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## COOPERATIVE LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AS A MEANS OF IMPROVING THE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF NURSES IN AUSTRIA

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## ТЕХНОЛОГІЇ КООПЕРАТИВНОГО НАВЧАННЯ ЯК ЗАСІБ УДОСКОНАЛЕННЯ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ПІДГОТОВКИ МЕДИЧНИХ СЕСТЕР В АВСТРІЇ

**Abstract.** The article examines the use of cooperative learning technologies in the professional training of nurses in Austria. It is emphasized that the nursing profession in Austrian society has a high social rating, a pronounced personal and humanistic orientation, it is a separate profession, where a nurse is an independent specialist in the health care system. It is emphasized that in the conditions of increasing the range of functional responsibilities and of the professional activity of medical specialists, cooperative learning technologies allow not only to improve practical skills, but also to develop the clinical thinking of future nurses, to adapt them to non-standard situations, to work out all the necessary stages of their activity. It is noted that the advantages of cooperative learning are the improvement of students' academic results, development of their ability to think critically and have non-stereotypical perception of other people, positive psychological climate in the group, students' desire for cooperation and constructive socialization, the presence of an empathetic reaction, mutual support, sympathy and friendly relations in the team, and positive attitude of students to studies, teachers and educational institution, etc. Unlike traditional forms and methods of educational activity, cooperative learning helps to achieve not only cognitive, but also motivational and emotional goals, develops the ability to take responsibility for one's own learning, that is, the ability to independently organize the learning process.

**Key words:** professional training; nurse; Austria; cooperative learning technologies.

**Анотація.** У статті розглянуто застосування технологій кооперативного навчання у професійній підготовці медичних сестер в Австрії. Наголошено, що професія медсестри в австрійському суспільстві має високий соціальний рейтинг, яскраво виражену особистісно-гуманістичну спрямованість, є самостійною професією, де медсестра – незалежний спеціаліст системи охорони здоров'я. Підкреслено, що в умовах розширення кола функціональних обов'язків і підвищення рівня складності професійної діяльності фахівців із догляду за хворими технології кооперативного навчання дозволяють не тільки вдосконалити практичні навички, а й розвинути клінічне мислення майбутніх фахівців із медсестринства, адаптувати їх до нестандартних ситуацій, відпрацювати всі необхідні етапи діяльності майбутньої медсестри. Зазначено, що перевагами кооперативного навчання є підвищення академічних результатів студентів; розвиток здатності критично мислити і нестереотипно сприймати інших людей; позитивний психологічний клімат у групі; прагнення студентів до співробітництва та конструктивної соціалізації; наявність емпатійної реакції, взаємопідтримки, симпатії та дружніх стосунків у колективі; позитивне ставлення студентів до навчання, викладачів та навчального закладу тощо. На відміну від традиційних форм і методів навчальної діяльності, кооперативне навчання допомагає досягнути не лише когнітивної, а також мотиваційної та емоційної мети, розвиває здатність взяти на себе відповідальність за власне навчання, тобто вміння самостійно організувати навчальний процес.

**Ключові слова:** професійне навчання; медсестра; Австрія; технології кооперативного навчання.

**Introduction.** In the conditions of fundamental changes in the domestic system of education and integration of Ukraine into the European educational space, special attention is paid to the study and

implementation of modern methods and forms of education, which are successfully used in the professional training of specialists in various European countries, into the educational process of higher educational institutions of Ukraine. Recently, in foreign

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scientific and practical experience, there has been a trend of transition from the individualistic form of educational interaction to cooperative learning, which promotes the development of the ability to interact effectively in a group and at the same time strengthens the autonomy of students [1].

The profession of nurse in Austrian society has a high social rating, which is ensured by university education, a pronounced personal and humanistic orientation, it is a separate profession, where a nurse is an independent specialist of the health care system. The prestige and importance of nursing in Austria is evidenced by autonomy, high social status, and the possibility of continuous training and career growth of nursing specialists.

The professional training of an Austrian nurse today is significantly complicated by its tasks. In modern conditions, it bears a great responsibility in the diagnostic and treatment process. Its functional responsibilities include making all decisions regarding the organization of a highly qualified patient care. Expanding the range of functional responsibilities and increasing the level of complexity of the professional activity of medical specialists in modern conditions requires a constant search for new forms and methods of training that would contribute to improving the quality of their training and, in the future, improving the quality of medical services.

Domestic pedagogues as M. V. Bayda, N. V. Hahina, T. S. Koshmanova, I. V. Mykhailova, K. F. Nor, L. V. Pyrozhenko, O. I. Pometun, O. Yu. Pryshlyak, H. O. Syrotenko, V. Yu. Strelnikov and others devoted their research to the problem of using cooperative learning technologies. Various aspects of cooperative learning are highlighted in scientific research and practical works of foreign scientists as E. Aronson, D. Johnson, R. Johnson, S. Kagan, E. Cohen, N. Madden, R. Slavina, E. Holubek, Sh. Sharan and others. The analysis of foreign scientific research shows that cooperative learning is widely used in the pedagogical practice of the USA, and European countries, in particular Austria.

**The aim** – to analyze the use of cooperative learning technologies in the professional training of nurses in Austria.

**Theoretical framework.** According to the Order of the Federal Ministry of Health, educational activities in nursing schools in Austria should be based on the following didactic principles:

– the principle of pluralism of teaching methods and means and their rational application involves the use

of teaching methods that ensure the effectiveness of students' cognitive activity. When choosing teaching methods, it is advisable to give preference to those that prevent the dogmatic perception of educational material, and contribute to the stimulation of students' thinking activity, the development of clinical thinking and the skills of solving complex problems;

– during all classes, it is recommended to actualize the so-called “social learning”, which allows to develop communication skills, independence and tolerance, as well as the ability to use existing aids and find new ones to solve problem situations.

Cooperative learning technologies contribute to the implementation of these principles in educational activities during the training of nurses in Austria, allow not only to improve practical skills, but also to develop the clinical thinking of future nursing specialists, to adapt them to non-standard situations, to work out all the necessary stages of a future nurse's activity. Cooperative learning is widely used at various levels of Austrian education.

The advantages of cooperative learning, according to the scientists [6, 7], are the improvement of students' academic results; development of the ability to think critically and have non-stereotypical perception of other people; positive psychological climate in the group; students' desire for cooperation and constructive socialization; the presence of an empathetic reaction, mutual support, sympathy and friendly relations in the team; positive attitude of students to studies, teachers and the educational institution; personal growth; a high level of self-esteem and mental health, which is manifested in emotional balance, awareness of personal individuality, manifestation of trust, optimistic perception of the world and the environment.

A specific attention should be paid to the study of the Austrian scientist D. Janker, who analyzes the use of cooperative learning technologies in Austrian higher education and in the professional training of nurses in particular. D. Janker interprets cooperative learning as a type of learning that enables a heterogeneous small group of students to achieve a common educational goal through cooperative interaction [5]. According to the author, the use of cooperative learning technologies in the professional training of nurses contributes to the formation of group work skills in students, which are necessary in their future professional activities.

Austrian scientists [8] emphasize that cooperative learning always takes place in groups, but not every group work corresponds to the principles of educational cooperation. In order to differentiate

educational cooperation from other forms of group work, the famous pedagogues brothers D. Johnson and R. Johnson developed five basic principles of cooperative learning, which distinguish it from traditional group forms of work in the classroom, the purpose of which is not to increase the individual level of academic achievement of students, but only a result.

The first principle of collaboration in a cooperative group is based on positive interdependence. The German scientist F. Borsch [2] believes that this principle is fundamental to any cooperation and describes it on the example of mountain climbers bound by a single rope – each of them will climb to the top only when everyone can do it. Each member of the group must make a significant contribution to the common cause, and the result of everyone's activity depends on the successful completion of the task by other members of the group. Therefore, positive interdependence contributes to students' motivation to study, encourages mutual assistance, active cooperation, mutual responsibility, determines the need for mutual control, ensures the unification of students' efforts to achieve a common goal.

Another researcher, M. Hasselhorn [4], claims that in order to achieve positive interdependence in a group, it is necessary to define a common goal and formulate tasks in such a way that they can be solved only through cooperation. This can be achieved with the help of a special distribution of educational material (for example, when a student has only a part of the material needed to complete a joint task); assignment of roles (group leader, expert, speaker, observer, etc.); summing up the points received by the group members during the assessment; giving a collective reward. The author emphasizes that the teacher must formulate the tasks in such a way that they can be solved with the direct individual activity of each member of the group.

The second principle of collaboration in a cooperative group, the principle of individual responsibility, is closely related to the principle of positive interdependence. The teacher must control that all students work actively, prevent the possibility of some students completing tasks instead of others, identify students who need help. For this purpose, with the help of individual tests, questioning or other types of control, the teacher checks and evaluates not only the final result of the entire group, but also the work of each student. At the same time, the grade for the performance of individual work is higher if all students successfully completed the task and achieved the set goal.

D. Johnson and R. Johnson [6] recommend choosing small groups for cooperative work. The scientist believes that the smaller the group, the greater the individual responsibility and the easier it is for the teacher to keep all the students in the group in sight and correct their work. Another scientist, S. Kagan [7], considers a group of four students, which can be divided into two pairs if necessary, to be the most effective for cooperative learning.

Scientists refer close interpersonal interaction to the third principle of educational cooperation. According to D. Johnson and R. Johnson [6], students should be able to support each other, encourage, praise for success, stimulate each other's learning activity, cognitively and empathetically respond to the behavior of partners. Scientists [4] emphasize that the location of students in the group is of great importance. They recommend that students sit in a face-to-face position while working. In this case, the group leader performs the functions that, in traditional forms of classes, are usually performed by the teacher. Other authors [3] emphasize the need to observe time limits when completing the task. By clearly regulating the time for completing tasks, the teacher forces students to concentrate and encourages them not to waste time on secondary matters.

The fourth principle of cooperative learning is that, unlike traditional group work, all group members must have certain social skills for successful communication. Interpersonal interaction in a group is often accompanied by a conflict of ideas, opinions, and approaches, and the ability to stop an argument, turn it into a constructive discussion, create an atmosphere of tolerance and trust contributes to a deeper understanding and memorization of educational material, provides educational motivation. Students gain experience in constructive conflict resolution based on dialogic communication, learn to create a trusting atmosphere, convince partners and argue their point of view.

The skills of interpersonal cooperation are purposefully formed by the teacher in specially created educational situations. S. Kagan distinguishes four levels of difficulty in the formation of cooperative skills. First-level skills are necessary to unite the group and establish norms of behavior – call each other by name, do not interrupt, listen carefully to the partners, etc. According to the scientist, second-level skills are necessary for organizing and ensuring effective group work. Among such skills, he names the skills of expressing support, expressing requests for help, encouraging work, etc. The skills of summarizing

what has been read, highlighting the main points, and connecting the material with previously studied belong to the third level and, according to S. Kagan, ensure mental cooperation for better assimilation of educational material. The skills of the fourth, highest level are to criticize an idea, not a partner, argue one's opinion, convince, draw conclusions, find an alternative, etc. contribute to a deep understanding of the educational material, stimulate the creative thinking of rational solutions.

The last principle of educational cooperation is a group analysis of results, which is carried out in order to assess the success of achieving the common goal of educational activities and the productivity of cooperation. During reflection, which is carried out in the form of a group discussion of individual and collective difficulties and achievements, students evaluate how effectively they interact, which behavior models are useful in the process of joint work and what needs to be changed to ensure the harmonious and effective work of the group, make decisions about further improvement of cooperation.

Actually, the presented model distinguishes cooperative learning from traditional group forms of work in class, the purpose of which is not to increase the individual level of educational achievements of students, but only the result.

Having a high level of theoretical training, sufficiently possessing the necessary professional skills and manipulation techniques, future nurses do not know how to apply the acquired knowledge and skills in non-standard, atypical situations. The optimal condition for overcoming the identified problems is to direct learning not to the assimilation of a significant amount of information with its subsequent reproduction, but to the active search and critical analysis of the necessary material, a creative approach to solving problems. As a result, the acquisition of subjectively new knowledge, which, under the condition of practical activity, is easily transformed into professional skills.

**Conclusions and Prospects for Research.** Therefore, the importance of using the technology of cooperative learning in the professional training of nurses is that, unlike traditional forms and methods of educational activity, cooperative learning helps to achieve not only cognitive, but also motivational and emotional goals, develops the ability to take responsibility for own learning, that is, the ability to independently organize the educational process. At the same time, the ability to self-reflect, that is, the ability to independently evaluate one's own results and achievements, plays an important role.

The perspective of our research is the use of effective methods and techniques of educational cooperation and their approbation in the educational process.

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