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Developing professional communicative competence of medical students in a foreign language

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ABSTRACT

In the article the results of the research on teaching foreign language to preventive medicine specialists (hygienists-epidemiologists) have been discussed. The results of scientific-methodological research and experimental works on the organization foreign language teaching through differentiated-continuous and professionally oriented principle and formation of professional communicative competence of medical students in foreign languages were presented. The experiments on developing professional communicative competence in a foreign language were carried out at Andijan state medical institute, Tashkent medical academy, Fergana branch of Tashkent medical academy. The factors influencing on language learning, communicative skills and motivation of the students in Experiment and Control groups in medical higher school were assessed by students themselves and the results were analyzed.

Keywords

professional communicative competence, medical students, hygienists-epidemiologists, hospital outside communication, language learning, motivation, the content of healthcare education.

In the twenty-first century, special attention has been paid to teaching English as an international language of communication in the world's higher education institutions. In this regard, the process of teaching English to medical students in higher education should be developed through methods including digital technologies for improving communicative competence, criteria for measuring the level of development of speech skills and its compliance with modern educational requirements.

In the process of education in medical universities around the world, the concepts of teaching foreign languages in the framework of international medical relations have been being implemented in a number of projects in order to develop communicative competence of students in a foreign language. In this regard, the development of theoretical and methodological bases of teaching technologies in accordance with the linguistic, cultural and methodological requirements of CEFR for acquiring English for Specific Purposes is recognized as a priority for

improving education. The need of students to communicate in a foreign language, develop skills and abilities of rapid and quality assimilation of information through effective methods and tools is important.

Today, the integrated approach to teaching foreign languages in non-philological higher education institutions in our country plays a central role. In particular, the development of modern foreign language references in the field of medicine is becoming a major source of professional development of professionals in this field.

Our scientists have carried out many research works on developing communicative competence in a foreign language of the students' of nonlinguistic specialties. We considered the research works. There has been found out the need for determining the field of professional communicative competence in a foreign language. Besides, the techniques for developing professional communicative competence in a foreign language have been

worked out, because developing medical professionals' communicative competence has been suggested as scientific need on international level.

During the theoretical and practical analyses of developing medical students' professional communicative competence in a foreign language, the research revealed that there were no definite requirements for future medical practitioners' communication skills. A.H Davis, O.Yu.Iskandarova, E.Coiera, J.Flowerdew, R.Fruscione, D.Hyland and some other researchers investigated the developing students' professional communicative competence in a foreign language. These research works were of great value during due time and in teaching foreign languages in non-linguistic directions. The studies of scientific-methodical resources showed that the recommendations for applying communicative approach and its effective methods for developing non-linguistic students' professional communicative competence in a foreign language have been worked out. The research works on identifying students' motivation and implementing information technologies in foreign language teaching are considered as the march of science.

The above mentioned works and researchers have showed that medical students' professional communicative competence in a foreign language are developed in communication between doctor and a patient, patient's relatives, doctor – doctor, doctor – nurse, nurse and patient in hospital settings. In addition, the recommended methods (role-plays, communicative situations, dialogues) are oriented to the doctor's qualities such as having rapport and empathy for patient and his/her relatives, being polite and based on higher moral ideas of psychology. Many years' experience revealed another aspect of medical communication, i.e. hospital outside communication, and this communication is preventive medical professionals' communication. The issues of teaching foreign language to preventive medicine specialists (hygienists-epidemiologists) have not been explored. Hygienist epidemiologists are required to communicate with certain layers of

social life (people, managers, employees and employers of different enterprises, people). They function as medical experts in international relations, cooperate with their foreign colleagues in health protection measures, struggle against epidemic, pandemic, and participate in exchange programs. The specialists of this field are required to be principal, to make decisions in emergencies, to prove his/her viewpoint with arguments, negotiate in conflict situations, to manage negotiations. On the bases of above mentioned, the model of developing professional communicative competence in a foreign language of future hygienist-epidemiologist was worked out.

The interviews with undergraduate medical students' showed that proficiency level in English are not in demanded level. The curriculum of English language in medical high school aims at developing speaking, reading, listening and writing skills on the bases of professional topics. Nevertheless, the teaching aids do not consider the special feature of professionally oriented language.

The fact is that the motivation for foreign language learning are developed through professional materials chosen by students' themselves, otherwise, we can observe the learners English language proficiency level will be limited with poor communication skills on the topics around objects and appearance. The aim of the curriculum are reached only if non-linguistic higher school's student receives necessary and useful information by studied foreign language.

The problem of developing professional communicative competence is connected with the information bases of communicative activity of the professional. Information bases of communicative activity are depended on the linguistic-didactic concepts like characteristics of information systemacy, the content of communication, types of communication, the characteristics of professional communication, and the functions of communication.

The process of developing professional communicative competence is also directly connected with receiving information, processing information and managing. The

success of the process is depended on the variety of factors. The main factor is providing with necessary information and transmitting it in communication. Only in this case, the real information exchange can be occurred. It can be achieved by acquiring communicative competence. There appears special situation in applying the very process in medicine. In this case, the knowledge of the student on health protection not acquired in native language is focused on receiving from the texts in foreign language and applying it in practice. It can be considered, that communicative competence is developed through narrow reading and listening activities. The tasks are not directed to learn grammar rules, but establish communication with listener and understand him. The acquired vocabulary is characteristic to medical science. Therefore, it is necessary for students to acquire terminological vocabulary in foreign language lessons. In spite of existing thesis on the matter, the issue of meta-language is suggested as less important. As a result, professionals cannot use foreign language purposefully in their professional preparation. Therefore, the first issue is to determine the academic topics for communication on the students' future specialty.

The themes in the English language consists of three major groups should be oriented to: the texts for fundamentals of medicine, the second group includes listening texts of particular specialty, and the third one is for daily routine and medical etiquette.

The aims of teaching English language to foreign students of leading countries such as Great Britain, The USA, Canada and Australia have been studied and analyzed in developing hygienist-epidemiologists' professional communicative competence in a foreign language. As a result, the academic status of the subject of foreign languages has been assessed precisely. The hygienist-epidemiologists were involved in selecting communication topics, working out databases of sanitation and hygiene terms. It positively influenced to increasing motivation to foreign language learning. It is important to suggest that the current textbooks were designed only by language specialists. Special attention was paid to implementing

computer technologies in teaching foreign languages, the ways of applying professionally oriented principle and the development of necessary conditions.

In particular, the methodical bases of developing professional communicative competence, differentiated-continuous and professionally oriented principle, the ways of implementing information technologies in foreign language learning and for increasing motivation for language learning were explored.

The studying and summarizing the experience of professional language learning approach in linguistic didactics, made it possible to determine the quality level of professional language teaching methods, and also helped to solve the problems of selecting and classifying them in designing professional activities system. The main goal of the recommended principle is to organize foreign language teaching on the basis of differentiated-continuous and professionally oriented way.

The bases of foreign language learning by differentiated-continuous and professionally oriented principle consider medical students' proficiency level in English and communicative competence without distinguishing their course in the specialty, and consisted of the techniques for developing professional communicative competence of medical students in foreign language and designed communicative situational tasks.

The analyses of the research results on motivation and the data received from the experimental works organized in Fergana Branch Tashkent medical academy can be concluded as following: 1) the reason of interdependency, person should believe that he is the reason of his actions; 2) together with students educators should have positive attitude, develop personal motives for language learning; 3) it helps educators to understand students personalities, psychological mechanisms, understand better who are their learners, acquire knowledge on objective laws of interdependency, re-examine some stereotypes of their profession; 4) the urgent issues of education, the majority of students have low educational-cognitive motives for language learning, because the students'

proficiency level in foreign language have been lower than showed in the state educational standard and the low level of basic knowledge are the reasons. The data showed the necessity to develop educational conditions enhancing the students' learning motivation.

It has been proved that implementing differentiated-continuous and professional-oriented principle will have successful results in teaching speaking in a foreign language.

It is of great importance to re-analyze the current approaches to language learning, finding out innovative methods considering advancement of science and technology.

There emerged a need to work out linguistic techniques to develop medical higher schools' students' professional communicative competence in a foreign language. The offered linguistic technique helps to solve the issue by modelling professional communicative activity of future medical experts. Developing the students' professional communicative competence in a foreign language stepped from conceptual model of modern specialist and considered as optimum alternative and aim. The process of this activity is carried out gradually according to language teaching theory.

The aim, methods, content and the means of the linguistic technique model for developing hygienist-epidemiologist's professional communicative competence in a foreign language have been worked out and included communicative competence, speaking, reading, listening, writing skills, hygienist-epidemiologist's communication style, and image, informational content of professional competence.

The following general conclusions were reached in the research work devoted to the problems of teaching English to the students of medical high schools:

1. Today, preparing specialists ready to implement his knowledge in practice, being competitive specialist in international level, capable to apply professional skills creatively in his professional activity are actual tasks of higher educational institutions. Developing foreign language professional communicative competence in future specialists of healthcare is also of great importance in today's world of

intensive development of socio-political, diplomatic relations and many other international relations between countries.

2. The purpose, content and methods of teaching foreign languages at medical higher educational institutions should be accepted as special teaching process for the formation of professional communicative competence of medical students in a foreign language, the content of differentiated-continuous and professionally oriented principle in foreign language teaching should be characterized as the social order in foreign language teaching.

3. Organization of foreign language teaching in nonlinguistic higher educational institutions on the basis of differentiated-continuous and professionally oriented approach can contribute to developing important career specific qualities necessary in foreign language communication, the requirements for main communication skills in a foreign language can be summarized and improved under the concept "professional communicative competence in a foreign language".

4. In the process of learning specialty sciences there should be methodical system, the linguistic didactic factors and conditions for developing professional communicative competence. The worked-out language teaching technology in accordance with this need can serve as steady fundamental and provide effective language learning. The project has been developed to ensure the formation of professional communicative competence in a foreign language of future hygienist-epidemiologists. In this project, communication and communication theory is central to the integral function of linguistic technology.

5. The linguistic technology was worked out to develop communicative competencies of medical students in the foreign language and is based on:

- defining and designing the content of teaching English to students of preventive medicine;
- methodical processing of texts for developing professional reading and other communicative skills of students in a foreign language;

- designing electronic database of interactive exercises and dialogues for developing correct pronunciation in a foreign language;

- electronic database of hygienic terms (database of terms, graphical index of amplitude and frequency characteristics);

- tests and case studies for control (intended for final exam);

- the computer-training program for correcting mistakes of pronunciation was worked out and the relevant databases and software means, where teaching materials in various specialties can be placed and adapted in language of various subject domain.

6. On the basis of studying, the research works on developing the criteria for assessing the level of developed communicative competence by our scientists and foreign scientists resulted to work out important criteria for evaluating the level of communicative competence of medical students in foreign languages: communication behavior, communicative activity, effectiveness criterion.

It can be suggested that in this way, developing the specialist's personality positively solved and meet the requirements of modern language teaching.

7. Planning the development of professional communicative competence in a foreign language based on modern professionals' conceptual model showed additional possibilities to implement professionally oriented English language teaching and for improving professional communicative competence of medical students in a foreign language.

8. The analysis of the influence of modern educational paradigm on medical higher schools foreign language teaching process suggests that, a need i.e. motive is the main factor of developing professional communicative competence of medical students in a foreign language. This determines the necessity of developing positive attitude to language learning at the initial stages of foreign language teaching. In its turn, it influences developing stable motives, positively reinforces subject learning, increases interest in language learning and develops communicative competence.

As the solution for improving the quality of developing professional communicative competence in a foreign language in nonlinguistic higher educational institutions, and for improving foreign language teaching in the republic of Uzbekistan we offer the following scientific and practical recommendations:

- the worked out principle of differentiated-continuous and professional-oriented foreign language teaching can be implemented to foreign language teaching process in nonlinguistic higher educational institutions;

- the computer-training program for professional English learning of future hygienist-epidemiologists and medical dictionary can serve as a source for various specialties, in software sheaths teaching materials of various specialties can be placed and adapted in language of various subject domain;

- the electronic database of hygienic terms (database of terms in English, Russian, Uzbek) can be used in the practice of nonlinguistic higher educational institutions;

- the research results and worked out teaching materials are recommended to implement in the content of foreign language teaching and learning in non-philological higher educational institutions.

- the results obtained, the program of experimental work and its experimentation administration can be implemented in any non-philological higher educational institutions and can be assurance for success in the field of teaching ESP.

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