Understand the advantages and disadvantages of this method, understand the preparation process to conduct a lesson, a topic according to the group discussion method. From there, apply creative science to the teaching process.

Have skills to prepare and conduct lessons by group discussion method such as: skills to design standard lesson outputs, subjects, skills to design lesson plans, lecture content, and skills to combine teaching methods and anticipating possible pedagogical situations, skills to assign tasks, explain tasks, skills to divide study groups, skills to observe, control group training, skills to orient, intervene, help and support groups in learning, skills to create a vibrant and positive democratic atmosphere in learning; skills to conclude learning content, skills to draw experiences from group dialogues, skills to orientate personality development, skills to refer to documents, skills to evaluate.

In addition to the above requirements, the lecturer must have a firm grasp of the subject's psychophysiological characteristics and students' awareness, so that the group can be appropriately divided to facilitate the learning process to achieve high results.

For students, directly participate in the learning process. Students must be active, interested in learning, have high personal responsibility. Students need to have dialogue skills, debate skills, analytical and evaluation skills, language skills, skills to capture and analyze information, skills to coordinate with other groups and cooperate with instructors,...

Teaching contents and curricula must ensure the science and modernity in accordance with the objectives, contents, as well as methods and forms of teaching organization. In addition to the goal of equipping students with technical knowledge and skills, the teaching program should focus on goals such as intellectual development, personality development, creative thinking, and life skills. At the same time, the content of the training program must ensure a scientific and modern balance, closely follow the students' career goals, focus on practical contents, contents that stimulate students' discovery and creativity in learning.

Besides the above requirements, the pedagogical environment has a certain influence on the process of education, training, and personality development for students. In order to improve the skills of using group discussion methods in teaching and developing students' capacity, it is necessary to have a large enough space to facilitate the arrangement of student groups, without affecting the other groups, while ensuring teachers' convenience in observing, monitoring, helping, and intervening to help the group's learning; The class must have a suitable number of students to avoid the phenomenon of the number of students being too high or too low. Because, if the number of students is too high, it is difficult for the teacher to manage and divide groups in learning, limiting the monitoring and interference in the learning of groups. If too few people study, the class will be boring, lack of competitive atmosphere among members of groups, making students lose interest; documents and infrastructures must be sufficient for the learning process. In addition, other physical conditions such as projectors, computers, classroom systems are also needed to facilitate teaching and learning.

In order to improve the skills of using group discussion method in teaching humanities and social sciences at the Telecommunication University, it is necessary to follow the organizational process on specific contents:

*First, choose the content of the group discussion, avoid the content being too large or too small.* Specific content in the lesson is determined to be used to conduct group discussion, which is determined to meet two types of goals: the goal of knowledge, skill and attitude according to the subject output standards, and the goal of developing group study skills for students.

*Second, establish and determine the size of groups.* The lecturer organizes group, assigns tasks to groups, and guides students on how to work in groups. Set goals for students to understand clearly what knowledge needs to be achieved when conducting group discussions and the tasks that need to be solved to achieve that goal. Depending on the conditions of each lesson, the lecturer decides to use the optimal number of members of the groups. When choosing the size of the lecturer group, it is necessary to pay attention to the following factors: the larger the number

of members, the more interactions, the richer and more diverse the amount of information exchanged; lesson content, documents, and learning media that affect group size; The less time of the lesson, the smaller the group size.

*Third, assign tasks to groups.* The lecturer assigns discussion content to the group, the groups work on their own and assign tasks to the group members. The group leader maintains and organizes for members to discuss and share with each other on the assigned topics.

*Fourth, determine the time to maintain and conduct group discussions.* How long the group exists depends on each type of group, each learning task, and each specific form of learning. There are groups that only exist for one topic, one hour, or even one class period. There are groups that exist for the whole duration of the subject period. The discussion time must be limited and correspond to the content and requirements of the proposed content to ensure enough time for students to think and discuss.

*Fifth, observe, monitor, intervene, adjust and evaluate the interaction during the discussion of the groups.* The lecturer observes the learning behavior of students during the preparation of discussion content and conducts group discussions on such topics as: individual responsibility in learning, the participation and contribution of members; raising questions and concerns, expressing support, accepting the opinions of others; encouragement and mutual help among members; managing the work of the group leader, taking notes of the group secretary, ... After listening to the group leaders or group members are assigned to present the group's work, every groups start to discuss together, give feedback, timely discover new issues to add to the learning task. Interactions between group members or among groups are directed to the following content: active, individual responsibility, cooperation in groups, and issues that need to be overcome in order to have a better group work next time. From there, the lecturer gives suggestions, orientations, and tips for the groups to complete the assigned tasks, ready to answer the questions of the groups. Finally, the teacher can directly comment on the group's activities or let the groups self-review and evaluate other groups, then the teacher concludes and evaluates the results for each group.

In order to use the group discussion method in teaching social sciences to be most effective, each lecturer needs to strictly follow step by step, comply with the content of the actual process from designing objectives, forming groups, explaining goals and assigning tasks, observing, monitoring, adjusting, intervening and evaluating groups to ensure improving the awareness and developing students' capabilities.

### III. Meaning of using group discussion method in teaching social sciences at the Telecommunication University nowadays

The group discussion method, if used in a scientific manner with the right process, will provide students with a large amount of systematic knowledge, help them remember, understand, apply, and analyze knowledge quickly to meet the output standards of the lesson or subject. In the process of group discussion, students have to find out and acquire knowledge by themselves, so the scientific knowledge that students have collected will be well understood and remembered longer. Applying the group discussion method in teaching social sciences has the effect of stimulating active learning, bring excitement and attention of students to the lesson, creating a freely atmosphere as well as helping to develop social skills for students.

Through learning by group discussion method, students can correct and make up for the lack of knowledge of the lesson, they have the conditions to express their thoughts, confidently to present in front of the crowd, creating an exciting learning atmosphere, stimulating all members to participate in the learning process and at the same time constantly exploring, researching, demonstrating the roles and responsibilities of individuals to the group. In the current trend of modern teaching, the good application of skills in using group discussion methods will help students develop cognitive capacity, practical capacity, cooperation capacity, communication ability, ability to detect and solve problems, develop creative thinking, self-study and behavior adjustment capacity, and at the same time meet the training goal of "learner-centered". Through the process of group discussion under the guidance of the lecturer, it also creates a two-way relationship between the lecturer and the students. Teachers can grasp the effectiveness of the education, grasp the attitudes, opinions, trends, and behaviors of students.

Like all other active teaching methods, in order for a group discussion session to be successful, the lecturer must invest a lot of time and effort, so the learning results can be good and the new group discussion method can achieve its basic meaning. Thus, we can confirm that group discussion is an effective form of learning, helping students to actively access knowledge and help students develop good logical thinking as well as debating ability.

**REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**

- [1]. Dang Vu Hoat (2013), *University theory*, Publisher of Pedagogical University.
- [2]. Nguyen Thi Minh Phuong, Pham Thi Thuy (2011), *Handbook of pedagogical methods*, Ho Chi Minh City General Publisher.
- [3]. Le Vinh Quoc (2011), *The topic of innovative teaching according to modern educational science*, Publisher of Pedagogical University, Ho Chi Minh City.
- [4]. Nguyen Thanh Nhan (2014), *Evaluation of the results of learning subjects according to the orientation of student capacity development*, Publisher of Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City.
- [5]. Pham Thanh Nghj (2000), *Quality management of higher education*, Hanoi National University Publisher.
- [6]. Bui Van Truc, Pham The Hung (2014), *Methods of teaching life skills*, Culture – Information Publisher.
- [7]. Phan Thi Hong Vinh (2010), *Teaching method*, Publisher of Pedagogical University.