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**WORKING OUT THE THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE MEDICAL
STUDENTS' LINGUISTIC TRAINING**

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Abstract

The aim of the paper is to determine the importance of creating the theoretical basis of the students' linguistic training. Unfortunately, the idea of the foreign language training's contribution to the formation of a future specialist's general professional competences often has a declarative character. As the author's practice shows, the first year medical students often don't realize the importance of studying a foreign language. Usually the graduates of the provincial medical universities don't find a job abroad, thus they doubt in the necessity of studying a foreign language (English, as a rule) at the university. Moreover, the first year students who are supposed to take part in imitation games, didactic dramas and other class activities (imitating a doctor's and a patient's communication) can't do it properly as their knowledge of English is rather poor after studying it at a secondary school. First-year medical students don't realize the fact that their future profession is of linguistically active character. Thus, a teacher of English becomes the first among the teachers of the other academic subjects to explain the importance of communicative skills for the future healthcare providers. The greatest problem is that many teachers in Russia are not ready to use innovative methods of teaching as they have got used to the reproductive ones.

In this situation, there is a necessity not only to summarize the experiences of teaching ESP and work out the innovative teaching approaches, but also to form the theoretic basis of the linguistic training.

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Keywords: Linguistic training, foreign language, reflective and creative approach.



1. Introduction

The subject 'Foreign language' (a compulsory subject at all the universities in Russia, including the medical ones) contributes to the formation of a future specialist's professional competences. However, most often this statement is declarative. Since the 1990s, the requirements of the post-industrial, multicultural and information society have made it necessary to create the optimum conditions for the students to master the general cultural, general professional and professional competencies in the process of their linguistic training.

The profession of a health care provider is of communicative character, thus the professionals (physicians, pharmacists, dentists) should possess the ability to communicate effectively. The requirements of the practical professional activity must be a stimulus for the development and application of the innovative approaches to the linguistic training of medical students. The health care provider must possess the ability and willingness to analyse and solve the professional socially significant problems and processes when using in practice the methods not only of the natural, biological and clinical, but also of humanitarian sciences.

2. Problem Statement

The problem of foreign language training of the medical students in all its general theoretical and practical aspects must find a comprehensive solution for the educators, linguists, sociolinguists, ESP teachers, etc. A teacher can use the innovative methods, but the first year students who are supposed to take part in imitation games, didactic dramas and other class activities (imitating a doctor's and a patient's communication) can't do it properly as their knowledge of English is rather poor after studying it at a secondary school. It should also be taken into account by the university teachers while working out the theory and practice of teaching a foreign language. Nowadays there are numerous publications about the applied aspects of foreign language training for the students of non-philological faculties, but there is an urgent necessity of creation the theory of the language training based on the innovative pedagogic approaches.

3. Research Questions

Unfortunately, many teachers are not ready to use innovative methods of teaching as they have got used to the reproductive ones. In fact, it is necessary to work out the theoretical basis for the usage of the innovative approaches for the improvement of the students' linguistic training that promote not only the students' knowledge of English, but also their professional competencies.

4. Purpose of the Study

The aims of the study are as follows:

- to substantiate the importance of the linguistic training, namely foreign language training, for the students of the medical universities;
- to show the necessity of working out the theoretical basis of the students' linguistic training;

- to prove that an innovative approach should be applied in theory and practice for increasing the efficiency of teaching and studying a foreign language.

5. Research Methods

The analysis of psychological, pedagogical, philosophical, linguistic and methodological literature has become the basis for the usage of the term ‘linguistic training’ in the teaching practice. In modern studies, the term ‘training’ is viewed as the purposeful interaction of the subjects in the process of mastering a specific activity that incorporates the elements of these activities (Kondratenko, 2012). This kind of interaction involves not only the formation of readiness for the independent implementation of this activity at a new, qualitatively higher level in the subsequent stages, but also the formation of motivation for the continuous improvement in this kind of activity and many-sided development of a student’s personality (Puzyryova, 2014).

In its turn, the term ‘linguistic training’ expands the field of application of the notion ‘training’ as it structures the process of learning a foreign language. A future health care provider’s linguistic training is defined as a sequential process of interaction between a teacher and a student carried out within the framework of specially organized pedagogical space that reproduces professional and social contexts of the medical students’ future activities.

The actual character of the future health care providers’ linguistic training in Russia is related to a number of reasons:

- Implementation of the national project ‘Health’ is impossible without the training of a doctor with a high level of his/her communicative skills;
- The development of legal relations in health care and the importance of a doctor’s professional responsibility require a certain attention to the communicative behaviour;
- Social and economic stratification of Russian society requires a more personalized approach to the professional communication;
- In modern conditions of the lack of time for direct communication between a doctor and a patient due to the usage of the equipment for examination and treatment of patients, the role of a doctor’s communicative competence increases;
- Increased migration and increased proportion of the patients belonging to the different cultures requires a doctor’s ability to communicate and establish intercultural contacts;
- There are iatrogenic diseases that arise as a patient’s reaction to a physician’s words or behaviour;
- Language is one of the important characteristics of corporate culture that reflects the moral priorities of health care organizations and cultural competence of the health care providers;
- The level of the patients’ trust to the professional qualities of a physician, who makes a mistake in his/her speech, is drastically decreasing (Orlova, 2012).

Thus, the view on a physician’s professional activities as to the sphere dealing only with the treatment of diseases is narrow and one-sided. In fact, the medical profession is of linguistically active character.

Theoretically, the specificity of the linguistic training at a medical school should involve not only learning medical vocabulary, reading and translating the medical literature, but also mastering the skills of professional communication. In their professional communication, the physicians are the subjects of communication in the following dyads: 1) a physician – a patient; 2) a physician - auxiliary medical personnel; 3) a physician – his/her colleague; 4) a physician – a patient’s relative (Novikova, 2007). Their specific content and the features of the communicative contact have been determined:

‘A physician – a patient’: compassion to the patient within the reasonable limits, providing information of a physician's own professional skills and qualification, rational arguments for the actions and behavior, ability to provide the information about the treatment correctly and clearly.

‘A physician - auxiliary medical personnel’: observing mutual respect, tactful and unobtrusive control, creating the friendly environment in a team, promoting the improvement of the professional competences. ‘A physician – his/her colleague’: compliance with corporate ethics, reasoned criticism of the colleagues, willingness to cooperate and share the experience and knowledge.

‘A physician – a patient’s relatives’: absence of derogatory remarks about his/her colleagues in the presence of a patient’s relatives, understanding the problems of a patient and his/her relatives.

During the first and second academic year, in the process of studying English, the medical students get to know the roles typical for their future professional activity. Depending on the object of communication, the students should master a variety of lexical, grammatical and phonetic models for the implementation of diverse speech intentions. The difficulty is that the first year students do not have any practical experience of professional communication, so English becomes the first academic subject forming a future health care provider’s social competence. On the other hand, in the limits of the proposed communicative dyads the students can master the linguistic clichés that they will be able to use in their native language, Russian, in communication with the patients during their practice at the hospitals and in their future professional activities.

For the development of a future health care provider’s complex competencies (linguistic, communicative, cultural, socio-cultural) the teachers of English should use the innovative approaches in the system of professionally oriented linguistic training. The training itself requires both theoretical design and practical application of the new approaches. We have developed the reflective and creative approach (RCA), which allows us to conceptualize linguistic training. The proposed approach promotes expanding the horizons of the professional communication’s application and developing the applied aspects of foreign language teaching with the purpose of the transition to the general cultural competency (Razdorskaya, 2014).

In the context of the approach, the processes of reflection and creativity complement each other and exist in the inseparable unity, presenting a dialectical relationship on the common logical and methodological basis. We have developed a theoretical model of the RCA, the general and specific principles of its implementation, the system of pedagogical conditions, means and methods of the linguistic training within its framework. The orientation of the RCA on the formation of professionally significant competencies involves the creation of didactic and psychological conditions in which a student is able not only to show his/her creative cognitive activity, but to develop his/her personal social position, to become a subject of education and a competent specialist in the future.

6. Findings

We have developed reflective and creative technologies of the linguistic training (the reflective analysis of the examples of the native language interference in the process of studying English grammar, simulation games with the phase of post-game reflection, didactic dramas and many more), adapted to the students' faculty (medical, dental, pharmaceutical) and implemented in the conditions of the creative educational environment. The educational complex provides the combination of creative foreign language activities and reflective analysis of the quasiprofessional activity in the specially organized social and pedagogical conditions.

Implementation of the innovative approaches and the development of their theoretic basis assume a teacher's motivation to carry out innovative pedagogical activities. Moreover, a teacher should possess the knowledge of the specific features of a health care provider's professional communication and have a high level of empathy in the interaction with the participants of the educational process. A teacher should be able to make creative refinement and adaptation of educational technologies according to the students' specializations. Moreover, a situation of success should be the result of a teacher's and the students' mutual activity.

As the author's practice has shown, the results of the usage of the innovative approach can't be obtained immediately. As a rule, the students realize the necessity of studying English during the 5th or the 6th year of studies at the University, when they have their professional practice, or even when they start working after graduation. The testimonies of the students of Kursk State Medical University prove it (I would like to quote two of them).

David Papashvili, the 5th year student of the Pharmaceutical Faculty of KSMU: 'The knowledge of English is necessary for the pharmaceutical students. First, it is necessary for the successful career, as without knowing English, one can't go abroad for internship and share the experience with the foreign colleagues. In Russia, pharmacists should know English because there are many foreign students here who are not very good in English. They can visit the pharmacies and you should understand them, establish contact and sell a necessary remedy. That's why it is very nice when a pharmacist knows English'.

Ismoilkhon Ibrohimov, the graduate of the International Faculty of KSMU: 'I was a member of Students' Scientific Society at the Department of Foreign Languages. I presented my reports in comparative linguistics at the students' conferences at Kursk State Medical University and the Southwest State University. My articles were also published in my native country, Tajikistan. Now I work as a neurologist in the town of Noginsk, Moscow Region. My patients are Russians, Tajiks, Ukrainians, Tatars and Dagestani. Now I realize that a doctor should have sociocultural competence, as the knowledge of the patients' cultural and religious peculiarities helps me to communicate with them. I believe I should be polite with all the patients no matter what their nationality, religion or race is'.

7. Conclusion

Summing up, we would like to note that the theory of language training has been supplemented by us with the notion 'linguistic training of a medical student', allowing to specify its professional orientation. In our opinion, the improvement of language training is possible in the process of application of educational

technology based on the reflective and creative approach. Anyway, there is a need in working out not only the educational technologies based on this innovative approach, but the theory of its implementation.

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