

The Content of Teaching Foreign Language using Communicative Approach

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ABSTRACT

The article focuses on the process of teaching English in order to develop students' foreign language professional competence. It describes essential components of methods and techniques applied for teaching languages. This article also deals with issues on designing teaching materials for students. Modern employers require graduates not only to possess theoretical knowledge but also to apply it effectively in real professional situations. Foreign language classes aimed at developing professional competence should be communication-oriented, as successful professional performance often depends on effective interaction in a foreign language. This study analyzes several methods of teaching Medical English to medical students with the aim of forming their foreign-language professional competence. Special attention is given to communicative teaching techniques that promote the development of speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in professional medical contexts. The findings suggest that the use of communicative and practice-oriented methods contributes significantly to the formation of professional competence and prepares future healthcare professionals for effective communication in international medical environments.

Keywords: Professional competence, CLIL, role play, communicative tasks, foreign language, professional competence.

INTRODUCTION

Preparing specialists who meet the requirements of modern employers involves going through several complex stages. One of the most important of these is acquiring knowledge and being able to apply it in practice. In other words, competency is essential for the professional development of any specialist in their work activity. Achieving competency, in turn, requires the development of professional competence.

Foreign language lessons aimed at developing any professional competence should primarily be communication-oriented, because the knowledge acquired in a foreign language requires communication when used in professional situations. In scientific and methodological literature, many opinions and discussions can be found regarding the formation of professional competence in a foreign language.

METHODS

We have analyzed several methods of teaching medical English in order to form foreign language professional competence of medical students.

One of such approaches, namely Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), has been described by Steve Darn as follows:

“Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has become an umbrella term describing the learning of a subject such as physics or geography through a foreign language, and the learning of a foreign language through studying subject content.

The basis of CLIL is that a subject is taught and learned in a language that is not the learners’ mother tongue, and language proficiency becomes a means of learning content. Language is integrated into a broader curriculum; learning is enhanced by increased motivation and by learning natural language in context. When learners are interested in the subject matter, they are encouraged to acquire the language for communication purposes.

CLIL is based on language acquisition rather than compulsory learning. Language is used in real-life situations

where learners can acquire it naturally. It represents a form of natural language development based on other forms of education” [1].

In addition to this, D. M. Isroilova, having studied foreign experience, notes that the use of a content-based approach in teaching professional vocabulary in a foreign language increases students’ motivation, accelerates language acquisition, expands their intercultural knowledge, and makes the language learning experience more effective [2;5].

Therefore, the use of such an approach creates opportunities for students to correctly pronounce medical terminology, understand it when they hear it, and use it fluently in English without overthinking, in a natural way.

Another method of developing professional competence in a foreign language has been described by A. V. Kotova, V. N. Serdyuk, and O. Yu. Belyaeva, who state that working with specialized vocabulary improves students’ ability to communicate with experts. For this purpose, discussions are conducted with students based on reading materials, listening to oral speech, and reflecting on the content [3: 341].

Considering that student groups often consist of learners with different levels of knowledge, such activities can be effectively carried out in small groups (2-4 students). According to the researchers’ experience, the highest effectiveness is achieved when groups are formed with students of approximately the same level of proficiency. In this case, the teacher also has greater opportunities for equal and active interaction with students [4: 132].

However, in non-philological fields, students’ levels of language proficiency vary significantly, and this situation requires considerable effort and time in both teaching and learning a foreign language. Therefore, it is necessary to properly distribute language materials and organize group work effectively.

On this issue, Jeremy Harmer emphasizes the importance of communicative activities, question-and-answer tasks, real-life tasks, job-related assignments, role-plays, and simulations in

developing students' professional communicative competence in a foreign language.

In role-plays and other speaking or group tasks, roles should be assigned according to students' proficiency levels. When dividing students into groups, teachers are advised to mix stronger and weaker learners, as they can support each other in the learning process.

Some students reinforce their knowledge not only from teachers but also by learning from their peers. However, this situation may sometimes lead to students relying on others for help rather than developing their own knowledge, and in some cases, depending on ready-made answers.

Many teachers have observed that quiet students tend to behave more confidently during role-plays; in other words, when students take on a different role, they often become more willing to speak and express themselves more freely.

During their research, Jack C. Richards and Theodore S. Rodgers concluded that teaching refers to selecting learning materials that match students' needs and proficiency levels, and conducting lessons in a supportive and comfortable learning atmosphere. Such instruction plays a key role in the development of medical students' foreign language professional competence.

As these scholars emphasize, students can learn from one another during the learning process, and less emphasis should be placed on purely linguistic content. Instead, learners should engage in interaction and provide suggestions to each other. Students should learn to work not in competition, but collaboratively, relying on each other both individually and in groups.

They may also support each other in identifying and correcting mistakes, or in improving their own errors through peer feedback [5: 106].

When working in groups, students tend to make an effort to speak partially in the foreign language during the preparation stage of tasks, and when performing their roles, they are often required to speak fully in English. As a result, they gain practical experience.

Regarding the impact of communicative teaching in English language instruction, Z. Bobonorova states: "In foreign language lessons, the teacher creates situations in which students interact with each other in pairs and groups. This makes the lesson more dynamic. In group work, students demonstrate independent speech" [6: 52].

According to E. B. Povarisova, a professionally oriented approach to teaching foreign languages has become particularly relevant in non-linguistic higher education institutions. This approach focuses on developing students' ability to communicate in foreign languages within specific professional, business, and academic fields and situations, taking into account the specific characteristics of their professional thinking [7: 117].

One of the effective methods of teaching a foreign language is role-playing. Role-play is an active learning method and a means of developing students' communicative competence. It is connected with learners' interests and serves as a source of emotional engagement and motivation for learning activities.

Role-play is considered an active approach to teaching practical foreign language skills. It helps students overcome language barriers and significantly increases the amount of speaking practice they receive [8: 66-69].

J. C. Richards states that planning a language course should include a content-based syllabus design, which involves decisions about what vocabulary and grammar should be taught at different stages – namely beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels – as well as which skills should be developed and in what sequence they should be taught [9: 6].

One of the main solutions to the discussed problem is strengthening practical application in language learning. The practical aspect of foreign language communicative competence lies in the effective ability to conduct any professional communication in a foreign language.

For example, in professional educational institutions, interdisciplinary integration in foreign language teaching – through the direct use of authentic materials related to students' fields of study – contributes to the enrichment of their subject-specific knowledge and keeps them informed about the latest

developments in their professional area. This, in turn, increases students' motivation to learn a foreign language [10: 166].

We agree with I. Kh. Iminahunova's opinion about authentic materials, that is, using these materials, the language learner encounters real-life language expressions, jargon, accents, colloquialisms, even dialects, and in general, aspects of the real language. Authentic materials allow you to get acquainted with the original language [11: 18].

Therefore, it is natural that words, phrases, terms or grammatical structures learned from authentic materials will attract the attention of students, because they are materials that are related to real life. Based on working with such materials, students develop receptive speech.

E. N. Solovova states that it is impossible to develop only one speech or language form during the lesson. When working with audio texts, we do lexical, grammatical and phonetic production in one project. Audio texts provide information for discussion, which involves improving their own use or tools. In this case, listening is a learning tool. Even the term "speaking" means listening and speaking. Dialogue in the form of oral communication is impossible without good listening and speaking [12: 125].

The scientists O. Hoshimov and I. Yakubov insist that another way to meet the requirements of the present time is to reduce the provision of excessive material to students and simplify the learning process. These are taken into account in the new foreign language program. The teacher approaches this from the perspective of comprehensive practical mastery of the material by students and teachers. For this reason, the teacher focuses his work on the productive (speaking, writing, expressing thoughts) and receptive (listening, understanding, reading) mastery of language materials, expanding the potential vocabulary of students and teachers. The basis of providing solid knowledge is the productive generalization and improvement of the teaching process [13: 38].

Regarding the teaching approach or planning of practical lessons, J. David et al. recommend that teachers should consider several factors in addition to content, such as the teaching format,

the fit between the challenge and the approach faced by the learner, and whether the practice should be classroom-wide, small group, or individual [14: 31].

For example, if some lesson materials are given for individual work, they may be boring, but if we give these materials to work in a team or small group, students may be interested in completing them, or vice versa. The main thing is that communicative competence is formed among students. According to T. V. Efremenko, the development of communicative competence at different levels not only helps to form a worthy specialist, but also motivates the student to professional self-education, his adaptation to the changing socio-economic conditions of the labor market. In the learning process, active and interactive forms of foreign language lessons (discussions, business games, use of computer technologies, etc.) can develop communicative competence [15: 125-129].

Regarding person-centered education, which is one of the educational methods for the formation of professional competence, I. F. Abdaliev and D. M. Kurbanbaeva expressed the opinion that the person occupies a central place in the process of person-centered education and upbringing. The goal of person-centered education is to develop the personality of students in a full, continuous and purposeful way in terms of mental, intellectual, physical, and spiritual aspects. The person-centered nature of education is manifested in the following: independence, originality, self-actualization, motivation for creativity, formativeness, orientation, intellectual creativity, impressionability, criticality, conflict, expressiveness, and ability to provide evidence. In this process, students develop the qualities of approaching their own lives and the lives of others from a high spiritual and cultural perspective. The above points also apply to teachers [16: 18].

RESULTS

Thus, alongside the development of foreign-language professional competence, students also develop several abilities that are beneficial for their personal growth.

According to P. I. Obratsov & O. Yu. Ivanova, the modern process of professionally oriented foreign language teaching is aimed at developing students' ability to communicate freely in a foreign language within specific professional, business, and academic contexts, as well as in situations designed on the basis of professional characteristics and requirements [17: 6-b].

Another challenge in foreign language teaching is the limited amount of instructional time available. Addressing this issue, T. A. Baeva recommends that teachers employ effective teaching technologies and organize speech practice in a rational manner that can produce clear and measurable results within the shortest possible time.

Under such conditions, the problem of optimizing the educational process becomes particularly relevant, as does the search for the most effective technologies, methods, and techniques for working with students. This situation requires the adoption of new approaches to organizing foreign language instruction in medical higher education institutions, with the primary goal of developing students' professional foreign-language [18: 67].

We consider one of these approaches to be professionally oriented foreign language instruction, as university students have already chosen their future professions. Conducting foreign language classes on topics related to their field of study is likely to increase their interest and motivation in learning the language.

Regarding this issue, P. I. Obratsov and O. Yu. Ivanova state:

In non-linguistic faculties of universities, it is appropriate to view the content of foreign language instruction as the body of knowledge that students are expected to acquire during their studies, so that the quality and level of their foreign language proficiency correspond to their needs and objectives, as well as to the goals and tasks of a particular level of education. The selection of content should be aimed at the comprehensive and holistic development of the student's personality and at preparing them for their future professional activities. [19: 22]

The sequential organization of teaching materials, that is, linking previously learned material with subsequent content, contributes to the continuous development of students' knowledge and skills.

The methodologists J. J. Jalolov, G. T. Mahkamova, and Sh. S. Ashurov argue that every technique, method, exercise, or mechanism that helps learners achieve their immediate goals and move closer to their ultimate objectives should be utilized. They recommend embracing every sound idea regarding language teaching methods, keeping the door open to future developments and innovations, and rejecting only those activities that are ineffective or harmful.

This approach is consistent with the communicative method of foreign language teaching, as it incorporates the most appropriate means of achieving the desired objective the mastery of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing [20: 334].

DISCUSSION

Therefore, when preparing communicative learning materials, it is advisable to provide exercises based on models or examples. Sample exercises should be thoroughly discussed and analyzed, with particular emphasis on practicing medical terminology and common medical expressions before proceeding to communicative tasks.

When completing any task, students should be encouraged to think critically, conduct independent inquiry, explore different ways of solving problems, analyze their reasoning processes, and formulate hypotheses.

Following the sequence of topics prescribed in curricula or textbooks is not always effective for every group of learners. Therefore, it is important to select activities that stimulate students' interest and participation, as such an approach helps prevent monotonous and unengaging lessons.

Based on our analysis of methodological literature on foreign language teaching, we believe that role-playing activities and simulation exercises related to medical topics, adapted to students' proficiency levels, are among the most effective ways

to encourage learners to communicate in a foreign language. According to our pedagogical experience, speaking in a foreign language gives students a sense of confidence and satisfaction. As students engage in foreign-language communication, their self-confidence increases, which in turn enhances their motivation to learn the language.

CONCLUSION

To further develop students' professional foreign-language competence, a variety of profession-oriented activities can be incorporated into the learning process. These may include completing medical histories, writing medication names and prescriptions, simulating clinical cases, filling out patient records, participating in emergency-response simulations, and conducting patient interviews. Additional activities may involve answering telephone calls, writing emails, engaging in professional social interactions, preparing reports, participating in negotiations, and delivering presentations. Such tasks create authentic professional communication contexts and help students develop the language skills required for their future medical practice.

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