

METHODOLOGICAL ALGORITHM FOR DEVELOPING THE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN MEDICAL ENGLISH

Keywords: *communicative competence, English for Professional Purposes, academic staff, PhD students.*

The English language training of researchers and teaching staff at medical universities has become a priority task in higher medical education [4]. However, conversational fluency does not guarantee the effective mastering of professional skills: it is necessary to acquire the so-called “*academic literacy*” in English as a global language in science and technology. The major challenges in academic English vocabulary in terms of spelling and punctuation have already been discussed in our previous studies [1; 2; 3]. The present paper focuses on the methodological algorithm for mastering the communication features of medical English by PhD students and academic staff.

The aim of the study is to examine and systematize the most common challenges in developing the communicative competence in medical English. The results of the research have been integrated into the 1st edition of *Medical English for Academic Purposes* by Yu. Lysanets, O. Bieliaieva, M. Melaschenko (2018) [5], which focuses on improving the communication skills of medical professionals. The proposed system of demonstration didactic materials is intended to support courses in professional English for PhD students and academic staff at higher medical educational institutions.

In this paper, we distributed the didactic material according to major concepts in medical English: pain, disease, patient’s condition and doctor’s actions (history taking and treatment). Table 1 presents common verbs, which doctors use when talking about pain.

Table 1

Common verbs to describe pain

	... spreads from one joint to another
	... radiates to the right shoulder
	... migrates from one quadrant to another
	... extends below the knee

Pain...	... escalates at the terminal stage of the disease
	... circulates into the thighs and knees
	... abates when the stimulus action is stopped
	... comes and goes for no apparent reason
	... dissipates gradually and recurs
	... persists beyond 4 weeks
	... is worse at night
	... yields completely to analgesics
	... subsides after physical therapy
	... is rated at 3/10
... is exacerbated by movement	

At the same time, patients tend to describe their painful feelings in a different manner, and it is highly important for doctors to be aware of these peculiarities and thus to react appropriately. Table 2 presents common adjectives, which patients use when talking about pain.

Table 2

Common adjectives to describe pain

Pain is...	...burning / roasting / scorching / searing / white-hot / scalding
	...pricking / sharp / stabbing / lancinating / boring / piercing / shooting
	...tightening / twitching / squeezing / pressing / clenching / wrenching / suffocating
	...tingling / dull ache / vibrating / throbbing
	...heavy / unbearable

Disease is another important concept in medical discourse, and it requires mastering a specific range of lexical units. Table 3 presents common nouns and phrases to use when talking about diseases.

Table 3

Common nouns and phrases to refer to diseases

...onset
...clinical course

... clinical presentation
... regression
... prolonged / complete remission
... manifestations
... exacerbation
... episode / attack / bout
... unfavourable prognosis
... disorder
... impaired function

Table 4 presents common verbs to use when talking about diseases.

Table 4

Common verbs to refer to diseases

Diseases...	...often run in families
	...can return after transplant
	...sometimes persist in spite of antibiotics
	... are resolved with specific treatment
	... remit and relapse – get better or worse
	... are transmitted by infected ticks
	... are contracted by inhalation
	... are managed by doctors

Referring to patients correctly is another essential prerequisite for effective communication in the clinical setting. Tables 5 and 6 demonstrate common phrases and verbs to describe patient's condition.

Table 5

Common phrases to use when talking about patients

	...was born at term to a healthy woman
	...is / was unconscious
	...is / was sexually active
	...is comatose / is in a comatose state
	...was admitted with a chest pain
	...was diagnosed with bronchitis

The patient...	...was referred to a neurologist because of ...
	...was inoculated / immunised / vaccinated against diphtheria
	...is unable to get out of bed
	...is fit for discharge

Table 6

Common verbs to use when talking about patients

Patients...	... sustain injuries
	... undergo surgery/procedure/examination
	... recover from sickness
	... complain of mild / severe symptoms
	... suffer from sequelae of the disease
	... develop acute / chronic symptoms
	... come down with the flu
	... break out in rash
	... present with symptoms/history of
	... seek medical care/advice/treatment
	... follow the treatment regimen
	... die of heart failure
	... succumb to injuries
... convalesce from surgery	
... come through illnesses	

Finally, doctor's actions are of paramount importance. Tables 7 and 8 demonstrate common verbs to describe the processes of history taking and patient's management.

Table 7

Common verbs used in history taking

Anamnestic data...	...is collected
	...is elicited
	...is recorded
Treatment plan...	...is drafted

	...is designed
	...is developed
Patients...	...are interviewed
	...are referred to...
	...are managed

Table 8

Common verbs used in treatment

surgery / resection...	...is indicated
	...is conducted
	...is postponed
medication...	...is administered
	...is injected / given by injection
	...is inhaled
	... taken by mouth
	...is applied topically
treatment...	...is prescribed
	...is discontinued
	...is completed

Thus, the study of common challenges in developing the communicative competence at a medical university is important to eliminate possible mistakes and avoid misunderstanding in medical communication. The authors believe that the professional development of PhDs and academic and clinical teachers of English-speaking medical students will promote academic mobility, scientific cooperation and the training of foreign students to international standards, and thus contribute to the development of higher medical education in Ukraine.

References

1. Беляєва О. М. Аналіз дидактичних термінів, пов'язаних з професійно орієнтованим навчанням латинської мови / О. М. Беляєва // Викладання мов у вищих навчальних закладах освіти на сучасному етапі.

- Міжпредметні зв'язки. Наукові дослідження. Досвід. Пошуки. — Харків : ХНУ імені В. Н. Каразіна : [зб. наук. праць / головн. ред. Чистякова А.]. – 2008. – Вип. 12. – С. 59–65.
2. Беляєва О.М. Професійно орієнтоване навчання латинської мови студентів вищих медичних навчальних закладів III-IV рівнів акредитації : автореф. дис. на здобуття наук. ступеня канд. пед. наук : спец. 13.00.02 / О.М. Беляєва. – К., 2011. – 21 с.
 3. Беляєва О.М. Латинсько-український тлумачний словник клінічних термінів / О.М. Беляєва. – К.: ВСВ «Медицина», 2016. – 222 с.
 4. Bielialieva O.M. Developing Professional Communication Skills In Medical English For Academic Purposes / O.M. Bielialieva, Yu.V. Lysanets, I.V. Znamenska, L.B. Slipchenko, Rozhenko I.V. // Філологічні науки. Вісник Луганського національного університету імені Тараса Шевченка. – 2019. – №2(325). – С. 309-316.
 5. Lysanets Yu. Medical English for Academic Purposes / Yu. Lysanets, O. Bieliaieva, M. Melaschenko. – Kyiv : AUS Medicine Publishing, 2018 – 312 p.

Анотація

У статті представлено методологічний алгоритм опанування комунікативної компетентності у процесі викладання курсу фахової англійської мови для науково-педагогічних працівників та здобувачів ступеня доктора філософії у медичних вишах. Розроблено цикл дидактичних демонстративних матеріалів, спрямований на вдосконалення навичок професійної комунікації у процесі викладання фахової англійської мови у медичних вишах.

Summary

The article presents a methodological algorithm for mastering the communication features in teaching the course in professional English for PhD students and academic staff at higher medical educational institutions. The authors developed their own concept of presenting the training material. The authors developed a cycle of demonstration didactic materials, aimed at improving the skills of professional communication in Medical English for Academic Purposes.