

Professionally Oriented Foreign Language Training For Medical Students

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Abstract: In recent years, continuing medical education has undergone significant changes, both in terms of the theoretical basis and methodology used, and in the prospects of what and how it should provide. As accreditation and certification educational programs become more widespread, issues of effectiveness (quality control) in medical education have received greater attention. The search and implementation of new pedagogical technologies have become an integral part of the learning process, including foreign languages. Linguistic education at a medical university contributes to the humanization of professional education and the formation of the personality of the future manager, provided that the humanitarian essence is highlighted in this process and the discipline “Foreign Language” is integrated with other humanitarian ones and medical disciplines.

Key words: modeling, forecasting, preparation, innovative technologies, efficiency improvements, innovative educational materials, listening speech, media resources, exchange of opinions, language skill training, group work, project activities.

New challenges faced by the global community have highlighted the paramount importance of the medical profession in preserving and maintaining human health and, as a result, demonstrated the importance of high-quality training of medical personnel capable of responding to modern challenges in healthcare “by methods of modeling, forecasting and anticipating the future” [1]. Training of a specialist aimed at improving general professional and professional competencies depending on the chosen area of training; development and application of modern innovative technologies for providing medical care; The development of domestic medicine and science is a priority task of higher medical education.

Training a competent specialist takes many years and is a painstaking and time-consuming process. According to a number of authors, improving the educational environment, increasing the motivational component, as well as the use of the latest methods and technologies in the educational process is intended to help improve the efficiency and quality of training of students at a medical university [4, 5].

A foreign language is included in the basic part of training and is a non-core discipline, however, this discipline, according to I.Yu. Markovina, has great “educational potential in relation to ensuring interdisciplinarity of professional training” for students and “acts as a powerful means of development in the profession and helps to increase the efficiency of independent work of students of medical and pharmaceutical specialties” [3].

Awareness of the role of the “Foreign Language” discipline as one of the key ones in the preparation of a medical student requires a revision of approaches to the methodology of teaching a

foreign language, taking into account changing trends in both the educational and professional spheres. I.Yu. Markovina notes that “a new type of thinking that provides a creative approach to conducting classes, a willingness to create innovative educational materials based on contextual, problem-based teaching methods, using an interdisciplinary approach and modern computer technologies” is necessary to increase the effectiveness of language training [6].

Traditionally, first-year students study a basic course in medical English, which includes studying the basics of human anatomy and physiology in English and mastering medical terminology. The novelty of the electronic course lies in the fact that for the first time students are offered the opportunity to begin studying professionally oriented aspects in a foreign language using digital technologies.

The course consists of six lessons, each lesson is devoted to a specific topic: Lesson 1 – History of Pediatrics, Lesson 2 – Neonatology. Diseases of the newborn, Lesson 3 – Immunization and Vaccination, Lesson 4 – Infectious Diseases of Childhood, Lesson 5 – Allergy. Allergic Manifestation, Lesson 6 – Maternity and Child Protection. When choosing lesson topics, the course authors were guided by the importance of ensuring an interdisciplinary connection between the sections of pediatrics that students study and the English language. Each lesson contains a number of exercises aimed at developing and improving listening skills, reading, writing and speaking skills. Authentic electronic medical Internet sources and media resources served as the material basis for the course. The selection of material took place taking into account professional specialization, topics and language competence of students. In addition to each lesson, the course authors have developed workbooks.

To increase the efficiency of mastering this course and develop professional motivation among students, teachers used the “flipped classroom” technique in their work.

Every year this method is gaining popularity among teachers. A flipped classroom is a teaching method based on the principle of “listening and sitting less, doing and teaching more” [7]. The principle was proposed in 2007 at Woodland School in Colorado (USA) by two science teachers, Jonathan Bergman and Aaron Samsu. They recorded short video lectures for students to watch independently at home. The essence of this method is that the learning process becomes more effective and dynamic if classroom time is devoted not to the traditional presentation of new material and questioning, but to completing assignments, group work, project activities, working to eliminate knowledge gaps, and solving difficult questions. This method allows for more active interaction between the teacher and students, develops independent work skills and motivates students to independently and creatively master professionally oriented material in a foreign language.

Work with the “Pediatrics” course was carried out as follows. Before each lesson, students were asked to independently familiarize themselves with the new educational material. Students had to independently study new lexical material, listen to audio, watch videos, read and translate text, and perform exercises aimed at training language skills. Classroom time was distributed as follows: part of the lesson was allocated to “knowledge leveling” [8]. The “knowledge leveling” technique allows the teacher to identify gaps in the assimilation of new material, explain and work through difficult issues, using both an individual approach and group forms of interaction. Further, the lesson was structured depending on the initial tasks and included a variety of communicatively oriented activities, such as discussion, exchange of opinions, discussions, information retrieval, project and research work. Completing tasks in a workbook allowed students to repeat and consolidate the material they had covered.

At the end of the professionally oriented course “Pediatrics”, students who studied this course were asked to complete an anonymous survey in order to evaluate the product of the students’ educational and cognitive activity.

To conduct a survey in the Google Forms online service, a questionnaire was developed consisting of 10 questions on the research topic. Statistical data processing was carried out using descriptive statistics methods using the computer program “Statistica 10.0” and the Microsoft Office software package.

Working with video material (53%) and preparing presentations and booklets on topics (47%) are noticeably leading in the list of tasks that aroused the greatest interest.

Almost the same difficulty (50% and 47%, respectively) was caused by tasks to control the understanding of audio information and workbook tasks.

Students were invited to make their suggestions for improving the Pediatrics course. Below are examples of respondents' responses:

- More video and audio exercises.
- Act out thematic situations, dialogues of professional communication.
- Expand the topic of the course.
- Add more hours to study the course.

Most respondents consider the course to be quite rich and not require any adjustments. 97% of students surveyed would like to continue studying a professional English course.

Since the students in the “Pediatrics” training direction, before studying the “Pediatrics” course, studied a basic medical English course, in which they became familiar with the basic systems of the human body, they were asked to answer the question: “Do you consider it necessary and useful to study the “English language” course for doctors”? 87% of respondents gave a positive answer, while 13% answered negatively. The following types of tasks from the basic course, according to respondents, aroused the greatest interest: work with new lexical material and texts on lesson topics; working with video; preparation of thematic presentations; presentation with messages on systems.

Studying the basic course involved working in the virtual learning environment Moodle. It was interesting to find out whether students found working in this program useful. According to 60% of respondents, this work was useful, 40% believe that when studying the course it was possible to do without working in this program.

Thus, based on the results of a survey of students who studied a new professionally oriented foreign language course, I would like to note the success of using this course among first-year students. Analyzing the data, we can note the effectiveness of the implementation of the developed course, and note that today’s medical student wants not only to know English, but to use it in his speaking practice at the level of professional communication. The overwhelming majority of students surveyed (80%) put the “Speaking” aspect in first place, and it is significantly ahead among other aspects.

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