



APPROACHES TO DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF MEDICAL STUDENTS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the aspects of teaching medical communication to Uzbek ESP learners. Two aspects of medical communication have been explored: medical communication and the communication in preventive medicine. First, this paper focused on the findings related to teach foreign languages to medical students. Key differences were found between therapists and hygienist-epidemiologists interactions. Next, the article described the offered approaches and methods for developing professional communicative competence of medical students in foreign languages, acknowledged the importance of designing role play activities relevant to specialists of preventive medicine.

KEY WORDS: *aspects of medical communication, preventive medicine, role play activities.*

DISCUSSION

The requirements for training specialists vary together with changes in political, social and professional spheres. These changes have impact on the quality of training specialists and serve as the reference point for selecting the curriculum content and teaching methods.

Despite the wide range of research works addressed to developing medical students' communicative competence in a foreign language, there are numerous issues in teaching medical communication. One area identified as problematic is teaching foreign languages to professionals of preventive medicine.

The research analysis revealed that medical communication have been explored extensively elsewhere and consists of doctor-patient or nurse-patient interactions in an in-patient hospital setting. Nevertheless, it is important to note the fact that such approach doesn't include the communication of preventive medicine professionals from an ESP perspective. However, medical communication doesn't consist only of doctor-patient or nurse-patient interactions, but it was found to have another aspect, which represented in the current study, particularly in Uzbekistan. The findings showed that preventive medical communication consists of hygienist-epidemiologist-people or patients, hygienist-epidemiologist-employers and employees of plants or representatives of organizational settings, foreign colleagues and medical experts' interactions. Doctor-patient and nurse-patient communication includes

having rapport and empathy. However, the specialists of preventive medicine actively participate in intercultural communication than therapists, and their communication should include being decisive, reasonable and tolerant in times of crisis. Hygienist-epidemiologists need to communicate with different professionals in different spheres of social life (employers and employees, representatives of international medical projects).

There is a need to explore these aspects of medical communication. Many new approaches to teaching foreign languages require a methodological analysis of the problem and the development of a new concept. These aspects show the relevance of this chosen topic.

There are two aspects to developing the personality of medical specialists in universities. The first is organizing learning process considering the proficiency level in foreign language, applying professionally oriented approach and the second is using appropriate methods, organizing communication through offered techniques.

By engaging students in active cognitive activities, we can develop professional communication qualities in foreign language. At this stage, the age of students coincides with the formation of personal views, acquiring values, and understanding the essence of their profession. Therefore, we should develop methodical system for developing professional communicative competence in foreign language during the study medical sciences.

The literature on the methodology of teaching foreign languages in the eighties of the last century



offered the intensive system of teaching foreign languages, which later became known as the system of communicative teaching. The basis of this method is the suggestopedic teaching system developed by G.Loanov in the seventies of the last century. This teaching system is based on three principles:

- suggestopedia positively changes the attitude towards learning a foreign language, activates internal memory capacity, prevents mental stress, promotes successful learning and increase self-confidence, and, in general, enhances the student's full potential;
- suggestopedia decreases anxiety, relaxing music inspires, learners performances and playing drama reduce fatigue and make learning language enjoyable;
- suggestopedia teaches to comprehend foreign language and use speech patterns in various social situations. [8.131-137]

It was important to study some of the innovative approaches in the world linguistics over the past three decades. The most important of these is the issue of developing communicative competence of ESP learners. Another achievement is the methodological idea of attitude towards language learning. In this regard, R.C.Gardner, G.Loanov, J.Jalolov recommended "attitude" to learn. [5, 7, 1] Students' attitude to foreign language learning is a key factor of learning, an instrument to control the behavior of learner in a specific speech situation while at the same time stimulating the students' learning. [5]

All the aforementioned methodical systems can be used in teaching foreign languages to the students of preventive medicine. We tried to develop an effective form of teaching system for Uzbek students combining every element of above discussed language teaching methods.

In recent years, language educators all over the world have been widely using role play activities as a teaching method. Philosophers, psychologists, ethnographers, anthropologists, and linguists have developed game theory as a form of human activity in detail.

V.Wundt studied the game as an analogue of practice and work activity. "Game stimulates to work," he wrote. [4. -9]

The theoretical foundations of using role plays and simulation activities in higher education have been extensively studied by M.Altun, A.A.Verbitsky, V.Littlewood, E.Milrou, N.Pern. Role-plays are different in terms of teaching aim: they can be differentiated between drama, research-oriented, career-oriented, role play activities for developing language skills, managerial, communicative, and activity-based. The main purpose of using role play activities is to involve students in the learning process and to develop steady motives for learning.

We have tried to incorporate role plays intended for personality traits development into foreign language learning process. Career-oriented role play activity is a

method of teaching based on the modeling person's activity, in which learners can practice the situations that they face in their future profession and also practicing native speakers performing speech.

The research analysis showed the above discussed principles can be effectively applied to preventive medical communication. For example, in modeling communication between hygienists and population, interaction in organizing health measures among public, problems that can appear in examining the sources of diseases. In this way, we modeled the communication of preventive medicine.

Organizing effective communication in a foreign language is a complex task, which requires special skills and develop listening, questioning, and communication skills. During the conversation, special attention is paid to being genuine and tolerant in communication, listening attentively to the communicator's ideas, being approachable, determined, sincere and respectful. The professional communication situation is modeled. The study revealed the possibility of forming some qualities of preventive medical professional. These qualities include: interacting with a foreign colleague, working autonomously, working in a team, communicating with the public and patients, making speech before public, acquiring the rules of medical etiquette, being decisive, showing respect to other cultures, self-esteem aspiration, emergency response, preventive medical communication style, communication ethics, specialist image.

The study also provided a clear definition of the place and time of communication in foreign language at medical university. At the initial stage of the English course, the learning components encourage students in speech situations, such as "sanitary examination and evaluation of the object", and the communication tasks should be gradually complicated. Speech situations are the content of teaching foreign language. The research results showed that organizing teaching foreign languages on the bases of professionally oriented problem solving tasks create the process of natural communication. Therefore, efforts have been made to model speech communication and select problematic situations, involve them to real preventive medical problem situations. Standard and various problem solving tasks are also important in creating speech situations.

The professional problems, which students understand and address, are reflected in their speech situations. The professional problem solving activities presented below are the speech material for modeling communication:

problems arousing in medical international relations. Student-doctors always play some role in social discourse in speech-based activities that reflect interactions. They may be preventive medical experts and residents, epidemiologist and epidemiologist, hygienist and supervised objects, foreign medical experts, or representatives and principals of the plants



and factories. The role is a functional aspect of preventive medical expert's status, which determines the person's position, rights and responsibilities in the system of relationships. Problems with social status and role-playing games can be seen in the relationship between ethical and professional activities.

While determining the learning objective, it is necessary to select type of collaborative activity considering the individual experience of the students. [2. 93-97, 8, 10. 4-14] Each type of speech situation has its own language means. Speech situations should serve as motivation for the students to speak. Speech situations created on the life situations have great impact on learners and an important learning tool in speech communication.

Studies showed that EFL students tend to feel anxiety and excitement in intercultural communication. E.K.Horwitz and J.A.Coup provided a series of recommendations for teachers to overcome the classroom anxiety in learning a foreign language. In particular, they suggested to use role-plays to avoid the stress and educators can easily encourage students to learn other cultures and cultural norms.

The research revealed that the students' of preventive medicine will learn how to greet, share ideas and opinions, making comment, introduce themselves in intercultural communication and understand subtleties of intercultural interaction in foreign language through playing variety of roles, such as participating in the World Health Organization's projects, medical exhibitions, supermarket inspections, Nobel Prize ceremonies. This technology teaches students to use facial expressions, body language in different discourse situations. One of the most important aspects of using role-playing games is developing a hygienist-epidemiologist's communication style, communication behavior in a foreign language, developing communication skills and communicator image of the specialist and the formation of professional communicative competence.

Another teaching tool for speech management technology is the role play cards for participants. It contains all specific features of the communicators. The recommendations on this card will serve as a personal basis for the participant in the interaction. This type of verbal supports provide stimulation for learning. By introducing this type of professional communication framework into the learning process (or the establishment of a professional framework for the learning process), teaching and learning becomes more effective and more manageable. It also helps to take into account the professional interests of students and improves their language training.

Students will focus on using language units for communicative purposes. This will have a positive effect on their speaking ability. Interviewees should be able to guess quickly changing situations in the process and be ready to respond. Reserved and unconfident students can easily play a role and repeat somebody's

words during conversation, and respond more effectively to the stimulus given in the interview. Therefore, the learners are able to overcome the psychological barriers in the conversation by practicing on someone's role.

Despite the fact, that much attention is being paid to developing foreign language skills, the technology of speaking in a foreign language in medical field is not adequately developed.

In role-plays directed to developing reading and listening skills, instructional material should consist of audio and reading texts and video material. This technology is effective as it includes a wide range of career specific topics, improves verbal and nonverbal communication skills, creative abilities, provides comprehensible input, and decreases anxiety. Participants of the interaction feel the need in sharing information. In this respect, Skalkin's position on the role of speech situation in dialogic discourse is noteworthy. He considered dialogic discourse as "a combination of thematically organized communicative situation and communication desire carried out by two or more interlocutors in speech act". [3]

The traditional presentation of speaking situations is also reflected in the distribution of roles. Students can chose their roles after reviewing the problem presented. When communication process focuses on solving professional problems, four different students' creative abilities are revealed. The first one is the role of hygienist-epidemiologist based on the students' level of knowledge. The other students are able to see their level of knowledge through imitation roles and compare their performance with excellent learners. Third, students develop team-working skills by playing imitational roles. At the same time, students will develop the quality of "help in any situation" as defined in the doctor's oath during working together on the scenarios. [6. 628-631]

It does not appear in any other form of communicative activity. The student is able to express his hero's actions through verbal communication and foresee the action of the hero in the role assigned to him. Therefore, this method of teaching, a dialogue, is particularly effective in teaching medical students, develops speaking skills in foreign languages, and professional qualities in future hygienist-epidemiologists, as well as their communicative skills in the implementation of state sanitary control.

In the process of modeling communication, students also improve their professional qualities such as speech etiquette of the medical expert, being sociable, and the ability to make decisions in different situations and in times of crisis, and learners will be motivated in the subject matter.

In EAP teaching, it is important to take into account not only the means of teaching, but also its personality-forming, controlling, diagnostic functions, in other words, it should be suggested as a component of the linguistic approach.



Role plays require modeling scenarios, career specific games, and role-plays as a form of collaborative creative activity. Researchers who investigate such approaches also acknowledge the emotionality of the process and, in some cases, being deeply involved in playing roles. Such enthusiasm of the students is related to the game activities, and as a result, they defend their viewpoint, try their best, and can feel satisfaction from the game. Therefore, even though role-plays are conditional, the emotions of the participants are natural; it is reflected on the development of critical thinking ability during solving professional problems.

It is useful to apply simulation-games as a term that fully cover the essence of these situations, as their professional and speech skills are developed simultaneously in practice.

The data analysis of the research proved the effectiveness organizing foreign language teaching at preventive medical departments on the bases of simulation activities that deal with the situations like sanitary inspections and sanitary evaluation of the establishments, checking food quality, participating in conferences, organizing contests, health measures on improving public health education and sanitation state, professional role-play activities in the form of reports or projects on developing anti-epidemic measures and are specific to the hygienist-epidemiologist. These activities are also effective in improving professional skills.

Summarizing the above, it is worth noting that the introduction of professionally oriented English language teaching system opens up great opportunities for medical students to develop communication skills in a foreign language.

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