



Law School Students' Skill Development in the Context of Multimedia Presentations

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Abstract

Specifics of juridical profession results in directivity of future lawyers' education to the correct perception of information, its analysis, correct information transfer, and development of skills needed to publicly present the results of their activity. The Federal educational standards reflect this directivity.

The speech-cogitative, communicative and logical-rhetorical competencies are the basis for the professional competencies development of law school students. That is why the complex study assignments, such as multimedia presentations with discussion and following evaluation in line with certain criteria, has important educational capability. These assignments facilitate the processes of perception and revision of various texts including lexicography sources, and production of comprehensive writing and oral texts, those can help to make complex description of student's linguistic personality.

An important tutorial goal is to choose the effective educational technologies that help develop students' abilities to work with text along with the management of conditions that provide the link between the training situations and moral values of future lawyers.

The example of the realization of this tutorial idea is an experience of formation a multimedia law encyclopedia Law Values by the students of Ural State Law University. This encyclopedia includes materials, that illustrate the critical concepts, important to the determination of lawyers' values, such as a state, law, rights, justice, freedom etc.

Another important aspect of studies is the technology of preparation of multimedia presentations that results in technical requirements (e.g. number and quality of slides), advisability of multimedia effects, choice of style. The technical aspect of this work assumes skills needed to take into account, the subject of the message, character of the communicative situation, specifics of audio and visual perception of the material by the audience.

Keywords: professional competencies, linguistic personality, multimedia presentations, evaluation, problem situation analysis, values.

Specifics of juridical profession result in directivity of future lawyers' education to the accurate perception of information, its analysis, correct information transfer, and development of skills needed to publicly present the results of their activity as reflected in the requirements of Russian state educational standards for Bachelor of law, judicial and prosecutorial activities / forensic activity.

Education at the university contributes to the development of common cultural and professional competences of a future lawyer. In accordance with the requirements of the standards [4,5] a lawyer should manifest high moral consciousness, humanity; have legal and psychological culture; be able to analyze socially significant problems and processes; know the major principles of thinking and the art of logical analysis. It is important that the process of higher education creates all the prerequisites for "the progressive development of a professional linguistic personality of a lawyer" [2].

The speech-cogitative, communicative and logical-rhetorical competencies are the basis for the professional competencies development of law school students. That is why the complex study assignments, such as multimedia presentations with discussion and following evaluation in line with certain criteria, has important educational capability. These assignments facilitate the processes of perception and revision of various texts including lexicography sources, and production of comprehensive writing and oral texts, those can help to make complex description of student's linguistic personality.

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Such complex assignments can include the preparation for a live performance on a professionally significant scientific topic using a multimedia presentation [1]. No wonder that in recent years, multimedia presentation has become an increasingly common educational genre that replaces traditional reports or essays, as it aims at a more efficient transfer of information to listeners. But nevertheless, the potential of this study assignment is not always used in the educational process.

Systematic observation of the quality of preparations for live performances in front of the audience using a multimedia presentation by law students allows, on the one hand, to identify typical mistakes, which are the results of misunderstanding of the genre features and the basic requirements to them, and on the other hand, to describe the peculiarities of linguistic personality of the modern student.

Presentation genre features are determined by the fact that the contents of presentation depend on the contents of independently studied sources of information. However, to create a presentation, you need a creative, original approach, as well as fluency in computer technology. The process of preparing a multimedia presentation is connected with the fact that the presentation is supposed to present the listeners with information through two channels: auditory and visual, and it drastically affects the preparation process. Studying the sources on the research topic should lead to a complete comprehension of the material. During the selection and further analysis of the material, it is necessary to determine what information should be reflected on the slides, and what information will be included in the verbal commentary. As a result of the work, both the visual slides and the message text should be prepared, which together constitute a presentation on the topic.

Monitoring of the quality of the complex assignments has been carried out since 2012 on the basis of the Ural State Law University and the data Bank is about 500 works. To maximize the working efficiency students are offered various topics that require independent search of scientific sources supplementing the contents of studying unit. For instance, when studying the course "Speech culture of a lawyer", three groups of topics can be identified that are prepared individually and included for consideration in the classroom according to a compiled schedule that takes into account both the topic studied and the student's readiness for the speech.

The first group consists of the topics that deepen the study of certain sections of the culture of speech: Dictionaries and reference books on the culture of speech in the professional activities of the lawyer; the Rules of oral speech in the practice of the legal activities; Clichés and stamps in legal speech; Norms of the literary language in business and procedural documentation, etc. In the second group it is reasonable to include topics focused on the features of judicial speech: Judicial speech: features of style and genre; Logical bases of judicial speech; Ethical bases of judicial speech; The prosecutor's accusatory speech; Features of the procedural status of the Prosecutor and the Defender in criminal cases with participation of jurors, etc.

It is very important to offer students the topics of the third group connected with the activities of well-known lawyers of the 19th and 20th centuries who influenced on the formation of Russian judicial eloquence: an outstanding lawyer and public speaker: the formation of personality, major works, famous speeches. Students are offered a list of names of prominent judicial figures (A. F. Koni, F. N. Plevako, A. I. Urusov, P. S. Porokhovshchikov, V. L. Rossels, V. I. Tsarev, etc.). Studying the life and work of judicial speakers requires students to work seriously with special literature, archives, as well as appeal to the texts of court speeches included in the golden fund of judicial eloquence. These texts differ in stylistic peculiarities from modern legal speech, but they have a serious influence on the formation of the student's linguistic personality, they form values that are significant for the national cultural tradition.

A common mistake of the first- and second-year students' presentations is the almost complete coincidence of materials in the slides and text messages. Meanwhile, in the process of preparatory work it is necessary to ensure that the information provided through the auditory and visual channels is in a relationship of interdependence. Besides, structural and composition requirements for work are not always correctly observed. Students certainly know from the course of schooling that the presentation, along with the main part should include an introduction and conclusion that fulfill their functions: the first one – the function of attracting attention of the audience, the introduction to the problem, etc., the latter - the function of generalization, summarization. But often the introduction prepared by the students



is only formally connected with the main part, and in conclusion there are no necessary implications or they concern only the fragment of speech.

Technical requirements for presentation design are also not always observed. These requirements are associated with the need to use different types of slides (with tables, charts, diagrams, pictures, photographs, texts) while keeping to a common visual style. It is important to arrange the information on the slide correctly: preferably the horizontal arrangement of information, the most important information should be placed in the center of the screen. When making slides, it is important to observe the norms of spelling and punctuation, to use the abbreviations correctly, not to violate the generally accepted rules of text design (the absence of full stops in headlines, the double designation of headings etc.). One slide should not have more than one logical stress: highlighting with color, brightness, underlining, blinking, movement. The use of animation effects should be minimal, carefully thought out. When preparing a presentation, a single style of design should be used.

The technical requirements for the presentation design are well-known, they are violated generally at the first stages of using presentations during the classes. That means that the majority of students before the university did not have sufficient practical experience of creating them. Thus, misunderstanding or ignorance of the requirements for complex assignment performance in a form of a public speech using a multimedia presentation leads to regular mistakes, among which the most frequent are the following:

- 1) uniformity of slides (only text or only picture) - occurs in 55% of students' presentations;
- 2) incorrect duplication of visual and text messages - in 48% of students' presentations;
- 3) visual and text message discrepancy (slides relate only to one of the parts of the message, or most of them are concentrated in some part of the presentation) - in 32% of the students' presentations;
- 4) non-observance of the technical requirements of the work (incorrectly selected background, type, poor image quality of graphic objects, etc.) - in 30% of students' presentations;
- 5) substitution of the presentation with a summary (the text of scientific work is summarized on the slides) – 25% of the students' presentations.

These mistakes are caused by the lack of experience in preparing multimedia presentations for public speeches (negative school practice influences - when students use ready-made presentations as illustrations), as well as misunderstanding of necessity to know well the presented, the incompleteness of the skills to present it to the audience.

Other mistakes can be explained by a generally low culture of thinking (breach of presentation consistency in the main part of the work, discrepancy of the content and the topic of presentation) and non-developed skills in creating text (the absence of introduction and/ or conclusion, or excess volume of presentation). Besides, technical difficulties in the design of slides lead to the lack of a unified style, inappropriate use of animation effects [3].

The quality of students' preparatory work is checked in the course of their speeches in front of the audience. The speech is assessed by a model that takes into consideration three basic aspects:

- **The content of performance using a multimedia presentation:** the correspondence of all the presentation components to the topic and problem; reliability, accuracy, completeness of the presentation of scientific (popular science) information; consistency of information deployment; completeness of each component content and their relationship; observance of structural-compositional requirements (presence of introduction and conclusion, corresponding volume / size of the main part, interconnection of all parts);
- **Technical design of multimedia presentation:** design corresponds to the theme and problem; slides of different types (pictures, diagrams, chart, photographs, texts); the correlation of text slides and slides with pictures allow to ensure the informative nature of presentation; the number of slides is enough, visual series takes place parallel to the auditory; observance of linguistic norms (the absence of spelling, punctuation, lexical and grammatical mistakes); the quality of pictures, diagrams, charts; the correct type for visual perception (readability of presentation); the



arrangement of information on the slides; the presentation design in accordance with the topic and problem; the appropriate use of animation effects;

- **Speech manner of the speaker:** the knowledge of the presented material, the ability to present information freely; quality of speech (correctness, clarity, accuracy, purity, relevance, richness, expressiveness); elocution (intonation, diction, tempo, voice volume) and the correctness of non-verbal behaviour (facial expressions, gestures, poses); the ability to establish contact with the audience (the direction of view, the location in front of the audience, verbal patterns of interaction); observance of the established rules.

Regular use of criterion model for assessing presentations with multimedia presentations in the class allows to organize the informal inclusion of students in the process of work, develops their critical thinking skills, analytical and speech skills.

In the formation of future lawyers' linguistic personality it is extremely important to form the assessing criteria towards their own speeches (written and oral). The teacher should take into account that the discussion of presentations should include all the aspects of the criterion model (the content of speech, technical design, speech skills) should be built on the basis of cognitive-communicative, activity and person-oriented approaches. Only in this case the fulfillment of the complex assignment using a multimedia presentation can be an effective educational tool.

The teacher's important methodological goal is not only to choose effective educational technologies, contributing to the development of the students' abilities to work with information and present the results of their work to the audience, but also the organization of conditions that allow to establish the link between educational situations and value concepts. All these make it possible to form the skills of analyzing the problem situation with the point of view of morality and morals, as Horace said «Quid uti frustra leges, ubi non sunt morum?»

The example of the realization of this methodological idea is an experience of creation of a multimedia law encyclopedia Law Values by the students of the Ural State Law University. This encyclopedia includes materials, that illustrate the critical concepts, important to the determination of lawyers' values. This assignment has a project nature and is presented at the university contest, it can be performed both individually or in a group. The results of the work are made in the form of a multimedia presentation where there is a detailed information about this or that concept.

In modern linguistics the category of concept is characterized by multidimensionality, dependence upon significant social and national-psychological attitudes, embodiment in language facts. In our research we are interested in concepts reflecting people's cultural experience considering the specifics of legal activities: - state, law, rights, justice, order, justice, freedom, people, etc.

It is obvious that law students cannot conduct serious linguistic research, but they can describe some clear linguistic and cultural facts related to a particular concept. Contest regulation requirements contribute to the correct organization of work on the project. Participants should show erudition, consult various lexicographic materials, describe the reflexion of the chosen concept in science (law, philosophy, history) and culture (literature, music, painting) as well as try to carry out an associative experiments in the target audience. Thus, the inclusion of multimedia presentations (in classroom and extracurricular activities) in the discipline "Speech culture of a lawyer" indicates the great potential of using this technology as it allows to develop students' intellectual and creative abilities, influence their values and preferences and to form professionally significant personal qualities of future lawyers.

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