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The Role of Online Debates in the Formation of Future Philologists' Professional Competences

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the article was to test the effectiveness of the influence of pedagogical conditions for online debates on the formation of future philologists' professional competencies. *Methods used:* pedagogical observation, pedagogical experiment, and students' self-assessment methods, mathematical and statistical methods for research results processing (t-Student's criterion), interviews, questionnaires. Dialogicality (communicative level) was estimated by L. Michelson test and by the method of diagnostics of "General Communicative Tolerance" by V. V. Boyko. *Results.* In an experiment, it was found that, after the secondary survey, 33.75% of respondents view online debates as educational technology and 26.25% of respondents explain their participation in the debates by the desire to improve communication skills. When analyzing the results of the secondary survey, it was found that such qualities as determination, tolerance, and sociability are in the lead. Comparing the design value and critical value of the Criterion t and T-Critical, we have taken that $T \leq T\text{-Critical}$, and therefore accepted the hypothesis of different average values in the two frames.

KEYWORDS: Educational debates, innovative education, modelling of skills, philological education.

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El papel de los debates en línea en la formación de las competencias profesionales de los futuros filólogos

RESUMEN

El propósito del artículo fue probar la efectividad de la influencia de las condiciones pedagógicas para los debates en línea en la formación de competencias profesionales de los futuros filólogos. Métodos utilizados: métodos de observación pedagógica, experimento pedagógico y autoevaluación de los estudiantes, métodos matemáticos y estadísticos para el procesamiento de resultados de investigación (criterio t-Student), entrevistas, cuestionarios. La dialogicidad (nivel comunicativo) fue estimada por la prueba de L. Michelson y por el método de diagnóstico de "Tolerancia Comunicativa General" de V. V. Boyko. Resultados. En un experimento, se encontró que, después de la encuesta secundaria, el 33,75% de los encuestados ven los debates en línea como tecnología educativa; y el 26,25% de los encuestados explican su participación en los debates por el deseo de mejorar las habilidades de comunicación. Al analizar los resultados de la encuesta secundaria, se encontró que cualidades como la determinación, la tolerancia y la sociabilidad están a la cabeza. Comparando el valor de diseño y el valor crítico del Criterio t y T-Critical, hemos tomado que $T \leq T\text{-Critical}$, y por lo tanto aceptamos la hipótesis de diferentes valores promedio en los dos marcos.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Debates educativos, educación innovadora, modelado de habilidades, educación filológica.

Introduction

The formation of students' professional competences is extremely important due to the radical change in the aims of the development of society in the process of socio-economic reforms of recent decades. The process of modernization of education in Ukraine determines the development of new concepts and approaches, change of the mission and functions of higher education. Modernization of education determines the need to mobilize and develop the social and personal potential of the subjects of the educational process. It becomes topical to search for such pedagogical forms and technologies that would create a space for the development of professional competences in the interactive engagement between students (Aadland et al., 2017).

The professional sphere of a modern philologist is characterized by dynamic changes and the major factor in the development of modern philological education is the transition

from traditional targets to targeting the formation of readiness to effectively solve professional problems (Karpenko, 2019).

Thus, the sum of acquired competences is integrated into the concept of professional competence as a personal quality of the graduate – the future specialist (Holubieva, 2018). Professional competence can be analyzed in two aspects:

1. As the purpose of education, the purpose of vocational training;
2. As an intermediate result that characterizes the state of the specialist who carries out his professional activity (Almazova et al., 2021).

Professional competence is a kind of indicator, a qualitative and quantitative characterization of the level of a specialist's professionalism. The analysis of the definition of "professional competence" makes it possible to identify the essential aspects of its content, among which are the following:

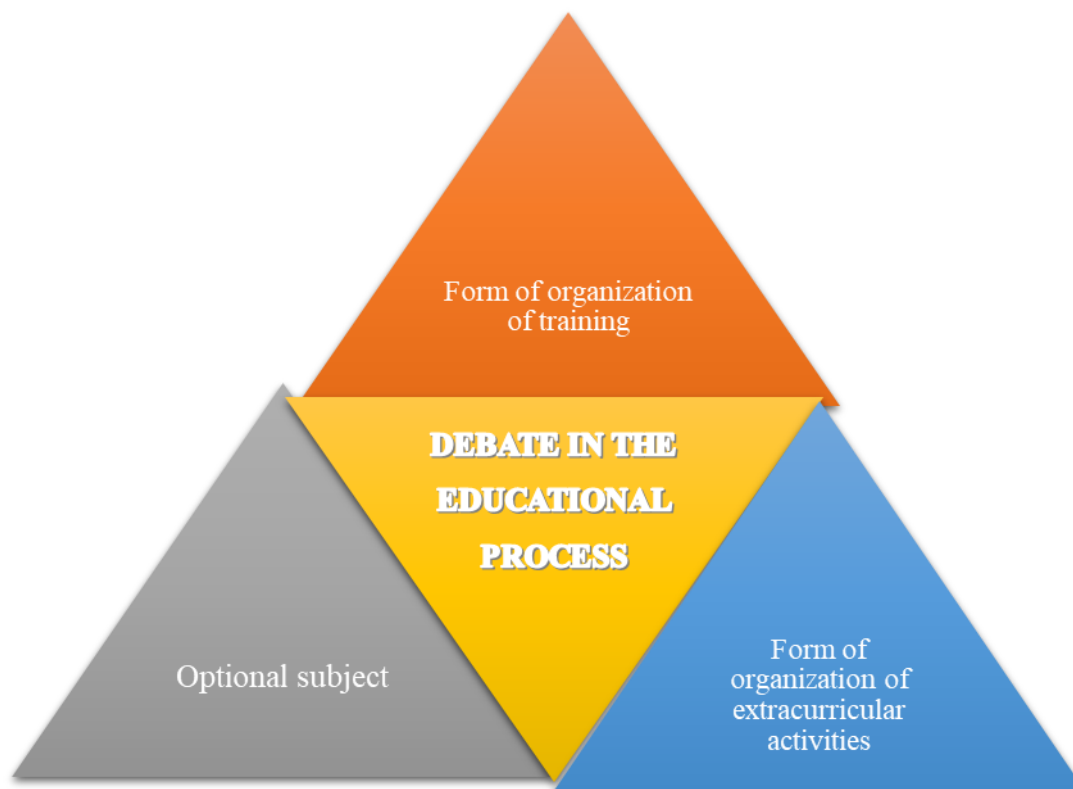
- optimal use of abilities, which determine effective professional activity;
- independent and constant increase in the level of professional knowledge and skills, necessary for the performance of professional functions;
- manifestation of autonomy and mobility in solving professional problems (Khanykina et al. 2021);
- active interaction with colleagues in a professional environment based on partnership and cooperation;
- ability to mobilize and integrate knowledge and skills that ensure optimal performance of professional activities in the modern work environment;
- advanced capability for self-regulation, self-reflection, and self-esteem, which provides a rapid, flexible, adaptive response to changing conditions (Forsberg et al., 2019).

In recent years, educational debates have become widespread in HEIs for the formation of future philologists' professional competence. The study of debating reflects the popularity of this interactive form of learning and the efficiency of the group interaction technique (Al Giffari et al., 2020).

Debates are an exchange of views at any meeting or assembly, based on free expression of personal opinion, and exchange of views on the proposed topic. The participants argue, prove, explain, inform, give examples or facts, and so on. As a rule, during the educational debates, the topic itself is discussed, and not the personal attitude of the participants to it.

Debates involve students in the culture of oral presentation, the ability to listen and hear others, assess their capabilities, etc. (Amar-Gavrilman & Bentwich, 2022). Fig. 1 shows possible forms of debates for the educational process in the HEI.

Figure 1. Forms of debates for the educational process in a HEI



Source: author's development

Active participation of students in the debates teaches them to look for arguments that can be a worthy confirmation of their point of view. Educational debates create excellent conditions for expressing opinions, positions, and attitudes on the topic. Although students are not used to the debates, the latter is not only an interactive teaching method but also a special technology. For many years, teachers of humanities rarely held educational discussions, round tables, business games, trainings, etc. Therefore, when using active forms and methods of learning, there are some difficulties in organizational and content plans (Jagger, 2013).

Thus, online debates are a pedagogically organized team-role intellectual game in which the players prove their position and refute the position of opponents in a strictly defined

format. Debate participants discuss the problem and solve the conflicts, using the techniques of reasoning and consistent justification of their point of view, including based on the statements of the opponent (Dehtiarova et al., 2021).

The purpose of online debates is to search for the “truth”, i.e. the conclusion reached by all or most of the debate participants. Debates develop the skills, necessary for the effective communication of future philologists. Achieving these goals and results is based on three basic principles of debates: respect, honesty, and learning. The use of the debates for the formation of philologists' professional competences involves:

- active involvement of the student in educational and cognitive activities;
- organization of joint activities and partnership between students;
- ensuring dialogic communication both between the teacher and the student and between students.

-Little-studied issues

The problem of scientific substantiation of the development of philologists' professional competence in the higher education system has not been sufficiently researched. Therefore, the need for its scientific development and practical implementation is determined by a number of the following issues:

1. Contradictions between the state and public order for forming the worldview of an individual in accordance with moral standards and cultural characteristics of society, which lie primarily in the environment of HEIs and insufficient efforts of pedagogical science to implement scientific design and realization of philological vocational education systems.

2. Contradictions between the requests of different segments of the professional educational community to philological education, taking into account the culturological model and underdeveloped didactic support.

3. The contradiction between the growing needs of philologists themselves in the development of professional competences required in modern conditions, and the inability to meet these needs by a system of traditional educational programs. Thus, there is a need to find new educational models for the training of future philologists.

The purpose of the study is to test the effectiveness of pedagogical conditions of educational debates in the formation of future philologists' professional competences.

-Objectives / questions

1) To model the process of development of philologists' professional competences in the higher education system with the help of online debates.

2) To identify and justify a set of pedagogical conditions for the development of future philologists' professional competence in the higher education system.

1. Literature review

Bulvinska and Khanykina (2019) consider competency as a set of interconnected knowledge and activities that relate to a certain range of subjects and processes, different from competencies - personal qualities. The scientists understand competency as alienated, predetermined requirement for educational training, necessary for quality productive activities in a particular field, whereas competence is an available personal quality that includes personal experience and attitude to the subject of activity in this area. Cariñanos-Ayala et al. (2021) point out that competence is always an actual manifestation of competency. Competence-based approach is characterized by strengthening the actual pragmatic and humanistic orientation of the educational process. Based on several examples of the use of the terms competency / competence as synonymous, Cariñanos-Ayala et al. (2021) in some cases also allow for their interchangeability. Chala et al. (2021) include in the concept of competence not only cognitive and operational-technological components but also motivational, ethical, social, and behavioural ones, which equates competence to the personal qualities of an individual. Demchenko (2017) considers pedagogical competence as a set of knowledge and experience that allows for a professional, competent solution to the issues of teaching and education. Ferrada and Del Pino (2020) examined professional competence as a combination of theoretical and practical readiness of a person to carry out any activities. Defining the "competence", Umarova (2022) assumes that this concept has several characteristics, such as independence, mental flexibility, abstract, systematic, and experimental thinking, the ability to make responsible decisions, a creative approach to any activity, the ability to bring the case to the end, and to study constantly. In psychology, there is a generally accepted that "socio-personal competence" includes knowledge, skills, abilities, and even ways of performing actions in certain social situations. Vorstman et al. (2020) define professional competence as socio-personal competence. According to Warwas and

Helm (2017), the implementation of the competence-based approach should involve the widespread use of active and interactive teaching methods in the educational process and meetings with professionals.

Ijaz and Sergeant (2022), Joldasbaiuly (2022), and Poddany (2021) studied debates as a teaching method. In the vocational education system, the student, to develop his/her socio-personal competencies, learns how to resolve dilemmas through debates. The debates relate to the development of society and the value of a culture, they develop the ability to deliberately use this knowledge in practice and in real life, which leads to the development of life skills, which the student relays into the social space.

2. Research Methods

2.1. Research procedure

The article summarizes the results of the study, which was conducted in three phases:

– The first phase (2020) was aimed at analyzing the scientific literature, the initial formulation of the research topic and problem of investigation, defining the purpose and objectives of the study. The development of a scientific study of debates as a means of forming students-philologists' professional competencies was also carried out.

– The second phase of the study (2021) included the generalization of the analysis of the research literature, substantiation of the technology of developing students' professional competences using debates;

– The third phase (2022) included an empirical study: the effectiveness of the formation of students' professional competences through debate was proven.

2.2. Sampling

The study involved 150 students studying at the Faculty of Foreign Philology and Andrii Malyshko Faculty of Ukrainian Philology and Literary Creativity of the National Pedagogical Drahomanov University (Kyiv). Such a sample allows covering a sufficient number of respondents to ensure a high level of reliability of the results. The participants of the experiment were selected using a questionnaire in Google Forms.

2.3. Methods

Several methods of psychological and pedagogical diagnostics were selected in accordance with the purpose and objectives of the study:

1. Pedagogical observation (Ellison, 2017).
2. Interviews, questionnaire. Dialogicality (communicative level) was estimated by L. Michelson test and by the method of diagnostics of "General Communicative Tolerance" by V. V. Boyko.
3. Students' self-assessment, method of pedagogical experiment.
4. Mathematical and statistical methods for research results processing (t-Student's criterion).

The number of degrees of freedom is calculated as $n + m - 2$ for two samples of sizes n and m . For a significance level of 0.05, the criterion is 1.98. Two samples correspond to each group and criterion: test results before and after the introduction of the pedagogical conditions for online debates. Based on these samples, the value of T-statistics is calculated:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{s_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{s_2^2}{n_2}}} \quad (1)$$

Here, X_1 and X_2 denote the samples, n_1 is the number of listeners on the stage of input control, n_2 is the number of listeners on the stage of the final control, and s means the standard error.

$$s_x = \sqrt{\frac{1}{(n-1)n} \sum_{i=1}^n (x - x_i)^2} \quad (2)$$

Google Forms were used for the survey. Data entry and processing were performed using "Microsoft Excel" and "SPSS Statistics 21.0". All data are given in relative values (% of the number of respondents).

The study was based on the principles of respect for the individual, gender equality, anti-discrimination policy, validity, professionalism, and incontestability of conclusions. All phases of the pedagogical experiment are consistent with the generally accepted academic ethical principles of scientific research work. All respondents were instructed to answer the questions of the test honestly and gave consent to the processing of personal data and the publication of research results in scientific papers.

3. Results

The study was based on the analysis of questionnaires of the students participating in educational debates. First, students were asked what, in their opinion, a debate is – an interesting game, a full-fledged educational technology, a form of cognitive or educational activities, or organizational practice (Table 1).

Table 1. Respondents' answers to the question "What is the debate in your opinion?"

№	Response options	Number of respondents, %	
		Initial survey	Secondary survey
1	An interesting game	37,25	26,50
2	Educational technology	19,75	33,25
3	Form of cognitive activity	19,75	27,25
4	The organizational practice of students	23,25	13,00

Source: Compiled by the authors based on the results of the study

The first survey found that students perceived debates more as a game than as an educational and cognitive activity. However, after gaining some experience in debates, their opinion changed: about a third of respondents began to perceive debates as educational technology, and a quarter – as a form of educational and cognitive activity. Next, the students were asked the reasons for their decision to participate in the debates (Table 2).

Table 2. Respondents' answers to the question "What are the implications of your interest in the debates?"

№	Response options	Number of respondents, %	
		Initial survey	Secondary survey
1	I am having a lot of fun.	26,75	20,00
2	It's an opportunity to gain new knowledge	16,50	28,00
3	Desire to improve communication skills	13,25	26,25
4	Desire to improve professional skills	23,75	14,00
5	Your response option	19,75	16,75

Source: Compiled by the authors based on the results of the study

Initially, the underlying motives were mainly the opportunity to have fun and meet interesting people, i.e., the desire to have a good time. Later, students realized that debates are not only an entertainment but also a means of developing socio-personal qualities and competences, including the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and communication skills, as well as the ability to adequately apply them (Table 3).

Table 3. Respondents' answers to the question "What aspects of the debates are the most attractive for you?"

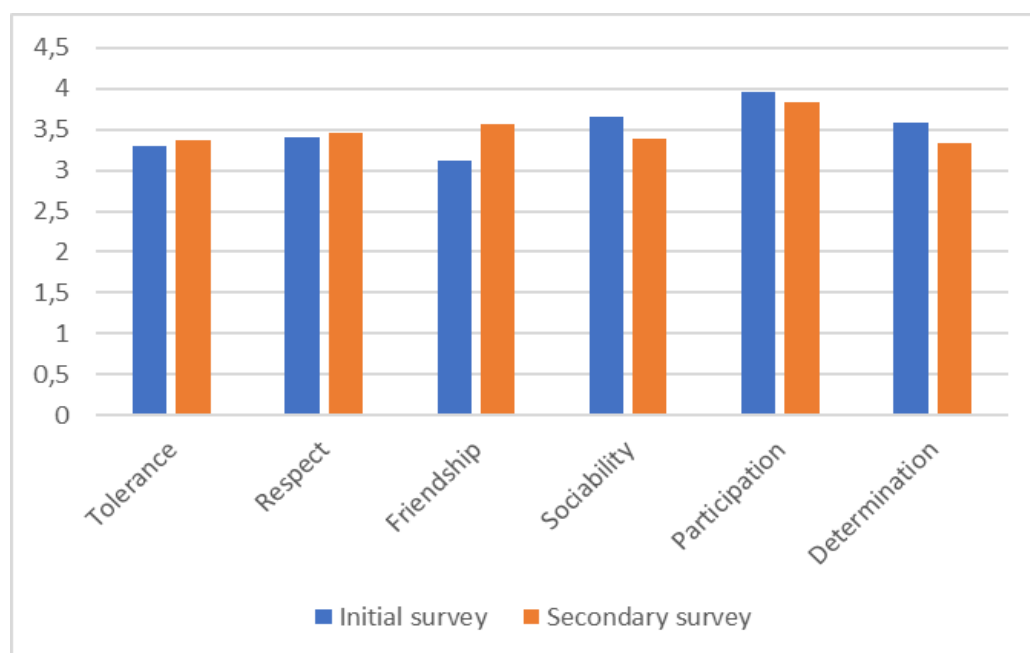
№	Response options	Number of respondents, %	
		Initial survey	Secondary survey
1	Debate preparation	19,75	23,50
2	Debate performance	43,25	36,50
3	Analysis of opponents' speeches	20,25	23,50
4	Your response option	16,75	16,50

Source: Compiled by the authors based on the results of the study

Both the first and the second surveys showed that the most attractive aspect of the debates is debate performance, which is quite logical and predictable because speaking at a debate is a kind of result of all the preceding preparations, an opportunity to show yourself, your position and public speaking skills. At the same time, the secondary survey showed that the number of those who find it interesting to prepare for the debates and to analyze the teams' presentations has increased. In our view, this indicates that students have become more aware of the importance not only of the debate performance itself but also of previous research activities, as well as of the subsequent summing up of the work done. Then, the students were asked to rank the development of their personal qualities and socio-personal skills through debates. The results are presented in Fig. 2.

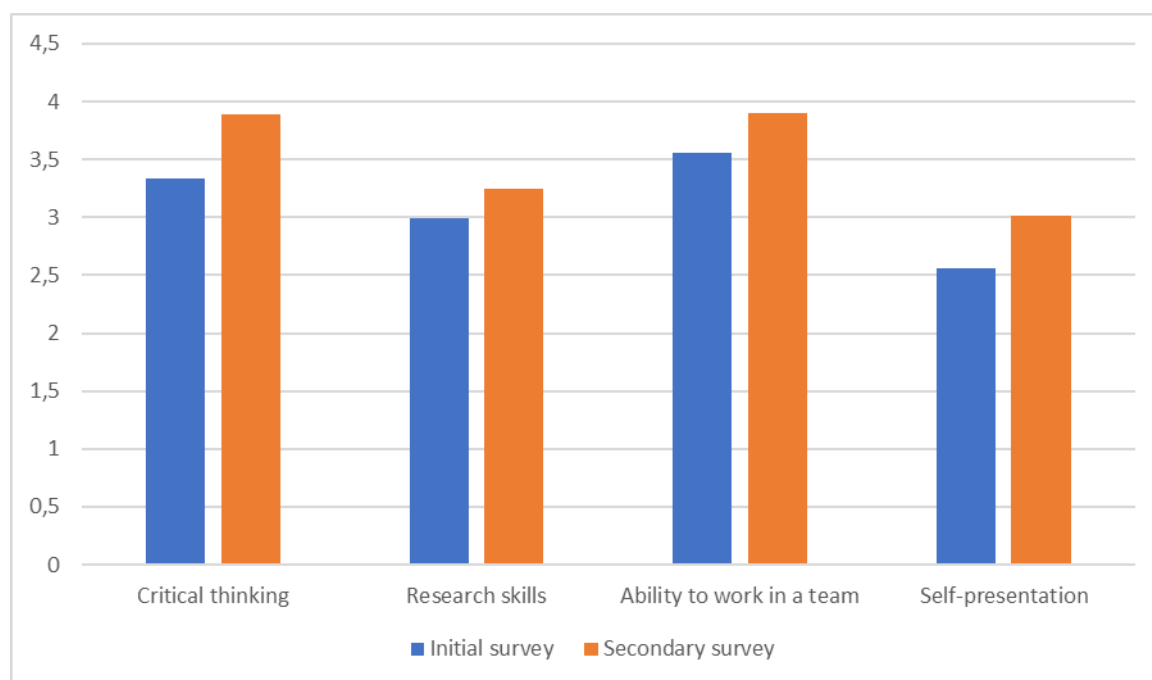
The first survey showed that preference was given to the categories of friendship, tolerance, and respect. During the second survey, the students chose such qualities as determination, tolerance, and sociability. The findings showed that before participating in the debates, students had emphasized interpersonal communication inside the group, while after it – business qualities and the ability to have a productive dialogue with strangers (Fig. 3).

Figure 2. Ranking of the development of respondents' personal qualities through debates



Source: Compiled by the authors based on the results of the study

Figure 3. Ranking of the development of respondents' social and personal qualities using online debates



Source: Compiled by the authors based on the results of the study

The first survey showed that the preference was given to such skills as critical research and the ability to work in a team. In the second survey, critical thinking took the first place. This result confirms the preliminary conclusions: if before the beginning of active participation in debates students were more focused on self-development, then after some time they refocused on the acquisition of socially significant competencies.

The values of the statistics were calculated according to formula (1), to which the numerical values X_1 and X_2 were entered. Thus, the value of the Student's coefficient was found. According to the obtained statistical indicators, the critical value of statistics with an error probability $\alpha \leq 0.05$ is $T\text{-Critical} = -2.95$. Comparing the design value and the critical value of the Criterion T and $T\text{-Critical}$, we accept that $T \leq T\text{-Critical}$, and therefore accept the hypothesis of different average values in the two frames. This confirms that at the end of the formative stage of the pedagogical experiment, the control and experimental groups of students are at different levels in terms of formation of their professional competences.

Summing up this two-phase survey, we should note that the technology of “online debates” had a significant impact on the development of students’ social and personal qualities: stimulated the development of their cognitive and communicative competences, contributed to the formation of research and self-presentation skills. During the debate, students developed tolerance, politeness, friendliness, ability to work in a team, and business communication skills. It can be assumed that the personal and significant competences formed through debates will have a positive impact on the further life and professional activity of young people.

4. Discussion

Pedagogical conditions, favorable for the formation of future philologists’ professional competences using the “online debate” technology, include:

- 1) psychological and age characteristics of the speakers;
- 2) interaction of participants based on subject-subject relations;
- 3) differentiated approach, which takes into account the needs, characteristics, and aptitudes of the participants;
- 4) implementation of the communication strategy;

5) the use of dialogue as a form of mutual activity of the debate participants, taking into account their personalities, originality of views, and relations with the world;

6) application of methods of independent mastery of knowledge based on the student's active participation in the debates;

7) group work;

8) students' mastering of research methods;

9) creation of success.

Derkach and Olender (2021) stress the importance of using dialogue as a form of interaction between debate participants. The discussion of professional issues, according to the researchers, contributes to the formation of professional competences during the debates. In turn, Dehtiarova et al., (2021) emphasize the importance of debates in the process of students' independent learning. This form of organization of educational work helps to increase students' interest in studying new material. At the same time, Wati and Palimbong (2021) and Zorwick and Wade (2016) could find no evidence of the effectiveness of debates as a full-fledged learning tool.

The study identified functionalities of debates in the formation of professional competences:

- debate technology is based on the real cases of educational, professional, and ideological situations;

- debate technology is integrated into the university's educational space as a platform for students' professional socialization;

- debate technology is implemented through interactive methods with the inclusion of various expertise.

It is important to note that Hotsynets (2022), Radojevic et al. (2019), and Sysoieva (2018) see the debates as the technology of problem-oriented education, as through debates it is possible to form professional competencies aimed at solving complex professional problems.

The logical structure of the technology "debates" contributes to the systematic development of professional competences through problem statements. Debates, due to integrity, personal orientation, and focus on students' self-education, as a pedagogical

technology may be applicable in both full-time and distance education. An important role of debates as a tool for distance education was examined by Poddany (2021).

As for professional competencies, it should be noted that instrumental competences are undoubtedly more tied to separate disciplines and activities than professional and personal competences. Professional competencies are integral, and their formation should not be associated with any particular discipline, as stated by Mathrani et al. (2021) and Holdhus et al. (2016). Only a group of highly specialized competences can be accurately localized in the educational process. This means that the formation of professional competencies requires various forms. That is why the technology "Online Debates" can be used both in training courses and in extracurricular activities.

The theoretical and practical importance of the study lies in the theoretical substantiation of the impact of the debates on the formation of the students' professional competences. The article expands conceptual understanding of the essence of debates in the educational process of high school. The methodical tools which can be included in the activities of debate teams and teachers of philological disciplines of HEIs were checked, generalized, and tested in practice.

Conclusions

The relevance of the study is due to the search for new ways of improving future philologists' professional competencies. Pedagogical conditions for online debates can create an environment for the formation of a real specialist. Conclusions on the results obtained. The implementation of pedagogical conditions that contribute to the formation of future philologists' professional competences is one of the key factors in improving the effectiveness of vocational training. The experiment was aimed at implementing the proposed model of future philologists' vocational training in the educational-information environment of the HEI using online debates. At each phase, appropriate pedagogical conditions were introduced to achieve the goal and the objectives of the phase. The content and forms of students' work during online debates were examined in detail. Thus, the described features of the implementation of this model have increased the level of formation of future philologists' professional competences. The results of the study can be used by all participants in the teaching and educational process during the preparation of online

educational debates. Thus, the described experience can be successfully implemented in the training of future philologists. Further research may be focused on improving the described techniques and tools for preparation of students-philologists for professional activities. Future research may also be aimed at finding new methods of forming competences that take into account the specifics of training students of different specialties.

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