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METHODS OF LEARNING PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH VOCABULARY BY MEDICAL STUDENTS

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МЕТОДИ ВИВЧЕННЯ ЛЕКСИКИ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЗА ПРОФЕСІЙНИМ СПРЯМУВАННЯМ СТУДЕНТАМИ-МЕДИКАМИ

Abstract. The given article deals with the issue of acquisition of professional lexical skills and foreign language communicative competence according to new methods in training specialists by students of higher educational institutions studying in medical specialties. The article reveals the essence of methods of studying English-language vocabulary and a number of aspects of optimal and effective application of these methods in teaching English-language vocabulary to medical students. The components of methods of teaching vocabulary in a foreign professional language, in particular in the context of teaching English to medical students, are considered, and mnemonic techniques and the possibility of their application in English classes are analyzed. The advantages of using these methods are described, as well as the conditions that will make the learning process effective. It is proved that by mastering the English-language vocabulary, specialists' professional abilities increase, it is one of the means of personal growth of specialists in the future, as well as an important condition for successful career growth of future doctors, because they will be able to establish professional connections with foreign colleagues.

Key words: professional vocabulary; methods of lexical units learning; lexical skills; foreign language communicative competence; medical students.

Анотація. У роботі розглядається питання набуття студентами вищих закладів освіти, які навчаються за медичними спеціальностями, професійних лексичних навичок та іншомовної комунікативної компетентності згідно з новими методами в навчанні фахівців. У статті розкрито сутність методів вивчення англомовної лексики і низку аспектів оптимального та ефективного застосування цих методів у навчанні англомовної лексики студентами-медиками. Розглянуто складові методів навчання лексики іноземної професійної мови, зокрема в контексті навчання англійської мови студентів-медиків, а також проаналізовано мнемонічні прийоми та можливості їхнього застосування на занятті з англійської мови. Схарактеризовано переваги застосування даних методів, а також умови, що зроблять процес навчання ефективним. Доведено, що завдяки оволодінню англомовної лексики у фахівців зростають професійні здібності, вона є одним із засобів особистісного росту спеціалістів у подальшому, а також важливою умовою для вдалого кар'єрного росту майбутніх лікарів, адже вони зможуть налагоджувати професійні зв'язки з іноземними колегами.

Ключові слова: професійна лексика; методи вивчення лексичних одиниць; лексичні навички; іншомовна комунікативна компетенція; студенти-медики.

Introduction. The main objectives of teaching foreign languages at the bachelor's and master's levels in a non-linguistic university are the formation and improvement of the communicative skills of students in other languages for solving problems of interpersonal and intercultural interaction.

Consequently, the formation of lexical skills is one of the main components of the content of teaching a foreign language at a medical university, which allows for the implementation of foreign-language communication. Knowledge of a foreign language is associated with knowledge of words, while language proficiency is associated with lexical skills that ensure

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the functioning of vocabulary in communication. Therefore, lexical skills should be considered as the most important and integral component of the content of teaching a foreign language, their formation is precisely the purpose of teaching lexical material. The lexical aspect of communication has certain features that facilitate its learning and such that makes it difficult. The first aspect includes the connection of vocabulary with the content of communication, which is what communicants' attention is focused on. This contributes to the concentration of their attention and, in the end, vocabulary acquisition. The second aspect is characterized by difficulties in mastering foreign language vocabulary associated with the form of the word (sound, graphic, grammatical), its meaning, the nature of compatibility with other words, the use of words, as well as differences with the words of the native tongue.

Today, it is already quite clear that knowledge of a foreign language is not only an advantage of future professionals, but also a vital necessity for competitive promotion in the labor market (today we are even talking about knowledge of more than one foreign language). A highly qualified graduate of a higher educational institution should not only know all aspects of their specialty well, but also be able to freely express their ideas and thoughts in both their native and foreign languages. Also important is the ability to conduct a dialogue and maintain a conversation or discussion on the topic, and much more. Accordingly, in this case, the level of knowledge of a foreign language depends on the lexical units in this field of performance [12].

It allows us to draw a conclusion about the topicality of the problem, about the need for long and time-consuming work in order to acquire foreign-language vocabulary, which provides for continuous accumulation and expansion of vocabulary, and its usage in various types of speech activity, i.e. listening, speaking, reading, writing. The learning process requires a more thorough and detailed study of the problem of teaching vocabulary in terms of its rational construction, organization and usage.

The analysis of research and publications shows that the issues of teaching lexical units and the formation of lexical competence in general and lexical skills in particular were studied by such scientists as O. Bihych, V. Bukhbinder, N. Borysko, N. Hez, S. Nikolaeva, V. Redko, S. Smolina, O. Solovova. S. Shatilov studied the stages of automation and use of new lexical units. P. Babynska made a comparative analysis of methodological approaches to teaching vocabulary.

The aim – to get acquainted with the main stages of formation of lexical competence of medical students in the process of specialized training; to describe modern tasks of working on vocabulary by future doctors; clarifying the use of interactive teaching methods in the process of formation of lexical skills of medical students.

Theoretical framework. The linguistic component of the content of vocabulary acquisition represents the lexical minimum, that is, words, phrases, phraseological units specially selected for learning in the educational process. The criteria for selecting the lexical minimum are the topic (words should express the most important concepts on the topic defined by the Foreign Language Learning Program). When selecting lexical units, the principle of excluding synonyms and international words that completely coincide in foreign and native languages is taken into account. Depending on the nature of speech activity, an active (proactive) and passive (receptive) lexical minimum are distinguished [12, p. 76].

V. A. Buchbinder defines the real and potential vocabulary. All the vocabulary of the minimum must be mastered almost during the course of learning a foreign language, ensuring the development of their active and receptive speech activity, so it belongs to the real vocabulary. At the same time, it is necessary to carry out work that develops the ability to recognize and understand vocabulary units met for the first time, but have familiar elements, relying on which makes it possible to achieve their understanding. Words that can be understood in the text without special study make up a potential vocabulary [1, p. 189–190].

The choice of a communicative orientation that contributes to the use of words in speech and the formation of positive motivation for learning new lexical units is important at the stage of getting acquainted with new vocabulary. The communicative orientation should be based on associative processes that contribute to involuntary memorization of words. These associations can be caused by both paradigmatic connections of a word (words of the same part of speech) and syntagmatic (words belonging to the same concept). There are different means of creating a communicative orientation, namely stories based on an illustration (thematic or plot picture, subject pictures, filmstrip, collage, reference poster, etc.), conversation, video, etc. [6, p. 22].

It is advisable to refer to the methodological aspects of the English language for Specific Purposes syllabus for higher medical educational institutions of Ukraine,

which is the basis for planning and organizing English language classes. The syllabus is aimed at practical interdisciplinary and professional orientation of the English language classes, which focus on the student. Its important goal is to direct the educational process to the formation and development of basic skills and abilities in social and professional communication, i.e. foreign language communicative competence [9].

Foreign language communicative competence is a set of skills, abilities and knowledge that allows you to study, work and communicate in a multinational society and achieve mutual understanding and interaction with representatives of other cultures in an equal dialogue [11].

It is implemented primarily through the development of skills and abilities in the main types of speech activity, covering reception, production, interaction and mediation, and is implemented both in written and oral forms [4].

The development of foreign language communicative competence provides the student with the opportunity to:

- improve their skills in reading, listening, writing and speaking to develop skills to work with information of various types of texts from any source based on already acquired knowledge about the world; extract, analyze and systematize, select and transmit information;

- form their own opinion on the basis of the information obtained, justify it and provide the necessary explanations;

- recognize the message intentions that correspond to certain types of texts with their grammatical structures and rules, understand and transfer them to adequate situations [8, p. 10].

Language competence includes the following components:

- phonetics, phonology: orthophony and spelling;
- grammar: morphology, syntax;
- vocabulary: lexical units, lexical connections, word formation/neology;
- discourse: language norms of the text structure [3, p. 45].

When assessing the formation of a foreign language communicative competence, content, coherence, compliance with phonetic norms, grammatical correctness, and lexical adequacy are taken into account. This means that lexical competence is closely related to many other skills. So, the learned word itself does not mean the formation of elements of lexical and grammatical competencies. It is noted

that lexical competence is directly related to all other competencies, namely: grammatical; semantic; phonological; spelling; orthoepic; sociolinguistic; pragmatic [4, p. 113–130].

So, focusing on the level of language proficiency in accordance with the «European recommendations for language education: study, teaching, assessment», we believe that teaching vocabulary and forming lexical competence should be a logical and important component of the process of forming the foreign language communicative competence of future physicians.

S. Shatilov considers the formation of lexical competence as a step-by-step process beginning from familiarization with new lexical units to their active use in speech activity [10, p. 29]. A similar opinion is expressed by Yu. Passov, noting that firstly, skills of working with lexical material are formed, secondly, skills are improved, and thirdly, the ability to use lexical units in speech activity is developed [7, p. 115].

According to a study by foreign scientists, the method of forming lexical competence should comprise several elements. Studying new words is not just learning by heart; but their function in language should be known as well. Firstly, a medical student learns the pronunciation and spelling of a word. Students should also know how to use them in a grammatically correct way, because some words cannot be put in random places for sometimes it can change the meaning of the sentence. Secondly, students should know while learning vocabulary a meaning relationship. The meaning relationship is the connection and cooperation the meaning of one word with the meaning of others. This relationship can be useful in teaching [13, 14].

There are classic methods of enlarging and improving vocabulary. The first method is mnemonics. It is “a set of special techniques and methods that make it easier to remember the necessary information and increase the amount of memory by forming associations (connections)” [2]. On the one hand, this is an excellent method of memorizing new vocabulary, but, on the other hand, mnemonics may not give a positive result when replacing meaningful (logical) memorization with mechanical memorization. This method is particularly well suited for memorizing complex, abstract, unknown words, when the meaning can be linked to a specific vivid visual or sound image.

There is a rather interesting and effective method of memorizing foreign words, i.e. the “polyglot” method. This method helps you quickly and efficiently memorize not only individual words, but the author

of this method recommends memorizing thematic groups of words. This is very important for students of non-linguistic specialties. Students can enlarge their vocabulary by memorizing not only individual words, but also combining them thematically and linking them to a specific subject of their specialization or professional orientation. The “polyglot” method is a sequence of mental actions and operations that form the memorization skill [2, p. 341]. Examples of commands using the “polyglot” method (for self-memorizing English words):

1. Imagine a translation of the word.
2. Choose a Ukrainian word for the pronunciation.
3. Connect the image of the translation with the image of the word that sounds the same.
4. “Take a picture” of a foreign word.
5. Write a foreign word.
6. Check the quality of visual memorization.
7. Write it down on the card for later repetition.

Since, students who enter a higher educational institution already have a certain level of knowledge of a foreign language and, accordingly, a certain vocabulary, one of the successful methods of enlarging professional vocabulary is the method of composing a story or oral topic. After getting acquainted with and studying a particular topic in a foreign language, students can complete some task to better memorize the vocabulary of this topic or lexical topic. After reading the text (or several texts) and completing a certain set of lexical, grammatical, oral and written tasks to memorize the learned vocabulary, they can create a topic (story, abstract, etc.) in a foreign language. The teacher can give students a specific set of words (most often from a text or lexical topic) and ask them to compose a topic. Firstly, it can be an oral topic or a written task in the form of an essay, report, or abstract [13, p. 259]. Secondly, very often such a task can be the final one in a group of exercises for the text and is characterised a clearly formulated task:

Pick up the key words from the text “Cardiovascular Diseases”. Make up your own sentences with these words. Or Pick up the key words from the text “Cardiovascular Diseases”. Write an abstract to the text “Cardiovascular Diseases”. Or Pick up the key words from the text “Cardiovascular Diseases”. Give a short report on the following topic.

A huge advantage of this method is that students, having passed the lexical topic, have the opportunity to show their individuality and uniqueness. In addition, it will be interesting for the whole group of students – since this is not just simple learning, but providing

a variety of information on the topic. It will be useful and interesting for the student not only to tell their topic, but also to listen to other students. Also, when doing such a task, the student must use not only familiar vocabulary, but also sometimes insert new, unfamiliar words (most often verbs), which also increases the number of lexical units that are remembered.

The flashcard method and marking method should be mentioned. The flashcard method is based on getting a certain number of cards with foreign words on one side and translating them into your native tongue on the other side. This method is a very appropriate one, because students can take these cards with them anywhere and repeat (learn) words at any free and convenient time. So, after learning a certain set of words, students can put down cards with already learned words and add new cards as needed. Also, if students have forgotten certain words and their translation, they can always return the cards already set aside in the pack.

The marking method is the use of stickers with foreign words written on them. Stickers are most often used without translation, but simply pasted on the item itself. The disadvantage of this method is that it is most effective to learn the words of home life (rooms and indoor objects, bathroom and what is there, as well as the kitchen and its utensils), but this is not very suitable for studying narrowly specialized professional vocabulary.

Reading is a great way to enlarge and develop your vocabulary. In texts, you meet an unfamiliar word, translate it, and memorize it. What is equally important is that you remember not only an individual word, but also its lexical environment (you can immediately learn the whole phrase). But since we are talking about expanding specialized, professional vocabulary, then the literature should also be appropriate.

One of the most long-used methods of memorizing foreign words is repetition. A person takes an unfamiliar foreign word and repeats it several times. In this case, you can remember a single word, phrase, or group of related words. Using this method, it is very important to take pauses or breaks, during which new material (lexical units) is “recorded” by the brain in long-term memory [13, p.48].

An affordable and universal method of enlarging your vocabulary today is to watch videos (movies, cartoons, TV shows, TV shows, news, etc.) in a foreign language. Firstly, students listen directly to a native speaker (a great opportunity to correct their pronunciation). Secondly, watching the video gives

you the opportunity to get acquainted with the modern colloquial English, which changes daily. Using this method, it should be borne in mind that today there are a lot of scientific and educational programs for medical purposes.

Without a doubt, in the era of Information Technology, the use of computer programs for memorizing vocabulary in a foreign language will also be relevant. These programs are specifically designed to expand and deepen your vocabulary, both general-language and narrowly specialized (Quizlet, Lingvo, LM Bomber, OpenBook, MyNewWords, EZ MemoBooster) [15, p. 103].

We should also mention multimedia technologies that can be used to develop visual, vivid, interesting and useful exercises for memorizing new vocabulary or improving and practicing using already learned vocabulary. It is possible to develop thematically and lexically related exercises using the PowerPoint program or any other programs. Here you can present not only the words themselves, but also offering it all with drawings, diagrams, etc. Students immediately have visual memorization and create an image (drawing) for a specific word. It is possible to develop a whole set of exercises for learning and memorizing new lexical units based on one professionally-oriented text for successful activation of the vocabulary of students of non-linguistic higher educational institutions in a foreign language. In pre-text tasks, you can represent key lexical units that the student will need to know after studying this topic [15]. Such tasks are given as follows: Before reading the text pay attention to... Or Guess the meaning of the following words.

The task is already represented with the expectation of learning and repeating new material in reading comprehension exercises:

Find in the text equivalents to the following words and expressions

Or

Translate into Ukrainian the following words and word combinations

Or

Memorize the following words and word combinations

There are many methods and means of presenting new lexical material. The teacher selects various forms and methods, and the student chooses a convenient way to learn new foreign words and lexical units.

In our University the training is conducted according to the work program for the discipline B1, B2. Foreign Language, which is designed for 2 semesters of training, is conducted within 2-4 hours a week.

Intermediate control from 1 to 2 semester, final control– grading test at the end of 2 semester of training. The study was carried out in stages: 1. The ascertaining stage is the diagnosis of the level of lexical skills development. 2. Formative stage is trial training, development and control of lexical skills. 3. Control stage is repeated diagnosis of the level of lexical skills development, analysis of the results. At the beginning of the ascertaining stage, we conduct a questionnaire. Then the students carry out a test to determine the level of English and write an essay on the topic, for example: “Why did I choose this profession?” The level of their language skill is determined by these questionnaires. According to this the following levels are revealed in the group: levels (A1), (A2), (B1), (B2), (C). As a result of the implemented activities at the ascertaining stage of the experiment, the percentage of lexical skills level is revealed. At the formative stage of our study, which take place from September to April, students cover lexico-grammatical exercises, oral presentations, multimedia presentations, dialogues, miniprojects, writing essays, performing reading, translation, referencing of texts on the control of lexical skills. At the formative stage of the work, we develop exercises and various types of assignments on such professional topics as: “My future profession”, “Education system in Ukraine and abroad”, “Human Body”, “Systems of the Human Body”, “Respiratory System”, “Diseases of the Cardiovascular System”, “The Stomach”, “HIV/AIDS”, “The Brain”, “Hormones”, “Senses”, “Genetourinary System”, “Paediatrics”, “Infectious Diseases in Children”, etc [9]. Students show a high level of interest in doing exercises, writing essays, messages and presentations on the topic. Performing exercises, drawing up dialogues, writing essays, writing and preparing oral messages help not only memorize and apply vocabulary in the context, but also focus students’ attention on understanding the content and perception of vocabulary. Reading, translation and paraphrasing texts, writing essays contribute to the replenishment of the vocabulary of students and develop thinking activity. At the control stage, the students perform a test that included the vocabulary of all the lessons learned and a test for determining the level of fluency in a foreign language. Comparison of the findings of the ascertaining stage with the data obtained at the control stage suggests that on the one hand the number of bachelors and masters with a low level of lexical skills is decreased, on the other hand, the number of students with a medium and high level

is increased. The quality of the level of lexical skills is grown from approximately 45 % to 75 %.

Conclusions and Prospects for Research. The obtained results indicate that the content and methods of teaching a vocabulary were chosen correctly and proved to be effective for the development of the lexical skills of medical students. The role of lexical units in language learning and communication has been enhanced by lexical and linguistic theory and by work in corpus analysis. The study reveals the importance of applying the lexical approach in the classroom. It shows teachers and learners a successful attempt of

how to use English professional lexical units as well as clear explanations of the importance of doing so. This study provides an accessible introduction for those new to this approach and guidance for those seeking to enhance their understanding and classroom implementation of the approach. It reinforces the importance of word combination patterns in language and their use in teaching and learning a language. Students may learn lexical units as they are reading a book, watching a movie, listening to radio, etc. Teachers can also give lists of different types of lexical units to students as they come up in class.

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