INTEGRATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES INMEDICAL UNIVERSITY AS A TRAINING MEDIUMPetrova O. B.
Kharkiv National Medical University
Kharkiv, Ukraine
lingace@gmail.com
The primary task of modern higher education is formation of highly skilled
professionals. As it is stated in the principal guidelines, foreign language proficiency is an
integral part in the structure of the professional self. The study of a foreign language in a
higher educational institution is integrated into the educational process and has a number
of peculiarities that are the subjected by the scholars in their research concerning the
future professional activity of the undergraduates.
An important component of higher education is orientation towards the world’s trends
in the profile areas, which determines, in particular, the need for a scientific and academic
space without frontiers. Today special attention is paid to higher education, universities,
their intellectual potential, which is constantly being strengthened and used in the
European integration process [ 2 ].
It is clear that professional foreign language proficiency plays an important role in
international professional communication. Undergraduate and postgraduate university
education is designed to prepare future professionals to communicate in various situations
in their special area. Teaching of a foreign language at the non-language university is
aimed at the development of the student’s personality and corresponds to the objectives
set in the European Language Education Recommendations [ 2 ].
189
The high-quality training of a modern specialist is ensured by integration of his
fundamental and special knowledge with practical training and target aims. Such
integration involves orientation of professional education not only on acquiring of a
definite skills, but also on the development of the individual as a whole, his cognitive and
creative abilities, abilities to provide independent work in future specialty.
As the requirements for the quality of professional education change with the
development of society, science and practice, current globalization and integration
processes update the innovative-intellectual competence model of any university
education, in which the proficiency in a professional foreign language plays a positive
role [ 7 ].
Integration of a foreign language course as a means of professional communication is
included in the process of professional medical training.
The purpose of this work is to highlight the peculiarities of the integration of subjects
related to foreign languages in non-language university, in particular, in the medical
university, into general professional training at different levels of higher education.
This research is a topical one due to the increasing role of professional orientation in
the university foreign language training and the importance of integration with
specialized disciplines in non-language universities.
Considering the leading feature of teaching a foreign language in higher education, it
should be emphasized as predominant the implementation of the principles of a
professionally oriented approach to learning. It is based on the principles of teaching a
foreign language for specific purposes. It should be noted, that professional foreign
language in this aspect becomes, among other things, a means of learning.
Assuming a foreign language as a means of training both at university years and lifelong, analysis of the needs of future professional activities in accordance with the profile,
specialty, educational level, etc., allows to direct training for implementation of those
functions which are necessary for future professional activities.
Introduction of a competent approach in the educational process is grounded in the works
of the experts in the methodology of teaching English for specific purposes (ESP) both in
the world and in Ukraine (T. Dudley-Evans, T. Hutchinson, W. Littlewood, J. Richards,
190
P. Robinson, P. Strevens, L. Dick, G. Borodina, O. Tarnopolsky, S. Nikolayeva, A.
Sherstyuk, etc.) [ 1–7 ].
As a result of the university education, professional competence is formed. It has a
multicomponent structure, with a foreign-language professional competence among
others.
Analysis of the language needs of the learners (needs analysis) is a global algorithm for
teaching English for specific purposes. It is elucidated in the works that have already
become classical in teaching English for special needs (P. C. Robinson, T. Dudley-Evans,
T. Hutchinson; J.C. Richards et al.) [4, 6, 8 ].
According to the British Council methodology, the analysis of language needs
involves certain activity with those who will study, in order to adequately plan a training
course: “Needs analysis involves doing some kind of activity with a learner in order to
find out what their learning needs are. understanding of learner needs can contribute to
successful course planning “ [5].
Important parts of the survey are the identification of the “necessities”, “lacks”, which
helps to compare the starting level of the learners' foreign language with their wishes –
“wants”.
The purpose of teaching a professionally oriented foreign language is to train students
for effective communication in their future professional environment.
Foreign language training at the medical university is one of the components of
multidisciplinary training of professionally qualified specialists. We consider ESP as a
means of forming professional foreign language competence at different levels of
education – bachelor, master and educational-scientific levels.
Adopted at the Department of Foreign Languages, the method helps to analyze the
needs of the course of English for specific purposes for a particular contingent. This is
important as the training is provided for various groups of students who, after completing
the university, will work different specialties within the healthcare sector: family
physicians, pediatricians, dentists, physiotherapists, laboratory doctors, nurses, etc.
Levels of education are also different – training course for bachelors, masters,
postgraduates.
191
Within this methodical trend, the Department of Foreign Languages of the KhNMU
carries out a scientific research on “Analysis of the Linguistic Needs of the postgraduates,
doing their Ph.D. degree”. In accordance with the goal of this work, the foreign language
needs of the postgraduates, while studying the discipline “Professional Foreign
Language”, has been performing to improve the curriculum and the training materials for
English language classes, taking into account the integration of this discipline into the
program training activities of the postgraduate students.
A survey of stakeholders involved in the training formed of the groups of the following
respondents: postgraduate students, teachers, translators, and administration was carried
out. The analysis of the needs of those studying a foreign language at the medical
university, determining the target situations of their professional foreign language
communication was done. It outlines the boundaries of the situational context associated
with the study and specialization.
This is necessary to determine the required communicative foreign-language
competencies, their relation with the types of speech activity (listening, reading, writing,
oral speech) and the availability of language knowledge (phonetic, grammatical, lexical)
and the formation of skills for operating them.
Such preliminary work should provide an adequate content of training course, the
selection of which is based on analysis of professional needs of the each category of
specialists and the features of professional foreign language communication competence.
Professional foreign language communication competence of a student or a
postgraduate student in the field of health care includes presence of professional
communication skills in the typical conditions of professional activity, potential
professional discourse, representation of professionally oriented texts, and the ability to
solve communication problems in professional situations.
Considering English as a medium which is used to obtain professional knowledge
allows either to increase the motivation to postgraduate training or to expand the scope
for their scientific research. It enables stimulation of the cognitive interest of the learners,
improves the ESP course efficiency, due to mastering authentic material in the chosen
192
professional field. The sufficient level of proficiency in professional English makes the
any source more accessible and provides the most accurate information.
Thus, professional medical English, to some extent, serves as a medium of studying at
medical university and receiving special information. English language is used by
postgraduates for acquisition special knowledge, formation of cognitive and practical
experience.
The goal of the ESP course for the training of the postgraduates for PhD in the field of
Medicine is to provide foreign language competences. The PhD postgraduates must
acquire certain knowledge, skills, and other foreign language competences that will be
sufficient in the target situations – the search, processing and analysis of scientific
information in foreign-language oral and written communication in the professional
environment in the international context.
The principal target is to gain ability to communicate in English aiming at exchange
information to solve the following main tasks: efficiently receive and transmit
information, receive additional information, etc. Professional English will serve as a
means of enhancing professional skills using foreign language sources of information.
Special English learning objectives for a given type of learners include performing
PhD dissertation in the field of medicine, research, innovation, professional foreign
language competences using English as a means.
Student-centered policy is the leading direction in the medical university. This, in
particular, includes intensive research work, which students join since the first year of
their study. As you know, in many cases, candidates for educational-scientific level – in
graduate school become those who the most active undergraduateswho showed their
competencies in student years. It is noteworthy that the Department of Foreign Languages
contributes to such students’ work during the scientific and practical conferences, extraclassroom organised events “Speaking club”, participation in the Foreign language
olympiads, etc. Thus, learning at the department of foreign languages, active participation
in such proposed in extracurricular events allows students to improve their foreign
language proficiency and add in their general university rating.
193
In this way, the most active, able to express themselves in the research, creative
students are revealed. University discipline "Foreign language for specific purposes"
focuses on professional foreign language skills as a key factor in the purposeful use of
English which is necessary medium in the profession.
Foreign-language professional communication competence is defined as a complex
ability to use foreign language in order to communicate in specific professional
situations, the ability to solve communication problems in professional situations aiming
at the acquirement of certain systemic professionally important knowledge, skills and
abilities. Thus, linguistic abilities serve to enhance professional abilities.
Foreign language integrated into teaching at the medical university serves, in
particular, as a means of teaching to apply creatively professional knowledge and skills.
Studying foreign language disciplines, participation in student scientific circles, round
tables, scientific conferences held by the Department of Foreign Languages, teach
students to make presentations, posters, abstracts, reports, scientific publications in
accordance with the current requirements. This confirms that English is integrated into
the training of future physicians and, to some extent, becomes a means of studying at the
medical university.
This is even more evident at educational-scientific level, while the course of
“Professional English” for postgraduates for Doctor of philosophy degree in the specialty
“Medicine”. Foreign language is taught for the purpose of professional development of
graduate students and is actually used by them in writing of the dissertation, participation
in international scientific conferences, publications, projects, etc.
After analyzing the educational activities of the learners who study English at the
medical university, it should be noted that independent work is an important factor in
mastering a foreign language in higher school. To improve the level of knowledge and
the ability to use language as a means of communication in different verbal situations, the
set of corresponding topics are offered for self-study: they also help intensify independent
work, allow students to carry out their own schedule, at the chosen pace.
Professional foreign language competence is a component of foreign language
communicative competence, along with linguistic, sociocultural and strategic ones [1].
194
Postgraduates are trained to be able to communicate in order to exchange information
aimed at solving the following main tasks: efficiently receive and transmit information, to
receive additional information about the interlocutor, to interpret the content of
statements, to be able to understand the cultural context, to be competent in specific
genres [ 7 ].
Formation of professional foreign language communication skills of students and
postgraduates of the medical university is ensured primarily through the content of
training, its thematic organization, which is determined for each contingent individually
and is oriented to a certain category of future specialists.
This contributes to increasing the efficiency in achieving foreign language
communicative competence, which consists of communicative skills formed on the basis
of language knowledge, skills and abilities. Specifically, students, while learning the
discipline connected with the foreign language (‘Foreign Language”, “Foreign Language
for Professional Purpose”, “Elective Discipline”, “Professional Foreign Language”, etc.),
students extend their professional competence by means of English language on the
authentic material in specialty.
The urgent tasks at the time are the formation of foreign-language professional
competence for students and post-graduates studying at the medical university, as this is a
prerequisite for the effective implementation of professional communication (oral and
written) in their future professional field. The purpose of education is to create
motivational environment for under- and postgraduates in the process of learning foreign
languages.
The functional approach in the study of foreign languages is fundamental. According
to this approach, communication as the main function of the language is more fully
executed both in linguistic and conceptual-thematic direction. The leading motives for
learning English for specific purposes are professional achievements, communicative,
cognitive and external motives. The means of their formation is the content of English
language as a subject of study.
Integration of foreign language combines separate parts of educational system in the
medical university in such a way that the total result is better than their values before. So,
195
knowledge of English allows to work with the information of the entire world
community, as well as to communicate with colleagues in a profession from different
countries.
The activity of the medical university is aimed at the formation of a highly educated,
intellectually developed personality of the future physician understanding deep
connections of phenomena and processes in the professional activity.
The learners should be taught to understand specific professional problems and
formulate conclusions adequately, be able to operate with special terms, identify the main
information, consider its value in the target professional situation.
Modern trend in education is achieved by ensuring the continuity of the content of
training and coordination of educational activities. Foreign language for medical students
is taught during the course of English for specific purposes, and therefore combines
knowledge of the studied foreign language and professional knowledge.
Thus, the purpose of English for specific purposes in the medical university is to
develop professionally oriented intercultural communicative competence in the
undergraduates and postgraduates, to form the capacity and readiness of the future
specialist to solve independently and adequately professional problems with means of
foreign language.
References:1. Бородіна Г. І. Комунікативні завдання на базі професійно-орієнтованого
тексту при навчанні ESP / Г. І. Бородіна, А. М. Спєвак // Викладання мов у вищих
навчальних закладах освіти на сучасному етапі. Міжпредметні зв’язки. – 2009. –
Вип. 14. – С. 40-45.
2. Загальноєвропейські Рекомендації з мовної освіти: вивчення, викладання,
оцінювання / Наук. ред. укр. видання д-р пед. н., проф. С. Ю. Ніколаєва. – К.:
Ленвіт, 2003. – 273 с.
3. Dick L. Syllabus-writing // British Council. Teaching English. –
https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/syllabus-writing
4. Hutchinson T., Waters A. English for Specific Purposes: A learning-centered
approach. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987. – 183 p.
196
5. Needs analysis. // British Council. Teaching English. –
https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/needs-analysis
6. Nunan D. Communicative Syllabus Design. – Cambridge University Press, 1988. –
166 p.
7. Popova N., Petrova O. English for law university students at the epoch of global
cultural and professional communication. // Problems of Legality. – 2017. – Issue 138. –
P. 237-246.
8. Robinson P.C. ESP today: A Practitioner's Guide. / Robinson P. C. — London :
Prentice Hall Int. Ltd., 2005. – 146 p.
СПЕЦИФІКА ЗМІСТУ ДИСЦИПЛІНИ “ІНО