

IRSTI 16.31

N.K. Gainolla¹, S. B. Tulepova¹

¹Suleyman Demirel University, Kaskelen, Kazakhstan

THE PECULIARITIES OF USING THE SOCRATIC QUESTIONING METHOD IN TEACHING SPEAKING

Abstract: The article describes the use of the Socratic questioning method, especially its use in foreign language lessons in teaching speaking. Types and examples of questions of the Socratic method are presented. It also indicates that by using this method it is possible to teach students to think logically and critically. The method also has a positive effect on the formation of identity and autonomy of the students, and in the acquiring skills to express their thoughts without fear and use the acquired knowledge in the real life situations. The examples and the kinds of questions that can be used to motivate speaking students are given. It also provides information on which points should be paid special attention in the process of implementation of the Socratic method to the lessons.

Key words: Socratic questioning method, Socratic questions, dialogue, critical thinking, logical thinking, autonomy.

Socrates was a Greek philosopher-idealist. Knowledge, he taught, is the concept of the general. He considered that to find the truth, it is necessary to have a special method, which requires reducing the studied subject to the general concept and on the basis of this concept to judge the subject. In teaching, Socrates used a dialogue. A dialogue is a kind of laboratory, a live search field. It cannot be alone, without the presence, or more precisely, without co-presence of two people at a joint search for the truth. The Socratic dialogue each of the interlocutors act equally. It is applied to the case when one of the participants of the dialogue is a teacher, and the other is a student. His method of teaching through dialogue, firmly entrenched in the world of pedagogy.

Some time ago, the Socratic method of teaching has been omitted from the educational system, but lately it has once again revived, so the use of dialogical forms in teaching foreign languages can make it easier to overcome the difficulties in the development and understanding of the language.

Socrates taught his students to engage in dialogue, debate, think logically. Socrates urged his pupil to consistently develop a controversial position, and brought him to the realization of the absurdity of the original approval, and then pushes a person on the right path and leads to the conclusion. This method of search for truth and learning is called Socratic. A question-answer training system is important in the Socratic method, the

essence of which is to teach logical thinking.

As questions arise curiosity, they also help teachers engage most of the students in speaking.

Socratic discussion allows students to develop and evaluate their thinking in comparison to that of other students. Since inevitably students respond to Socratic questions within their own points of view, the discussion inevitably becomes multi-dimensional. It is interactive. And its advantage from other methods is that it makes students active, they are not passive listeners, they are openers of the Nature's and the society, they are seekers of knowledge [1, p.12].

By routinely raising root questions and root ideas in a classroom setting, multiple points of view get expressed, but in a context in which the seminal ideas, which must be mastered to master the content, are deeply considered and their interrelationships established [2, p.16].

Over time, students learn from Socratic discussions a sense of intellectual discipline and thoroughness. They learn to appreciate the power of logic and logical thinking. They learn that all thoughts can be pursued in at least four directions:

1) Their origin: How did you come to think this? Can you remember the circumstances in which you formed this belief?

2) Their support: Why do you believe this? Do you have any evidence for this? What are some of the reasons why people believe this? In believing this, aren't you assuming that such and so is true?

3) Their conflicts with other thoughts: Some people might object to your position by saying How would you answer them? What do you think of this contrasting view?

4) Their implications and consequences: What are the practical consequences of believing this? What would we have to do to put it into action? What follows from the view that ...? Wouldn't we also have to believe that ... in order to be consistent? Are you implying that ...[2, p.17]?

As we can see here, Richard Paul suggests to ask questions in the given four formats in order to develop logical and critical thinking in students. Nevertheless, we can use them in teaching speaking effectively. For that reason, discussions and debates should be added to the lesson plans when teaching speaking is planned. A teacher can help his students to formulate questions or make examples of such questions at the beginning level.

To participate effectively in Socratic questioning, one must:

- listen carefully to what others say
- take what they say seriously
- look for reasons and evidence
- recognize and reflect upon assumptions
- discover implications and consequences
- seek examples, analogies, and objections

- seek to distinguish what one knows from what one merely believes
- seek to enter empathetically into others» perspectives or points of view
- be on the alert for inconsistencies, vagueness, and other possible problems in thought
- look beneath the surface of things
- maintain a healthy sense of skepticism
- be willing to helpfully play the role of devil's advocate [2, p 18].

Although "Socrates claimed that the Socratic method was not a teaching method but rather a method of philosophical inquiry, a way of seeking wisdom" [3, p. 77], it can well be successfully implemented in all areas of education including EFL teaching. However, certain aspects of this method do not adhere to the humanistic language teaching practices that are of high value in contemporary language education, and need to be revised. As Hyman suggests, "the question is, then, what to modify in the Socratic method in order to convert it into a teaching method" [3, p. 78]. The primary troubling element the Socratic thinking incorporates, that we should be alert to, is the potential chaos and turmoil it is likely to fabricate due to its intense and potentially infuriating nature. Oliver and Shaver, for instance, in a study of classroom discourse, uncovered the frightening truth that the Socratic Method can provoke negative emotional responses in students such as, but not limited to, disappointment, aggravation, stress, anxiety, and anger. Thus, several actions need to be taken to alter or eliminate the underlying causes of such dangerous reactions, all of which may severely limit the students' learning and the quality of our classrooms. All in all, the teachers' responsibility is to create an environment of competition, tolerance, and fun all at the same time, not a battlefield of harsh feelings or malicious encounters.

Hyman suggests several ways of abolishing the potential risks associated with the Socratic Method that has been mentioned above. Initially, unlike the field of Law where this method has been frequently used to overpower the individuals for the sake of finding the truth, the field of Education calls for special care, compassion and kindheartedness to establish a mutual understanding, trust and respect between the teacher and the students. This is particularly important in the case of foreign language learners who may already be feeling marginalized due to being forced to study a foreign language and its culture (i.e., compulsory EFL classes). Therefore, the teachers must ascertain that the students are not put down or dejected, but instead are inspired and fueled, throughout the questioning.

Otherwise, the teachers using the Socratic Method for instructional diversity and excellence would turn into magnets of revulsion seeking to disclose their students' weaknesses and lack of knowledge to talk them into their own way of thinking.

According to Hyman, in serving the purpose elucidated here, namely reducing the tension linked to the Socratic practice, teachers are advised to carry out three specific tasks. Initially, the teachers should keep the use of this method brief, as 10-15 minutes would be enough to arouse curiosity in a topic, and to practice critical thinking and sharing of ideas, without making the students feel like alleged suspects of a crime desperately being questioned. Secondly, the teachers can use humor and jokes to decrease the pressure that the Socratic questioning may result in, as inserting comedy in the dialectic may help balance the downsides of this method. Next, the students should be encouraged to concentrate on the characterization of the ideas, facts, and the meanings attached to them, as well as on the progression of their thinking, while their attention is diverted from the uncertainty and insecurity they may experience. Lastly, the teachers should realize that the Socratic Method is complex and sluggish in nature, as it requires a string of questions, each of which serves to bring forth the preceding responses before moving forward; thus, they should not rush the students, and persevere gradually, which can eventually help trim down periodically the students' likely unease [4, p5].

The next type of modification desired in the Socratic Method, as Hyman affirms, "involves the outcome of the dialogue" [4, p. 80]. Unlike Socrates' fellows who felt defeated and distraught at the end of the interchange, the end result we wish to produce by using this method in teaching is to create a sense of satisfaction and success in our students, or at least an impermanent feeling of relief and value. Yet, this may not be an easy task to accomplish, particularly at the early stages of the utilization of the method when the teachers keep the length of its operation short to lessen the latent negative effects. In any case, we should endeavor to create some sort of meaning so that the students will not feel worthless, distorted or lost, and whether they wind up

having a resolution and breakthrough or not at the end, they will feel the need to clarify and/or inquire further. Once these recommended changes and measures are executed, the Socratic Method can be used to successfully cover a variety of topics in teaching. However, one should recognize that this method is not as straightforward as it may come across, and that its practice requires numerous skills, meticulous preparation, intellectual strength, unremitting vigilance, and a never-ending patience. Considering the fact that the substance and direction of the dialogue is not known to the teachers in advance, it is crucial that the teachers understand the core qualities of the Socratic Method, and that they carefully analyze and grasp the essence of the chosen topic, put their superior inquiry and assessment skills into practice, persistently monitor their students' cognitive progress and affective reactions, and systematically advance the students' higher order thinking skills and adaptation of their ideas. Absence of the essential knowledge and expertise required of the leaders in Socratic teaching carries the risk of turning the exhausting dialogical trade, and the class time, into a "meandering bull session of little value" [3, p. 80].

As a final point, the teachers should establish a fair, inventive and enriching assessment system, rather than using long-established stringent grading based on the students' performance in the Socratic debate. The teachers should recognize that some type of formal evaluation should accompany the method's implementation for pedagogical purposes, as the students would then hit upon an educational rationale for it, and would be less likely to cultivate the delusion to see the Socratic Method as a way to dispute and appeal to the teacher figure, to their peers, and to the ideas that are different than their own. On the other hand, a view of this method as just another grading scheme may be perilous, as the dialogue and debate then turns into a testing session and/or discussion, and this may eliminate the very constructive outlook and purpose the method advocates. Therefore, a fine line between an effortless and practically nonexistent assessment procedure and a strict and damaging evaluation protocol should be established. The assessment criteria may be based on a rubric teachers can devise from a variety of print and/or online sources, or on a measure teachers and students can jointly write out after deliberation. Alternatively, in classrooms where student-centrism is of utmost importance, a self-assessment list or a seminar reflection questionnaire/survey can be employed. The Socratic Method, even with the suggested alterations, may not work well with each and every student group. A certain level of intellect and proficiency in the content area (English, in this case) is needed. For instance, this method may not be feasible for learners of English at lower levels, unless it is wholly simplified, which might then fail to trigger the students' thinking, or even if it might not, it could well be troublesome for the students to provide sharp expositions to issues highlighted in the dialogue. Similarly, additional modifications may be needed to use this method with

young learners. As much as children demonstrate the type of passion and curiosity we desire in Socratic teaching, they lack the autonomy, patience, self-control and maturity that one should not disregard to properly handle the use of this method [9, p 8]. With this being said, a capable group of students with the preferred proficiency and cognitive/maturity level does not necessarily guarantee success either. Thus, it is critical that the teachers are exceptionally familiar with their students, the richness of their life experiences, and their fervor for such a method so as to make an informed decision about whether this would expand their knowledge and perspective. Correspondingly, although the Socratic Method may benefit their students to a great extent, the teachers should avoid using it too often due to its tremendously demanding and lingering nature, which may enervate both the leader and the participants, and wipe out their craving for this method. Extended dialogues also have the potential to bring about dullness and to lead to distraction and dislike. Hence, replacing and/or blending it with other methods from time to time can greatly increase its reaching and the odds of obtaining better outcomes.

References

1. Даниярова А.Б. Бастауыш сыныпта интерактивті технологияларды қолдану // Елорда ғылыми хабаршысы. – 2013. – № 7–9. – С. 15-24
2. Paul, Richard W. Critical Thinking: What Every Person Needs to Survive in a Rapidly Changing World / Paul, W. Richard. – Rohnert Park, CA: Center for Critical Thinking and Moral Critique, Sonoma State Univ., 1990 – 78 p.
3. Hyman R.T. Ways of teaching. Philadelphia / R.T. Hyman. – PA: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1970. – 276 p.
4. Servet Çelik. Socratic Method: Dialectic and Its Use in Teaching Culture in EFL Classrooms // Humanizing Language Teaching Magazine. – 2007. – N 9. – P. 56-65.

Н.Қ. Ғайнолла¹, С.Б. Тулепова¹

¹*Сулейман Демирел атындағы университет, Қаскелен, Қазақстан*

СОКРАТТЫҚ СҰРАҚ ҚОЮ ӘДІСІН СӨЙЛЕУГЕ ҮЙРЕТУДЕ ҚОЛДАНУДЫҢ ЕРЕКШЕЛІКТЕРІ

Аңдатпа: Берілген мақалада Сократтық сұрақ қою әдісінің тіл сабақтарында қолданылуы, әсіресе шет тілінде сөйлеуге үйретудегі маңыздылығы ашылып жазылған. Сократтық сұрақтардың түрлері мен мысалдары берілген. Осы әдісті қолдана отырып, тіл меңгеруші оқушылардың сөйлеу қабілеттерімен қатар логикалық ойлауға және сыни тұрғыдан ойлауға үйретуге болатыны көрсетілген. Өз бетімен әрекет ете алатын тұлға болып қалыптасуына, тіл сабақтарында өз пікірін қорықпай айта білуіне және шынайы өмірде мектеп қабырғасында алған білімдерін

қолдана алуына оң әсері бар екені көрсетілген. Сократтық сұрақ қою әдісінде қолданылатын сұрақ түрлері көрсетіліп, оларды дұрыс қолданғанда оқушыларды сөйлеуге ынталандыра алатындығы баяндалады. Сонымен бірге сократтық әдісті қолдану барысында қандай пункттерге баса назар аудару керектігі туралы мәліметтер көрсетілген.

Кілт сөздер: Сократтық сұрақ қою әдісі, сократтық сұрақтар, диалог, сын тұрғысынан ойлау, логикалық ойлау, автономдық.

Н.К. Гайнолла¹, С.Б. Тулепова¹

¹ Университет Сулеймана Демиреля, Каскелен, Қазақстан

ОСОБЕННОСТИ ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЯ СОКРАТОВСКОГО МЕТОДА ВЫСПРАШИВАНИЯ В ОБУЧЕНИИ ГОВОРЕНИЮ

Аннотация: В данной статье откровенно изложено использование метода сократовского выпрашивания, в особенности, использование данного метода на уроках иностранного языка в обучении говорению. Приведены виды и примеры вопросов сократовского метода. Также указывается, что с помощью данного метода можно развить у учащихся логическое и критическое мышление. Метод также положительно влияет на становление личности и автономности учащихся, на приобретение навыков излагать свои мысли свободно и использование приобретенных знаний в жизни. Приведены примеры и виды вопросов, которые можно использовать для мотивирования говорения учащихся. Также дается информация о том, на какие пункты нужно обращать особое внимание при внедрении сократовского метода на уроках.

Ключевые слова: Метод сократовского выпрашивания, сократовские вопросы, диалог, критическое мышление, логическое мышление, автономность.