

VI International Forum on Teacher Education

# Students' Psychological and Pedagogical Orientation towards the Development of Discussion Culture in Digital Education

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## Abstract

The problem of students' psychological and pedagogical orientation towards the development of discussion culture in digital education is caused by the challenges presented by digitalization of the educational system. Theoretical and methodological research features the problems of students' psychological and pedagogical orientation towards the discussion culture in digital education. They are reflected in features of applied methods such as modeling, questioning, testing, observation, psychological and pedagogical experiment, extrapolation, expert methods.

The research is guided by the theoretical framework revealing the content of discussion culture, its concept, essence, structural and functional composition. Discussion culture is considered an integral characteristic of personal and professional qualities of students. Communicative competency is the basis for the development of discussion culture. The most important conditions of students' psychological and pedagogical orientation towards self-development of discussion culture in digital education are involvement of students in discussion situations, activation of 'self-processes' (self-knowledge, self-determination, self-improvement, self-realization, self-evaluation), active use of heuristics methods and prescriptions, application of equal criteria related to the discussion culture. Indicators of the discussion culture are communicative and discussion competencies, logic, heuristics, critical thinking, technological thinking, manifestation of positive ethical and aesthetic qualities during discussions and disputes, the desire for the development of personal and professional qualities.

The study theoretically substantiates and integrates psychological and pedagogical conditions that focus on the development of the discussion culture among students in the context of digital education. The article defines the forms, methods and means of students' orientation towards the development of the discussion culture.

*Keywords:* digital education, human transformation, self-development, discussion culture, interactive educational practice.

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Published by Kazan federal university and peer-reviewed under responsibility of IFTE-2020 (VI International Forum on Teacher Education)

## **Introduction**

The problem of the psychological and pedagogical orientation of students towards self-development of a discussion culture is analyzed in various fields of science such as cultural studies, pedagogy, general psychology, social psychology, social philosophy, linguistics, psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, and other fields. The works that have important methodological and theoretical significance in relation to the development, including self-development, of discussion culture among students are the works of Bekhterev (1921), Bodalev (1995), Andreeva (2009), Ilyin (2014), Znakov (2005), Andreev (2015), Valeeva (2014).

For the development of the discussion culture among students, it is important to implement the following psychological and pedagogical conditions:

- teachers should systemically involve students in discussions of problem situations that exist in the educational process;
- such ‘self’ processes as self-development, self-knowledge, self-determination, self-improvement, creative self-realization and self-control should be activated;
- during the process of systematic application of discussion forms and methods in educational activities, the teacher should involve students in heuristic dialogues with the use of heuristic cues such as “How to win an argument?”, “How to criticize complying with ethical norms?”, “How to refute an opponent?” etc.;
- pedagogical assessment and students’ self-assessment of the discussion culture should be based on specifically created indicators and criteria.

The effectiveness of higher pedagogical education modernization largely depends on whether the university teacher can orient students towards creative self-development, including the development of discussion culture in digital education.

## **Purpose and objectives of the study**

The purpose and objectives of the study are the theoretical justification and integration of psychological-pedagogical conditions of students’ orientation towards self-development that includes the development of discussion culture in digital education.

## **Literature review**

In recent years, there has been an increased interest in the problems related to communication and development of students' discussion culture. It has to do with the fact that communication is an important factor in socialization and an essential component in the development of a person's intellectual abilities. Despite the existence of different approaches to determining the concept of communication, it is considered a special type of human activity. Particular attention should be paid to the research carried out by Bekhterev (1921) who viewed the issue through social reflexology. According to Bekhterev (1921), communication is the mechanism forming groups of people and providing conditions for socialization. Bekhterev (1994) determined two specific types of communication: imitation and suggestion stating that "imitation builds on communication with others which then contributes to a kind of mutual induction and mutual suggestion developed through cooperation" (p. 31). The scholar believed that the influence of one person on another in the process of communication stems out from unconscious infusion of ideas, feelings and sensations and without relying on logical forms of persuasion. He singles out the conditions under which such an infusion happens to be the most effective: common mood, personal experiences, common goal, and common ideas. Bekhterev (1994) was the first who started examining the problem of communication in Russian social psychology.

Ananyev (2001) considered communication a specific type of activity through which a person builds relationships with other people. He believed that communication defines the governing prefix of personality development and contributes to the person's mental health. It is particularly important to consider the concept that Ananyev (2001) indicated in the problem of communication – participants' perception of each other. This concept was then developed by Bodalev (1995).

Znakov's (2005, p. 125) generalization regarding the essential characteristics of the communication category is of particular importance:

"I refer to communication as the form of persons' interaction which is initially motivated by their desire to reveal mental qualities of each other, and during which interpersonal relationships are formed. Joint activities are further understood as situations when persons' interpersonal communication is driven by common goals or the intention to solve common tasks."

Considering the aforementioned and applying the concepts "culture", "psychological and pedagogical orientation", one can define the concept of "discussion culture" that characterizes the process of psychological and pedagogical orientation of students towards the personal development of discussion culture.

Thus, we infer that student's discussion culture is an integral characteristic of student's motivation and value orientation, knowledge, skills and abilities, which manifest in aspiration to self-development, self-realization through communicative, ethic, reflexive, and estimating functions that are revealed in the situations of discussion during educational activities (Evsetsova, 2016). Discussion culture is a part of the communicative culture that integrates and reflects value orientations, communicative competencies of students, their ability to participate in disputes and defend their views and beliefs. In connection to this, it is essential to consider the concepts "development" and "self-development". Andreev (2015) notes that there are two essential differences between the processes of self-development and development:

- 1) Changes in personality are determined by the purposeful influence of the individual on oneself;
- 2) Changes occur not only in the motives, intellectual, and emotional spheres, but also in the processes of self-knowledge, self-determination, self-improvement, self-realization, and self-government. At the same time, the main mechanism in both processes is the creative resolution of conflicts.

In other words, to begin with, it is essential to activate self-processes provided that the most significant backbone elements of "self" are self-knowledge, self-determination, self-management, self-realization, and self-improvement.

## **Methodology**

Theoretical and methodological aspects of the research problem are reflected in the research methods used for this study. The methods are modeling, surveys, observation, psychological and pedagogical experiment, interpretation of factors and conditions of the psychological and pedagogical orientation of students towards self-development of discussion culture, extrapolation.

The research goals are threefold: (1) to develop a conceptual model of the psychological and pedagogical orientation of students-teachers towards the discussion culture in the context of digital education; the model includes goals, objectives, conditions, indicators, and performance criteria; (2) to clarify and specify the concept "students' discussion culture", i.e. the content, development of a diagnostic battery of measures including questionnaires, indicators, criteria allowing to study the individual level of students' (future teachers) discussion culture, based on the methods of extrapolation, comparison, and interpretation of factors and conditions of the psychological and pedagogical orientation of students; (3) to systematize psychological-pedagogical conditions of students' orientation towards the culture of discussion.

Experiments were conducted at Bashkir State University and Kazan (Volga region) Federal University. In the first stage of the research, the research problem, goals, hypothesis, and research categories were formulated. In the second stage, a formative experiment was conducted, and the basic psychological-pedagogical conditions for students' orientation towards self-development of discussion culture were identified, and the structural elements of the model of self-development of discussion culture were clarified. At the third stage, research results were summarized; methodological recommendations for implementation of research results in the process of teaching students at the universities were developed.

## **Results**

The analysis of the research problem showed that the problem of the psychological and pedagogical orientation of students towards self-development of the discussion culture in the context of digital education presents an important task in modern education. However, it is not fully developed in the modern didactics of higher education being an essential component for the development and self-development of pedagogical skills. Although there is no comprehensive analysis of the features of students' discussion culture, in pedagogy, methods for activating students' discussions have been developed.

Based on the theoretical analysis, the research identified the concept, nature, structural and functional composition of the discussion culture of future teachers. Students' discussion culture is viewed as an integral characteristic of personal and professional qualities that includes motivational and value orientations, communicative and discussion competencies, logical, technological and critical thinking, heuristics, erudition, tolerance, and the sense of tact in communication, self-development and self-realization abilities, which students show and develop in various types of discussion situations. Discussion and communicative competencies are fundamental for the development of discussion culture. The most important conditions of students' psychological and pedagogical orientation towards self-development of discussion culture in digital education are the involvement of students in discussion situations, activation of students' self-processes (self-knowledge, self-determination, self-control, self-realization, self-evaluation) during discussions, active use of heuristic methods. Also, teachers and students should use equal criteria for assessment and self-assessment of the levels of discussion culture. Indicators of the discussion culture are the value-semantic orientation of the student in a discussion situation, communicative and discussion competencies, heuristics, technological, logical and critical thinking, the manifestation of positive ethical and aesthetic qualities during discussions and disputes, desire to develop personal and professional qualities. The criteria for the development and self-development of the students' discussion culture are students' orientation towards success and significance of participation in the situation of discussion; flexibility and systematic application of communicative and discussion competencies, heuristic, heuristics,

technological, logical and critical thinking, erudition, tolerance, the level of self-development, self-realization, and other “self” processes.

The level of the discussion culture can be determined judging from the content and the structure of the discussion culture of a certain student and can be assessed based on the basic indicators of discussion culture and following an appropriate set of criteria. To assess the effectiveness of the development of the discussion culture, we identified the following theoretical indicators: value-motivational, cognitive, and competency-based.

Components of the discussion culture are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Indicators and criteria of the discussion culture

Indicators and criteria of the discussion culture	Criteria of the discussion culture
<b>Value-motivational</b>	
Communicative and developmental motivation of discussion	Priority of self-development of communicative competencies in discussions; understanding of the importance of communicative competencies for the purposes of self-development; self-education and creative self-realization; understanding the importance of communicative competencies in teaching.
Cognitive and developmental motivation of discussion	Priority of cognitive interests in discussions, aspiration to implement cognitive developmental goals of the educational discussion, creative activity in the advancement of ideas.
Personal significance of active forms of education and self-education	Assessment of the significance and effectiveness of the use of interactive technologies in education; purposeful development of self-education skills during preparation for the educational

		discussion; unbiased self-assessment of the level of development of communication and discussion skills; the desire to increase the level of emotional culture during discussions; aspiration for success.
	Aspiration to self-improvement and creative self-realization	Conscious aspiration to develop logical, heuristics and critical thinking during discussions; conscious aspiration to develop the discussion culture; conscious aspiration to develop erudition, completeness and depth of knowledge, both in the field of the subject of discussion and beyond; conscious desire to broadcast accumulated knowledge.
<b>Cognitive</b>	Common and professional communicative and speech knowledge	Knowledge of verbal and non-verbal possibilities of self-expression; knowledge of scientific foundations in monologues and dialogues; knowledge of the essence and principles of discussion; knowledge of the specifics of pedagogical communication.
	Erudition, knowledge of the disciplines of general and vocational training	Depth of knowledge; consistency of knowledge; latitude of intersubjective connections; argumentation of personal point of view; scientific validity of judgments.
	Knowledge of psychological and pedagogical foundations of communicative culture	Knowledge in the field of forecasting and resolving conflicts; knowledge in the field of communication culture; knowledge of the discussion rules.

	Ability for self-development and self-education	Conscious aspiration to self-development of communication culture, skills of self-knowledge and self-diagnostics of level of communicative qualities; use of opportunities for self-education and self-improvement of communicative and general culture.
<b>Competency-related</b>	General educational communicative and discussion competencies	Ability to listen and understand; ability to describe and explain; ability to ask questions; ability to criticize; ability to defend one's position; ability to make value judgements; ability to generalize and make conclusions.
	Logical, heuristic, and critical thinking	Ability to concentrate on the essence of a problem, independence of judgement, scientific views, non-standard thinking.
	Communication and leadership skills	Heuristics, goodwill, leadership, rationality, democracy, sense of humor, empathy.
	Making creative and responsible decisions	Self-analysis, self-criticism, predictive thinking, high level of responsibility.

During the diagnostic stage of the research, we identified the following diagnostic levels of students' discussion culture: intuitive, cognitive, reflexive, and creative. The levels were defined according to the criteria of the discussion culture.

The intuitive level of personal discussion culture pertains to the lowest stage of its development, i.e. communicative, logical-heuristic, emotional-volitional, and self-evaluative components. At this level, the components of the discussion culture are fragmentary and unsystematic and are insufficient for the formation of the value-motivational, cognitive, and competence-based foundations of the discussion culture. The intuitive level of the discussion culture classifies students as unsuccessful in communicative

educational activities. Students with an intuitive level of the discussion culture may need an enhanced program of socialization and creative self-realization. At this level, students may have a passive or even negative attitude to discussions as a form of learning as they are associated with the lack of developmental motivation, low level of communication skills, unsatisfactory knowledge of the topic of discussion, and poor erudition.

The cognitive level assumes a cognitive step in the development of the discussion culture. At this level, general communicative skills are already formed; there is satisfactory knowledge of general and professional disciplines, basic ideas in the field of psychological and pedagogical foundations of discussion culture. Such knowledge and skills determine positive attitudes to active forms of learning, interest to the theme of discussion and its process. However, they are not reflected in motivation for discussion activities and are insufficient for self-improvement and self-education. In this case, students may participate in discussions but their productivity remains low.

The reflexive level of the development of students' discussion culture assumes the presence of communicative knowledge and the system of competencies as a part of a communicative component; awareness of the communicative, developmental, and cognitive values of the discussion for creative self-development; self-analysis of the level of the discussion culture indicators; the importance of active educational forms necessary for self-education; high level of personal interest; competence; involvement in the discussion. Also, communicative and leadership skills together with low levels of conflicts in communication are manifested. As a result, there is a high level of productivity, however, the generation of ideas is insufficient, and creative potential is rather limited.

The creative level of students' discussion culture is characterized by high levels of development in most of the twelve criteria of the discussion culture. The main feature of the creative level is the purposeful development and application of self-development skills during preparation for the discussion; extensive cross-subject knowledge; the use of knowledge for argumentation of judgements; the ability to ask questions and to find answers. High efficiency of discussion activities is manifested in the generation of ideas, search for extraordinary solutions, creative approaches, low rate of conflicts, tolerance, and empathy. Students quickly build communication with partners in the group, assume a leadership position, are focused on success, and have a motivational effect on others. This is the most promising and successful type.

The research experiment was conducted in three stages. The stages reflected the sequence of the formation of the main components of students' discussion culture (communicative, logical-heuristic, emotional-volitional and self-evaluative). This classification is conventional as the components of the discussion culture are formed systemically. The experiment confirmed the increase in the level of the discussion culture in students. The discussion culture was proven to be effective and decisive in the achievement of self-development goals along with communicative, logical-heuristic, emotional-volitional, and self-estimative components. Forms, methods, and tools for self-development of students' discussion culture are defined in the study. Preference is given to discussion forms and methods. The conceptual model of students' discussion culture ensures the proportionality of all components of the discussion culture, the conformity of forms, methods and tools to certain types of educational activities in the conditions of digital education.

### **Discussions**

The problem of students' psychological and pedagogical orientation towards the discussion culture in the context of digital education stems from the global challenges of digitalization in the educational system. Further research will focus on the questions of how the role and status of the teacher will be transformed in the digital world; what ways of development of innovative interactive educational practices can be identified; what risks for the creative self-development can be predicted in a hyper-informational environment and digitalization of society.

### **Conclusion**

As a result of the theoretical research that examined the content of discussion culture, the concept, essence, structural and functional composition of the students' discussion culture were determined. Students' discussion culture is an integral characteristic of personal and professional qualities. It includes motivational and value orientations, communicative and discussion competencies, logic, heuristic, critical and technological thinking, erudition, tolerance and tact in communication, self-development and self-realization, all of which students demonstrate and develop in various types of discussion situations. Discussion and communicative competencies form the basis for development, including self-development, of discussion culture. The most important conditions of students' psychological and pedagogical orientation towards self-development of discussion culture in digital education are involvement of students in discussion situations, activation of 'self' processes (self-knowledge, self-determination, self-control, self-realization, self-evaluation), active use of heuristic methods. Also, teachers and students should use equal criteria when evaluating and self-evaluating levels of the discussion culture. Indicators of the discussion

culture are the value-semantic orientation of the student in a discussion situation, communicative and discussion competencies, logic, heuristic, critical, and technological thinking, the manifestation of positive ethical and aesthetic qualities during discussions and disputes, development of personal and professional qualities. Criteria determining the level of development of students' discussion culture are students' orientation to success in the discussion situations and significance of participation in it, flexibility and systematic application of communicative and discussion competencies, logic, heuristic and criticality of judgment and conclusions, erudition, tolerance and the sense of tact in discussions and disputes, the level of 'self' processes development (self-development, self-realization, etc.)

The research results are practically important as they allow using theoretical conclusions to improve the development of the discussion culture and make it more efficient. Also, practice-oriented didactic postulates were formulated and conditions, indicators and criteria of effectiveness of the discussion culture were identified. During the research, questionnaires and methods for evaluating and self-evaluating of the level of students' discussion culture were designed.

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