

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS: CURRENT ISSUES OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

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МЕТОДОЛОГІЯ І МЕТОДИКА: АКТУАЛЬНІ ПИТАННЯ ТЕОРІЇ ТА ПРАКТИКИ

Abstract. The article deals with current issues of functional literacy of the first year students at the medical universities. It has been emphasized the importance of adhering to the philosophical foundations of higher educational didactics. The main issues for the consideration in the article are the development of basic competences i.e. communication; digital media skills; training for self-improvement; social and civic skills; initiative and practicality; awareness and expression in the cultural sphere. The analysis of the content of normative documents, works of national and foreign scientists gave us possibility to make a conclusion about the difficulties in determining the essence of the main concepts. The study of the problem of functional literacy among students of medical faculties becomes especially relevant, because the anamnesis, communication of the doctor with the patient, and the medical council require special, purposeful preparation.

Key words: didactics; regularity; methodology; concept; methods of teaching.

Анотація. У статті проаналізовано актуальні питання функціональної грамотності студентів першого курсу медичних університетів. Підкреслено значимість дотримання філософських засад дидактики вищої школи. В центрі уваги актуальні питання розвитку основних компетенцій: спілкування; навички роботи з цифровими носіями; навчання заради самовдосконалення; соціальні та громадянські навички; ініціативність та практичність; обізнаність та самовираження у сфері культури. Аналіз змісту нормативних документів, праць вітчизняних і зарубіжних вчених дозволив зробити висновок про труднощі при визначенні суті головних понять. Особливої актуальності набуває вивчення проблеми функціональної грамотності для студентів медичних факультетів, адже анамнез, спілкування лікаря з пацієнтом, медичний консилиум потребують спеціальної, цілеспрямованої підготовки.

Ключові слова: дидактика; закономірність; методологія; поняття; методика.

Introduction. The methodology assumes a high level of theoretical generalizations, combined with the needs and perspective forms of practical activity. However, there are many conscious and unconscious reasons for misunderstanding its importance. The problem of the low level of philosophical culture remains rather urgent. It is natural that recently such areas of science as “Philosophy of Education”, “Philosophy of Didactics”, “Philosophy of Teaching” have become increasingly popular. Unfortunately, K. Jaspers’ conclusion regarding sceptical attitude to philosophy does not lose significance. According to the scientist, “Traditionally, philosophy is treated with courteous respect, but secretly despised. It is widely

believed that it cannot say anything worthwhile. It is also of no practical importance. However, its name is mentioned by the public; (...) A life instinct, opaque also to myself, hates philosophy. It is dangerous. If I understood it, I would have to change my life completely. I would reach another state and see things in a different light, have to judge everything in a different way. So, it is better not to think philosophically! Then there are accusers who want to replace the outdated philosophy with something else completely. It is despised as a completely incompetent end product of a shattered theology. It is laughed at. Philosophy is accused of being a compliant servant of political and other forces, and it would be easier for many politicians to do their hopeless work if

philosophy did not exist at all. It is easier for masses and functionaries to manipulate when they do not think, but have only a trained mind. Obstacles prevent people from seriously thinking about it. Apparently, it is for the better that philosophy is boring. Let philosophical departments barely glow. The more they study the irrelevant, the easier it is to distract people from the power of philosophy. Consequently, philosophy is surrounded by enemies, mostly those who do not know it beforehand.”[10]. We must acknowledge the guilt and methodology experts themselves. Having created a kind of scientific language, they forget about practice as a criterion of truth, “playing” with terms and models that conceal a lack of innovation in obscure concepts.

The above issues become particularly acute during the transition to the information society. Previously, functional literacy implied the presence of elementary knowledge, including the ability to read and write, then nowadays, in our opinion, it is advisable to ask the willingness to work with large arrays of information flows, search for key ideas, the ability to draw conclusions and generalizations.

Working with students allows us to conclude that, following the rules of admission to universities, they are well prepared to complete the test tasks. When there is a need to find creative problems, to choose a topic for a speech, to turn to experts then it causes considerable difficulties either for freshmen or graduate students. It is no coincidence that researchers emphasize the fact that “in the context of becoming an information society, the education system raises the issue of educating individuals capable of working with large amounts of information and productively using innovative developments of the present. In this case, the traditional education system based on the principle of personality socialization in accordance with clearly regulated socio-cultural conditions are becoming ineffective in the face of increasing social dynamics, globalization and modernization of society. Such educational system contributes to the formation of a conformist type of personality; under the terminology of José Ortega y Gasset a marginal “person of the mass” who will be able to acquire specialized competencies required by the specifics of his/her professional activity. Instead, the realities of the modern information age require the formation of an intellectual and value-oriented personality who will be able to overcome the complex of civilization challenges [5].

One of the most relevant and least studied phenomena of modern education is the systematic study of the

functional literacy of foreign students in Ukraine. It is no coincidence that in 2003 the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine established the state enterprise “Ukrainian State Center for International Education”, which offers employees not only a list of higher educational institutions, but also a set of educational programs, various forms of assistance with admission, visa support, as well as monitor the learning process, develop advertising and information projects, explore opportunities for international cooperation. It should be noted that statistics is rather interesting. According to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 75605 students from 154 countries of the world study at our national higher schools. The leaders are India – 14958, Morocco – 7390, Azerbaijan – 6228, Turkmenistan – 5033, Nigeria – 3552, Egypt – 3412, Turkey – 3254, China – 2721, Israel – 2460, Georgia – 2397. It is necessary to state that among the five most prestigious universities four top positions are held by medical ones.

Confirmation of the above trends is the activity of the I. Horbachevsky Ternopil National Medical University. Nowadays more than 2000 representatives from other countries are studying here. Successful learning and social adaptation of young people greatly depend on the methodology of learning the Ukrainian language.

The aim – to investigate the tendencies of development of methodology of science, actual questions of teaching methodology, prospects of didactic philosophy.

Methods. To achieve this goal, theoretical and empirical research methods were used, in particular the method of expert assessments, which made it possible to compare the conclusions of teachers and students on current issues of psychology and pedagogy in the process of professional training; content analysis for analytical study of literature; comparative analysis to identify common and specific features of the problems being studied. Analysis and synthesis, generalization of modern philosophical, psychological-pedagogical, sociological, educational-methodical literature to highlight the regularities of the educational process; structural-logical, systemic, theoretical and comparative methods for the study of the basic tendencies in the philosophy of didactics; prognostic method.

Results. Let us first consider some theoretical aspects of the problem under study. H. Bugaevska in her work “Functional literacy of students of higher educational institutions as a psychological and pedagogical problem” emphasized that the dynamics

of structural changes occurring in the economy are so great that graduates “require the acquisition of more advanced, professional skills, knowledge and abilities. However, it is obvious that the content of the future specialists’ training does not always correspond to the existing and prospective demand in the labour market. The changes occurring in the economic and social infrastructure of society demand some special features of the individual specialist i.e. the ability to respond quickly to change, leadership, communication, creativity and so on. In this regard, the formation of functional literacy of students should be considered as actual problem of modern training of qualified specialists” [1]. Noteworthy is the definition of “functional literacy”, which is suggested in the context of competent, personality-oriented, activity-based approaches as “quality of personality, consisting of a set of key competences and values that allows you to perform professional and social functions. The formed professional competence determines the effectiveness of solving typical problems and tasks that arise in real situations of everyday life and creates the preconditions for creative self-development of the individual in the field of professional activity” [1]. N. Donij stressed the fact that “in September 1965, the World Congress of Ministers of Education for the Elimination of Illiteracy was held in Tehran and it was there that the concept of “functional literacy” was proposed, the meaning of which was to bring educational activities closer. The fact is that the pedagogical community at that time was already clearly aware that knowledge gave a person only a tool for understanding life but the correctness of understanding determines the success of human functioning. The introduction of a new concept into the educational system, as well as ideas of A. Toffler and H. Gerjuoy, reflected the need-query that was already sounding in the social space, which experienced the emergence of unprecedented complications associated with the passage of the process of social adaptation in humans”. Analyzing foreign experience, in particular, the work of the above-mentioned researchers, N. Donij highlighted two other important aspects: “Instructing students how to learn, unlearn and then learn again can add to a new powerful dimension in education” (A. Toffler) and the perspective of the fact that “new education should teach an individual how to classify and reclassify information, how to evaluate its validity, how to change categories when needed, how to move from concrete to abstract and back, how to look

at problems from a new perspective, how to teach yourself. Tomorrow the illiterate person will not be able to read; and it will be a person who has not learned how to study ”(H. Gerjuoy) [4].

Foreign scientists also point out the importance of functional literacy for human security in the context of civilization challenges, environmental, technogenic, social, and political threats.

It should be noted that a large number of authors, while considering the issues of functional literacy, mostly use the problem of functional illiteracy as a start, and therefore analyze the functional literacy at the elementary level. This is an additional argument for differentiating the basic concept. In today’s context, being able to read and write is difficult to even get to the first level of studying, it is rather a preparatory stage.

The European Parliament and Council (EU) Recommendation 2006/962 / EC “On basic competences for lifelong learning” of 18 December 2006 plays an important role in understanding the issue under study. The preamble to this important document emphasizes that Europe’s main value is people, and lifelong learning in the context of globalization is a determining factor in the transition to a knowledge-based economy. The following aspects should also be mentioned. First, competencies are defined as a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant to the situation. The core competencies are those that are needed by all citizens for personal realization and development, active civic life, social unity and employment opportunities. Second, the reference framework defines eight basic competencies: 1) communication in their native language; 2) communication in foreign languages; 3) knowledge of mathematics and general knowledge in the field of science and technology; 4) skills in working with digital media; 5) learning for knowledge acquisition; 6) social and civic skills; 7) initiative and practicality; 8) awareness and expression in the cultural sphere. Thirdly, the conclusion is relevant about the importance of all components “because each of them contributes to a successful life in a knowledge-based society. Many competencies are close and related: aspects that are fundamental in one area help the others. General knowledge of languages, education, ability to quantify thinking and awareness in the field of information and communication technology is a necessary basis for studying, and learning for knowledge acquisition includes all educational activities. In this case a number of points should be

applied e.g. critical thinking, creativity, initiative, ability to solve problems, risk assessment, ability to make decisions and ability to manage emotions constructively.”

This document defines the vector of modernization of educational systems. In the context of the topic of our study, an explanation of the mother tongue is rather important, the main priorities are succinctly and precisely identified. Above all, it is an opportunity to express and explain “concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and views, both verbally and in writing (listening, speaking, reading and writing), and interact appropriately and creatively at the linguistic level in all social and cultural contexts; during studying and professional training at work, at home and at leisure.”

It is emphasized the importance of communicative skills as well as “knowledge of vocabulary, functional grammar and functions of language. This includes knowledge of basic types of speech interaction, types of artistic and non-artistic genres, basic features of different styles of language and linguistic registers, variety of linguistic styles and communication. Individuals need to have oral and written communication skills in different communication situations, as well as monitor and adapt their language to the situation. Language competence also includes the ability to distinguish and use different language genres, search, collect and process information, to use the codification sources and to formulate and express their views orally and in writing clearly and according to the situation.” It is also highlighted the ability to be engaged in critical and constructive dialogue, an appreciation of aesthetic qualities and the desire to achieve them, and an interest in communicating with others. This involves assessing the impact of language on others and seeking to understand and use it confidently and with responsibility to society” [6].

We suppose that the problem of functional literacy has several levels. The first one is the ability to adapt in a modern society, which is gradually approaching the level of information. According to A. Zbruyeva, functional literacy means “the ability of an individual to understand and use different types of information in order to function in a modern society, professional and public life successfully. UNESCO experts determine that nowadays literacy is more than just the ability to read and write, it means communication skills in society. Literacy refers to the individual’s social practices, social relationships, knowledge, ownership

language and culture. Literacy has many forms of expression – writing, computer and media skills, math, sign language, political literacy, etc.” [7, 8]. Achieving the first level is the priority task of a comprehensive school. The overriding goal is the ability to adapt to the demands of a dynamic, globalized world. At the second level, it is necessary to combine pre-vocational training with elements of professional activity. This level involves, first and foremost, differentiation of tasks, the combination of common professional culture issues with the specifics of future activity, the integration of efforts of specialists in different directions, an in-depth individual assessment of the level achieved.

Let us consider the problems of methodology as an example of studying the Ukrainian language by professional direction in medical universities. There are three threats that are obvious for educators. Firstly, it is a kind of repetition “schooling” for topics and tasks that are characteristic of a comprehensive school. Secondly, it is a kind of “game” with the name “the Faculty of Philology” at the professional university, characterized by the excessive complexity of the conceptual apparatus, the inappropriate delving into the discussion issues of linguistics. Thirdly, there is a lack of a proper combination with the specifics of the student’s future professional activity. It is important to consider the professional orientation of the course. For the future physician, a number of priorities can be identified in the context of philology.

1. The problem of self-knowledge is a priority for professional development. It is language with elements of literature that will help to achieve the goal. However, this problem is an area of focus for many sciences. It no coincidence that, while analyzing the purpose of philosophy, K. Jaspers asserted that it “breaks into the farthest horizons beyond the being of the world to know the modern in eternity. But even the deepest meditation only makes sense in its appeal to human existence here and now. Philosophy sees the highest scales, the top of possibilities, and seeks in the light of the seemingly impossible path to the nobility of man in the manifestations of his existence. Philosophy turns to the one single item. It is the foundation of a free community of people who rely on each other in the will to the truth” [10].

2. Successful medical activity is not possible without a high level of culture, an important component of which is the culture of speech.

3. The peculiarity of modern medicine is collective forms of providing qualified help. In such circumstances, the importance of successful interaction and communication of physicians increases.

4. The patient's health greatly depends on communication with the medical staff.

5. In the course of professional activity it is impossible to avoid conflict situations. Therefore, their prediction, technology of successful solution is the key to a favourable microclimate in the team.

6. Communication with relatives of the patient in different life situations requires special skills, especially in the case of fatal consequences.

7. To achieve this goal, an important role is played by the method of practical training. It is advisable to follow a clearly defined structure. We tried the following model. 1. Literature review. 2. Epigraphs in which the wisdom of the ages is concentrated. For example, Avicenna's famous thesis, "A true doctor, has three tools: a word, some grass, a knife" is analyzed. 3. "Adventures of the word", which involves the analysis of one or two basic concepts. 4. Main topic. 5. Test verification.

Modern teacher has to consider several other important features. 1. In the educational process, it is important to understand the laws of the process, which allows to describe, explain the causes and predict events. 2. The technique of a short conversation remains relevant: a system of logical questions, a positive attitude to the interlocutor and a belief in his abilities, a situation of success. 3. Rather essential are the didactic ideas of Ya. Komenskyy: analysis, synthesis, syncrisis; a student as a teacher; the structure of the lesson; the start from self-observation, then the use of knowledge in practice and in new conditions, and finish with the completion of the test. 4. The method of projects is "returned" to educational institutions. Brainstorming, portfolio, case study are firmly in the forefront of modern didactic systems. 5. New technical possibilities, Internet create favourable conditions for activation of students' cognitive activity. All of the above ideas will only be relevant if they are aimed at personal development of future doctors, readiness for self-improvement, creativity.

Particular attention should be paid to understanding the essence of the system of basic concepts. Not accidentally famous Polish teacher Vincent Okon in the preface to a popular dictionary argued that the development of lexicography is evidence of

the relevance of science, and one of the main manifestations of its maturity are terminology and corresponding definitions [11].

R. Kipling's poem "IF" is of particular importance for the students' professional development and the preparation of the self-education program. We traditionally use the best translation, in our opinion, by S. Karavansky. It is no accident that a person who has been suffering in Soviet camps for over thirty years translates this text is so important for understanding the "psychology of power." In addition to traditional questions, we use an unexpected task. There are two flaws to be found in the text. After active search, some participants argue that the final conclusion "Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it, And – which is more – you'll be a Man, my son!" is approachless in principle.

Further study requires the modernization of content, forms and methods of controlling learning. First of all, textbooks on pedagogy of the new generation, including those of higher educational pedagogy, should be prepared based on the principle of finding the laws. An objective assessment of the capabilities of science is needed. For example, the current stage of scientific development does not allow considering the mechanisms of creativity. One can only consider a system of different activities that will contribute to the development of desirable qualities. The only problem is that the teacher must be ready to organize the creative process, taking into account the unique qualities and individual characteristics of the student.

Conclusions and Prospects for Research. The problem of preventing manipulation in the medical environment is becoming increasingly important. This problem has various aspects. Competition between firms providing the market for drugs and equipment necessitates training young professionals to understand the content, forms, methods of manipulation technologies.

Significant increase in the level of information culture of the population, the Internet, the opportunity to hear the qualified opinion of specialists from different countries create fundamentally new prerequisites for communication between doctors and patients. Therefore, focused work in this area should be carried out from the first year of studying.

Focusing the media on the failures of doctors enhances feelings of fear, distrust, increases the desire for self-medication, and enhances the importance of

unconventional medicine. Students should prepare for this situation. One aspect of such work is professional communication.

Many years of experience confirm the feasibility of the “early start”. We mean the level of creative, scientific tasks of increased complexity. However, this requires appropriate methodological training of the teacher. The first year students develop the author’s charts (mind map) successfully, prepare comparative tables of basic concepts, and make scientific reports.

The basis of successful management decisions is the availability of prompt, objective information. Some time ago a laboratory of educational quality was established at the Ternopil National Economic University. In the first stage the main focus was on diagnostics of the effectiveness of the educational process and management activity, development of quality criteria for education, generalization of the experience of national and foreign educational institutions, studying the motivation of students and teachers, topical issues of didactics of higher education.

In order to understand the promising areas of research for the coming decades, it is advisable to draw attention to two important documents in the educational process. First, in some countries (Israel, Poland) at the government level, groups of leading experts have prepared the reports on the intellectual capital of the country. These documents are characterized primarily by a comparative approach. Each conclusion is justified in comparison with other countries. In addition, a kind of methodological basis was successfully selected, which made it possible to avoid the chaotic accumulation of information. We mean personology, the development of a person from the prenatal period (that’s why “ancestral” politics comes first) to old age. A characteristic feature of the document is the scientific substantiation of the existing problems in economy, education, and culture. This allows them to be systematically solved, to make effective management decisions. It should be noted that overcoming the effects of the pandemic in 2020 once again proved the tragic consequences of mistakes in reforming and managing social processes. Secondly, the conclusions of the experts of the Roman Club were published with some delay, which is important for the development of pedagogical science. The experts first of all drew attention to the growing likelihood of environmental, economic social, political, cultural, moral crisis. For pedagogical science the conclusion

about the spread of intolerance and aggression through social networks is important. Priority is given to the original, integral, systemic thinking, the development of creative abilities, which is a priority for quality education. Practice confirms that even students of the best higher educational institutions in Ukraine are oriented to solving test problems and well prepared for this type of activity. However, if a creative problem is needed, the author’s abstract is written, the review turns out to be accessible only to individual students. Interestingly, in the process of working with teachers found the same difficulties. We may not have the necessary information available to us, but unlike other countries in Ukraine there is no system of sociological research, such as Teacher 2020 or Student 2020. Conducting longitudinal studies, comparing the results with the previous period, comparing them with the experience of foreign colleagues would help to find patterns of the educational process, directions for improving didactic principles.

Analysis of dissertations, textbooks, experience of lecturing for teachers allow us to single out another problem. We mean insufficient attention to the system of basic concepts. This problem has several levels. Firstly, there are considerable difficulties in substantiating such concepts as a human, an individual, personality, education, learning process, pedagogy. Secondly, even professionals with considerable experience do not always pay attention to the basic concepts of their subject. Changes in teaching methodology are needed to improve the situation, as well as an updated system of scientific and methodological support for the educational process.

We suppose that in the dissertations, which will be defended in the future, at first in the “tasks”, later in the “objective”, and also in the “title” the concept of “regularity” will appear. Note that modern researchers use such words as “trends”, “conditions”, etc, even understanding its importance and also being aware of the complexity of finding patterns. The authors of studies in the history of pedagogy will eventually reach a qualitatively higher level and instead of the chaotic accumulation of facts will move to the level of generalization, seeking a retrospective evaluation of the laws of the process, taking into account the principle of innovation for the evaluation of each pedagogical idea.

The authors of the new generation of textbooks on pedagogy will not declare the idea of the benefits of an

interdisciplinary approach, but will try to combine the achievements of pedagogy, philosophy, psychology, sociology, disciplines of the natural cycle and will try to approach the specific patterns of human development to the level of personality.

It is advisable to review the main priorities in educational policy. First of all, changes are needed in assessing test capabilities. Test as an element of the system is effective and appropriate. Hundreds,

sometimes thousands, of tests for one subject negate the possibilities of the methods of teaching, moreover they cause harm. After all, in a professional activity the person will not answer the chaotic questions, but will solve specific practical problems. Perhaps this is the reason for the popularity of the case method. The well-known thesis about the dialectical way of knowing the truth by means of living contemplation, abstract thinking and practice is irrelevant.

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