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COMMUNICATION ORIENTED APPROACH TO THE FORMATION OF GRAMMAR COMPETENCE IN THE STUDENTS OF HIGHER MEDICAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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КОМУНІКАТИВНО ОРІЄНТОВАНИЙ ПІДХІД ДО ФОРМУВАННЯ ГРАМАТИЧНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ У СТУДЕНТІВ МЕДИЧНИХ ЗАКЛАДІВ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ

Abstract. The article deals with grounding of the use of English grammar tasks as a component of forming communicative competence in the students of higher medical educational institutions. The essence of grammar competence as an important component of the future medic's communicative competence is found out, and the need for learning grammar in order to be able to express one's thoughts properly is emphasized. English communicative approach to medical students' professional competence is an integral aspect of professionally oriented study at the higher medical educational institution, and is formed through mastering the specifics of language competence at its phonetic, lexical, and grammar levels, particular attention being focused on the analysis of scientifically grounded classification of the exercise system aimed at the formation of grammar competence as a fundamental basis for professionally targeted English course. The issues of semantic content for professionally targeted English, selection of training grammatical material, and development of communicative component in the process of students' mastering English language skills are under consideration. Main components of medical students' grammar competence are characterized; science-based classification of grammar tasks for the formation of English language communication is considered, the emphasis being put on the role of grammar for the proper formulation of thoughts. Both theoretical and methodological aspects of communicative approach to learning English grammar, which is studied through combining grammar, lexical, and phonetic phenomena, are covered. In particular, when teaching correct sentence construction, their semantic and thematic content are considered, grammar skills being formed both at the level of separate structures and fluent dialogue-monologue speech. The use of communicative type grammar tasks at professionally targeted classes of English has been found to develop speech skills and abilities that make possible to estimate and express one's thoughts along with training attention, memory, developing thinking and having high motivation characteristics.

Key words: English language professional competence; English grammar; grammar competence; communicative approach; system of exercises.

Анотація. Стаття присвячена обґрунтуванню використання англомовних граматичних завдань як складової формування комунікативної компетентності у студентів медичних закладів вищої освіти. З'ясовано суть граматичної компетенції, що є важливою складовою комунікативної компетентності майбутнього працівника охорони здоров'я. Наголошується на необхідності засвоєння граматики для правильного формулювання висловлювання. Англомовний комунікативний підхід до фахової компетентності студента-медика є невід'ємним аспектом професійно орієнтованого навчання у медичному закладі вищої освіти і формується шляхом опанування особливостей мовної компетенції на її фонетичному, лексичному та граматичному рівнях вивчення. Увага акцентується на необхідності аналізу навчальної науково обґрунтованої класифікації системи вправ для формування граматичної компетенції як фундаментальної основи курсу англійської мови за професійним спрямуванням. Розглядаються питання змістового наповнення курсу англійської мови за професійним спрямуванням, відбору навчального граматичного матеріалу, розвитку комунікативної складової в процесі оволодіння студентами англомовними вміннями. Охарактеризовано основні складові граматичної компетенції студентів-медиків, розглянуто науково обґрунтовану класифікацію граматичних завдань для формування англомовної комунікації; наголошено на необхідності засвоєння граматики для правильного оформлення думки. Висвітлено теоретичні та методологічні аспекти комунікативного підходу для засвоєння граматики англійської мови, вивчення якої здійснюється шляхом органічного поєднання граматичних явищ із лексичними та фонетичними. Зокрема,

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при навчанні правильної побудови та структури речень береться до уваги також їх змістове та тематичне наповнення: граматичні вміння формуються як на рівні окремих структур, так і на рівні зв'язного діалогічного та монологічного мовлення. З'ясовано, що використання граматичних завдань комунікативного характеру на заняттях англійської мови за професійним спрямуванням розвиває мовленнєві навички та вміння, які надають можливість давати оцінку, висловлювати думку, тренують увагу, пам'ять, розвивають мислення, а також мають високі мотиваційні характеристики.

Ключові слова: англомова фахова компетентність; граматики англійської мови; граматична компетенція; комунікативний підхід; система вправ.

Introduction. Today, our national higher school's integration into the global educational process is particularly relevant and contributing to the reassessment of the purpose of studying foreign languages. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is considered to play a key role in the field of searching for and developing the ways of improving professional English language training of future specialists as practical English language skills is a prerequisite of successful professional activity nowadays.

Proper training of healthcare professionals as well as formation of future medics' professional English language competence and culture require the educational process in higher institutions to be focused on the future specialists' learning language competences which contribute to developing speech activities: grammar, lexical, and phonetic. Phonetic competence is revealed in standard articulation and pronunciation of sounds; lexical competence unites lexical structures in a certain language system; grammar competence is built at morphologic, syntactic and word forming sublevels, respectively. English language professional culture of the medical student is determined by the level of grammar competence formation, since it is the grammar that helps understand the logic of thinking and formulate a thought in a foreign language, in other words, provides a speaker's ability to build efficient language behaviour that corresponds to the standards of social interaction that are specific for any culture, as well as communication participants' ability to possess communicative strategies together with the rules of communication, and includes organic unity of language, speech, pragmatic, and subject competences [2, p. 228].

The aim. The study is mainly aimed at analysing the system of grammar exercises and tasks meant for the formation and improvement of abilities to build medical students' communicative activity in studying ESP.

Theoretical framework. The issue of mastering the grammar side of foreign language communication has been studied by F. S. Batsevych, O. B. Bihych, P. B. Hurvich, A. V. Konyshva, M. V. Liakhovytskyi, S. Yu. Nikolaieva, Yu. I. Passov, J. Allen, M. Finocchiaro, J. Harmer, J. Isenberg et al. The scientific format concerning grammar specifics distinguished the follow-

ing determining trends of grammar competence: unconscious use of the grammar forms of native and foreign language according to grammar regulations and standards; sense of grammar form; available correction skills as to the correctness of grammar concepts' use; ability to understand and express meanings by producing and discerning properly formed phrases and sentences (that is opposite to memorizing and reproducing them as stable formulas; [4, p. 112]; inside non-verbalized knowledge of language grammar system, as well as of morphologic and syntactic system (types of forms).

Systematic work on the comprehension of English grammar concepts is carried out by the students throughout the ESP course. It is performed on the gradual study basis as students of higher education institutions continue to study the language they studied at school. However, improvement of their grammar competence is supposed to change at different phases of study. At the initial stage, repetition and systematization of grammar rules seems to be reasonable. The experience of group work at non-linguistic departments of higher educational institutions suggests that students often have to re-learn grammar, since groups are formed of the graduates from schools with different level of knowledge. Therefore, correction grammar course is time consuming that is beyond the curriculum.

For learning grammar one can refer to a reputable grammar book, whereas mastering grammar means ability to use corresponding rules in practice. Knowing the rules suggests practical activity and can be mastered through learning. Learning grammar and mastering English grammar competence presumes practical acquisition of structural language phenomena, that is acquiring ability to use them in speech and to understand in perceiving a foreign language. Besides, theoretical knowledge of structural phenomena is gained. Grammar competence implies correct use of English grammar forms according to grammar regulations and standards. Grammar competence is the knowledge of grammar language means and ability to use them. It implies ability to understand and express thoughts, to generate and identify phrases based on certain principles rather than memorizing and reproducing them as ready-to-use formulas. Grammar competence includes: systemic knowledge of lexical,

morphologic, syntactic, phonetic, and orthographic language aspects for understanding and building meaningful and coherent phrases; proficiency in grammar concepts and means of expressing grammar categories; knowledge of stylistic specifics of the foreign language studied; authenticity of the use of a foreign language; skills and ability to adequately use grammar phenomena in speech activity in various communication situations for solving communicative tasks and problems [3].

It is a common knowledge that learning English grammar is nearly the most complicated section of grammar constructs' theoretical comprehension. Though ESP is learned by the students of higher medical educational institutions, they often do not find sufficient time for studying it and, therefore, experience problems in reading unadopted English texts and poorly understand foreign speech by ear. Formation of the rational approach to learning English grammar is impossible without comprehension that even perfect knowledge of grammar rules does not provide proper language proficiency, but comprehensive knowledge of language is unthinkable without grammar skills. Since it is easier and faster for the students to memorize logically structured information, grammar makes it possible to learn language constructions in a meaningful way rather than learning speech formulas by heart.

Practical goals of studying grammar at higher educational institutions include formation of grammar skills in productive and receptive types of speech activity according to curriculum determined grammar minimum that should be sufficient for using language as a means of communication and realistic enough to be learned within curriculum.

Formation of grammar competence is impossible without taking into account sociocultural factor since knowledge of word meaning and grammar rules is not sufficient for command of the language as a means of communication. It is through knowing sociocultural realities of studied and native language and by comparing both foreign and native language and culture that all the subtleties and depth of interlingual and intercultural communication become quite evident [11]. Successful formation of grammar competence, considering national and cultural specifics of a studied language, is possible on condition of implementing communicative and sociocultural approach to teaching the foreign language. Sociocultural approach includes teaching communication in the context of cultural dialogue and formation of the individual of cultural dialogue, capable of acting as a representative of a foreign culture in the professional activity [7].

Within its system, grammar competence constructs interconnected constructive components which are an essential condition for the medical students' English language profiessogram: motivation (encouraging the specialist to self-development and self-improvement, as well as focus on increasing one's awareness about the grammar structure of a language); gnostic (understanding decisive role of English grammar theoretical knowledge for the individual's development); activity (practical implementation of theoretical knowledge); personal (students' ability for inner self-development and logical comprehension of English grammar phenomena) [10].

Experience of working with the students studying at the non-linguistic departments of higher educational institutions and reviews of methodical literature confirm that students' mastering grammar competence is achieved through organic combination of grammar, lexical, and phonetic phenomena. In particular, when teaching correct sentence construction and structure, their semantic and thematic content is taken into account: grammar skills are formed both at the level of separate structures and coherent dialogue and monologue speech. Such presentation of professional language structure provides training of grammar structures not separately but in thematic connection.

At the receptive phase of acquiring grammar skills students are expected to learn to identify and to understand grammar information orally and in writing. Scientific system of learning grammar material differentiates the following main items of working on grammar concepts: presentation of grammar phenomena and providing basis for the further formation of skills; formation of speech grammar skills through their automation in oral speech; inclusion of skills into different types of communication; development of speech skills [10].

N. O. Fedchyshyn stresses that different types of texts and test tasks are suggested for processing language material and training students' receptive, reproductive and productive skills and, at the same time, to control the level of their speaking competence formation. Educational materials include a vocabulary minimum, grammar aid, and lists of basic language formulas to express different communicative intentions [12, p. 34].

For grammar phenomena to be better understood, it is appropriate to use theoretical and practical method that includes short grammar explanation of a speech phenomenon concerning formation and the use of presented grammar phenomenon in speech. Exercises for the formation of grammar skills are divided into linguistic

(tasks with minor communicative emphasis: to build a sentence following a model, to convert a sentence from active voice into passive, etc.); relatively speech tasks (those that simulate speech communication: to answer questions using the grammar form specified) and true speech tasks (those focused on the development of speech communication: describe the situation on the picture, listen to and comment the text) [10].

Grammar competence provides systemic knowledge of lexical, morphologic, word-formation, syntactic, phonetic, and orthographic language aspects for the formation of meaningful and coherent phrases; mastery of grammar concepts and ways of expressing grammar categories; skills and abilities to adequately use grammar phenomena for speech activity in different communication situations in order to solve challenging speech and intellectual tasks.

Exercises that develop grammar competence equally activate training skills into communicative ones. Practical experience shows that creative grammar tasks, focused on professional speech, make it possible to master English language competence at morphologic, syntactic, and word-formation levels of language skills. Grammar tasks is a specific invariant basis that is compulsory for proper formation of lexical and phonetic competences in recreating communicative situations. It is due to the fact that morphology, syntax, and word formation are the centres around which proper functioning of language forms in particular speech situations is built and their use in different types of professional speech activity (speaking, writing, audition) is provided. The tasks like *Write the nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs from the following words* [1, c. 70]. *Use the suffix -logy to write a word that means each of the following* [5, p. 96]. *Form the opposites by adding negative prefixes* [5, p. 183] may be the samples of linguistic (non-communicative) exercises targeted at mastering word-formation and morphologic concepts of the English language.

Morphologic and word-formation exercises are of reproductive and training type, providing the future medic with English language literacy that is quite necessary for the formation of professional foreign language communicative activity.

Tasks for the formation of grammar skills and abilities in the context of mastering foreign language syntactic component are characterized by the presence of speech constructs. For the formation of interrogative sentences, determination of affirmative tense forms, and transformation of sentences into various grammar (mainly tense-related) combinations, the student should involve lexical concepts. At the initial phase of learning

and improving syntactic constructions, the exercises like *Transform the following sentences in the Past and Future Perfect Passive* [1, p. 78]. *Rearrange the words to form the sentences* [5, p. 218–219] are useful.

Relatively speech grammar exercises are aimed at training communicative activity, methodical English language medical literature containing the following tasks: *Here are the answers to some questions from the text. What are the questions?* [9, p. 33]. *Put the verbs in the brackets in the proper tense using the rules of sequence of tenses* [1, p. 106].

True speech tasks are meant for the development of speech activity and belong to communication spectrum. This type of exercises is creative, complicated and is used for the development of speech skills: composing communicative situations, tests, mini-compositions, thematic speeches, etc. Here are the examples of such tasks:

1. Write a brief story using the words below.
2. Work in groups of three to discuss the following points.
3. Work in pairs. Compose short dialogues on the topic.
4. Provide your mates with some interesting facts about ...
5. Try to guess what it is!

The work on the grammar aspect of the language is often restricted to reading a rule and its training in sentences (with or without support on tables/schemes). Consequently, owing to the lack of actual communication in classes even the students with a fairly high level of theoretical knowledge have problems with expressing their thoughts. This taken into account, tasks should be targeted at communication. Primarily, communicability includes speech orientation of the educational process that suggests practical use of the language as a way to attain the objective.

Communicative method provides for teaching grammar on functional and situational basis. It means that grammar phenomena are learned not as “forms” and “structures”, but as means of expressing certain thoughts, communicative intentions, and their introduction into speech experience. Contextual and communicative technology of teaching is oriented on the creation of linguistic environment that actively involves students in English language communication [8]. In this context, dialogue is of particular significance, since it has been proven that mastering a foreign language and formation of value orientations are the most effective in the process of comparing various meaningful positions, that is under

conditions of linguistic/social interaction and interpersonal communication that is realized in the form of a dialogue. In the conversational situation, testing of samples and models of actual foreign language occurs and students' speech behaviour forms. Besides, their attention mobilizes and imagination develops, in so doing enlivening the process of studying [10]. Thus, communicative situation for business communication is the combination of conditions and circumstances when there is a need for meeting an actual challenge, taking a decision, or achieving the desired result through communication. Situations may occur on the basis of verbal business communication and reveal preconditions for conscious use of mastered professional material in practice.

Teaching grammar side of speech, related to the formation of corresponding automatisms, is effectively carried out through a series of training exercises. Since exercises alone do not develop ability to take part in communication, it is necessary to develop the skills of spontaneous communication in accordance with situational needs. For this, a system of communication-oriented exercises is needed which should be close to actual communication, addressed to the student, and include the use of his/her own life experience. Grammar exercises of communicative type contribute to deep comprehension and versatile understanding of what has been read and reveals ability for the proper use of lexical material both in monologue and dialogue speech. Grammar tasks include training of the ability to understand and to render in English the content of original English texts alongside with forming skills to hold professional conversations.

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Conclusions and Prospects for Research. For effective formation and improvement of all grammar competence components in medical students, it is essential that future health care workers should perform the task system of communicative type; focus on the regularities, principles and rules of mastering theoretical knowledge; use methods and ways for the development of their own cognitive abilities. Definitely, communicative tasks are perhaps the most effective way of performing speech activity as they are targeted on mastering both receptive and reproductive skills.

The above-mentioned technologies of communication-oriented English grammar teaching in the non-linguistic higher educational institution have an effect not only on communicative speech and thinking activity, but also on cognitive and creative ones; they train attention and memory, develop thinking and have high motivation characteristics.

The reviewed theoretical aspects are necessary for the formation of grammar competence of future doctors through the prism of communicative approach at ESP classes. However, they do not encompass the entire volume of forms and methods. Many issues of improving and introducing the concepts of communicative approach into the higher education system still await their development both in theoretical and practical plane. As regards further scientific perspective, we are going to focus our research efforts on theoretical and practical grounding of organizational and methodological conditions of forming medical students' grammar competence on the basis of communicative approach at ESP classes.

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