

METHODOLOGY OF FUTURE DENTISTS' FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE FORMATION ON THE BASE OF CAMBRIDGE METHODS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Yaroslava Kulbashna

ORCID iD 0000-0002-2571-091X

Doctor of pedagogical science

PhD in medicine, Professor

Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Department

Bogomolets National Medical University

13, T. Shevchenko blvd., 01601 Kyiv, Ukraine

j.kulbashna@gmail.com

Valeriia Zakharova

ORCID iD 0000-0002-8863-2373

Teacher, Bogomolets National Medical University

13, T. Shevchenko blvd., 01601 Kyiv, Ukraine

valerieozakharova@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The article deals with the improvement of future dentists' foreign language competence formation based on the Cambridge methods of English language teaching. Future dentists have a strong need to receive professional knowledge from foreign sources and communicate to their colleagues. Moreover the foreign language competence is an important part of professional competence. Thus foreign language competence formation of future dental specialists contains certain diversity; it is not typical for other specialties. As a result it requires thorough analysis of Cambridge methods of English language teaching in order to adapt and improve them for future dentists. On the base of own pedagogical experience this advanced methodology was designed as student-centered one and includes new improved tasks for better language competence formation. Original Cambridge methodology was also improved by implementing the new "verification" stage of the lesson. This methodology was applied at the Bogomolets National Medical University and has brought positive results. It will become the base of increasing level of competitiveness not only in our country and abroad as well.

Key words: *introduction; foreign language competence; leadership competence; professional competence; PPP lesson; presentation; practice; production.*

INTRODUCTION

English has become the most commonly used language in a variety of fields such as politics, especially medicine, business, education and others (Crystal, 2003).

Extensive modern international relations initiated the need for a new language policy, necessary for the foreign language competence formation of future doctors so that they would be able to communicate and successfully implement various innovations in the field of medicine (Kubacheva, 2014). Besides, it was mentioned

by Liliya Grunevych (2017) (the Minister of education in Ukraine) that teachers should form the key competences of XXI century in students. She defined state and native (in case that native language is different) language competencies, foreign language competence, social and cultural competencies as the mandatory ones. Foreign language competence is part of professional competence, so it plays a key role in the development of medical students' professional competence. It is important to stress that the method of future doctors' foreign language competence formation should be grounded on the professional content which contains many derivatives from Latin and old Greek languages (Kulbashna, 2014). Furthermore, according to competency based approach, the objectives in professional foreign language competence formation at courses in the system of medical education are focused on practical needs of students' future professional activity. It particularly concerns dentists, who have to integrate successfully general medical terminology, specialized oral and maxillofacial pathology. Meeting those objectives is possible if science-based learning content is applied. Speakers of English as a foreign language have to learn how to use language in areas where they are going to work.

Analysis of the researches conducted by J. Harmer (2001; 2000), J. Scrivener (2002), S. Thornburry (1999), P. Ur (1996) on methods of general foreign language competence formation of different specialists found out that the issue of future doctors' foreign language competence formation was not paid enough attention. Only few researches were devoted to this issue. According to scientific data only 19,5 % of dental students at National Bogomolets Medical University have elementary level of foreign language competence. And not more than 10 % can speak foreign language fluently (Kulbashna, 2014). Thus, it caused the need to analyze and adapt Cambridge methods of English language teaching to dental specialists.

The aim of the article is to improve methodology of future dentists' foreign language competence formation on the base of Cambridge methods of English language teaching.

MAIN CONCEPT OF PPP LESSON

A British researcher J. Scrivener (2002) notes in his book "Learning teaching" that the act of teaching is a constant processing of options. One of such choices is a Presentation, Practice, Production lesson (PPP) which can be defined as a common technique in English language competence formation and was designed in Cambridge. The main idea of it is to help students learn, understand and practice new language material.

PPP lesson is a three-part teaching paradigm: Presentation, Practice and Production and it is based on behaviorist theory which states that learning a language is just like learning any other skill. The high degree of teacher's control which characterizes the first stage and in less extent the second stages of this approach lessons as the class proceeds, allowing the learner to gradually move away from the teacher's support towards more automatic production and understanding (Ur, 1996). Most of Cambridge and Oxford courses like "Headway" are based on their original methodology. Moreover, as J. Harmer (2001) mentioned in his book "The Practice of Teaching English", this technique is the most appropriate for the students with elementary level. This kind of lesson was adapted in order to improve the methodology of future dentists' foreign language competence

formation. At the same time, D. Byrne (1986) also notes that the sequence does not have to be followed rigidly, and that depending on the level of the students, their needs and the teaching materials being used, it would also be possible to move from production to presentation to practice. But it is important to emphasize that no one of these stages should be omitted; otherwise it will lead a teacher to fail achieving aims of the lesson. So, PPP lesson is an offered option of professional foreign language competence formation of future dentists and its key components are defined as vocabulary and grammar components.

VOCABULARY COMPETENCE AS A KEY PART OF FUTURE DENTISTS' FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

Vocabulary knowledge has been considered one of the most central factors in learning a foreign or second language to the extent that some experts claim that learning a second or foreign language largely means learning its vocabulary (Harmer, 2000). To support this idea, M. Lessard-Clouston (2013) states in his book that vocabulary is central to English language teaching because without sufficient vocabulary students cannot understand others or express their own ideas. D. Wilkins (1972) wrote that without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. M. Lewis (1993) went further to argue that lexis is the core or heart of language. So, mentioned above researches proved the fact that vocabulary is considered as a necessary component of foreign language competence of different fields of professional activities. So vocabulary material should be paid much attention while forming future doctors' foreign language competence and doctor-dentists' one as well.

GRAMMAR COMPETENCE AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF FUTURE DENTISTS' FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

Nevertheless, grammar is not considered as the least important aspect of the foreign language competence. S. Thornburry (1999) argues back that grammar is important if students are going to use English creatively. At the same time J. Scrivener (2002) advocates the same point of view that it is worth nothing that the grammatical names can actually get in the way of understanding the meaning. He also notes that a teacher who does not clearly separate the importance of form and meaning may confuse students. Simply we can make a conclusion that both grammar and vocabulary are vitally important for future dentists' foreign language competence formation. Consequently, to be more competitive abroad dental specialists should be able to use suitable professional vocabulary, but at the same time they have to put it in correct grammar form. So PPP procedure may be successfully used for teaching vocabulary together with grammar material.

PPP LESSON: INTRODUCTION STAGE

The first part of the PPP lesson is Presentation. It consists of two steps: lead-in or introduction and presentation of new material. During the *Introduction* students are familiarized with the medical oriented topic of the lesson. Besides, the aim of this stage consists in not only introducing the content, but also in getting the

students interested in it and involving the students into the English professionally related environment. At the beginning the teacher may use a picture, a short video or a funny story to present the information. Besides the teacher may ask if students dealt with some diseases (survived them or provided first aid) etc. This part should not last more than 3 minutes. Nevertheless, it is important part as it sets the pace for the entire lesson and involves students into English speaking environment.

PPP LESSON: PRESENTATION STAGE

At the *Presentation* stage (15 min) itself, the teacher is supposed to present the new vocabulary related to oral and maxillofacial pathology. The trainer begins the lesson by setting up a situation, either eliciting or modeling some language that the situation calls for. Presentation may consist of model sentences, short dialogues illustrating target items, either read from the textbook, heard on the tape or acted out by the teacher (Maftoon, Hamidi, Sarem, 2012). To explain the new material either inductive or deductive approach is used. *Deductive approach* aims at presenting the rule to the students. *Inductive approach* aims at eliciting a new material from the students. A teacher guides the students to discover the topic for themselves. For achieving this purpose brainstorming technique may be used. The teacher may ask the students what they know about the particular dental disorder and how they understand what this is. The aim of this stage is to elicit the vocabulary on medical related topics from the students that they already know. For this purpose the teacher may use matching activities, which may include tasks where students have to match the terms with the appropriate definitions or word with the appropriate picture. The last activity is preferable for the students with low level of foreign language competence. Another eliciting activity is “*spider gram*”: the teacher writes the word «caries» and the students should name the terms that are associated with this dental disorder. These activities are beneficial for the students because they are student-centered, so the teacher encourages the students to active participation during the presentation stage instead of passive listening. Both inductive and deductive approaches have their advantages and disadvantages; at the same time, inductive approach is considered more beneficial to the students (Harmer, 2001). It is time consuming, but it encourages learners to work things out for themselves based on their existing knowledge. Though, if time does not permit or rule does not require much students’ attention, the teacher may use deductive way to explain the rule. In Ukraine deductive approach is more preferable on account of many reasons: a teacher is limited in time, it is easier for students to explain using this method. Considering all that was mentioned above and own pedagogical experience, it looks appropriate that it will be more beneficial for students to use inductive approach in developing vocabulary and grammar competencies. Illustration (using pictures, posters, video fragments) will be of great importance in presenting vocabulary material. If students have the opportunity to see the words they are trying to memorize, they learn the vocabulary more effectively. But it will be more interesting for the students to bring «realia» to the classroom which can create the professional environment and students will not only use visual, but kinesthetic memory as well. So it may facilitate the process of professional language competence formation.

It is worth mentioning that during presentation stage teacher taking time (TTT) prevails over students taking time (STT). Notwithstanding, students are

not supposed to remain silent when the new topic is presented. In Ukraine teachers tend to speak alone during the presentation stage when students remain almost silent. Instead it is a good point to give an opportunity to express students their own ideas or activate their previous knowledge.

PPP LESSON: PRACTICE STAGE

On having presented the new vocabulary, students should practise new skills. At the *Practice stage* (20min) different exercises are used for training accuracy. A teacher may use a wide range of vocabulary exercises and activities depending on the aim and the topic of the lesson. It is important to emphasize that students practise the new language in a controlled way. They *drill sentences or dialogues by repeating* after the teacher or the tape, in chorus and individually, until they can say them correctly. (Maftoon, Hamidi, Sarem, 2012) Other practice activities are *matching parts of sentences, completing sentences or dialogues, asking or answering questions, filling the gaps in the sentences, crossing out an odd word, categorizing words, finding synonyms or antonyms to a given word, constructing new words by adding prefixes or suffixes* (example: conscious – unconscious, treat – treatment), *doing crosswords, composing sentences with a given word and other vocabulary games using the target language*. The vocabulary games include “*snowball*”, “*crocodile game*”, “*tic tac toe game*”, “*concentration game*” and others.

At this stage TTT and STT are equal. During this stage of the lesson the teacher should pay attention to the students’ mistakes. Once they occur, the instructor should correct them immediately or ask other students to correct the mistakes. According to own experience of observing teaching, most of teachers have tendency of correcting students themselves instead of encouraging students’ self-correction or appealing to peer-correction. All that is written above evidences that instructors should use first self-correction, peer-correction, book-correction strategies, and after all others teacher-correction strategy. Students learn much better if they acquire knowledge on their own. So, this technique of error correction should be substantiated for future dentists foreign language competence formation.

PPP LESSON: PRODUCTION STAGE AS THE MAIN PART

The following stage is *Production* (40 min). In Ukrainian methodology production stage is not attached much significance; whereas, it is the most essential and important stage of the lesson. During this part of the lesson students are encouraged to use the new language in a freer way, either for their own purposes and meanings or in a similar context introduced by the teacher. It can be a simulation activity or a communication task. The examples of communication tasks are preparing a *project work, holding debates, role play or clinical case*. Production stage shows the output of the lesson whether a teacher achieved the aim of the lesson or not. It should be the longest stage of the lesson.

According to teachers’ experience, students eagerly participate in *case-study* activities as this kind of tasks prepares the students for their future profession. For instance, students may be provided with a clinical situation where they should establish the correct diagnosis and prescribe the proper treatment using active vocabulary, grammar aspect or both depending on the aim of the lesson.

Project work. One student or a group of students has to prepare and deliver presentation about different aspects of a particular disease (etiology, pathogenesis, methods of diagnostics, clinical pattern, treatment, complications or prevention etc.) to the group. Then after the presentations a teacher encourages discussion in the whole group. This activity gives the opportunity to develop professional foreign language competence, but students' research competence as well. It also encourages the students to work in teams.

Role play. This activity is considered as a very effective method to teach professional English as students use the target language knowledge in real life situation and this activity prepares them for a medical career. For instance "a phone call" to a doctor where one student is a patient and the other is a doctor. "Rescue team" where there are one leader and two participants where a leader gives instructions, after that they change roles. Another example of role play may be "taking anamnesis" where a doctor needs to ask a patient about his past or present diseases. All offered activities for production require using target language. Besides, these activities also demand from the students their professional knowledge. That is very challenging for a teacher as students start studying clinical subjects only from the second year of studying. In this case a foreign language teacher should be an expert not only in linguistic field but in medical sphere as well. But by performing these activities, students can start developing their professional foreign language competence starting from the first year of studying. At the same time the activities that were presented above are designed in the way that one is a leader who gives instructions and another is a participant who follows them. So there is a chance for a teacher to form students' leadership competence as well. (Kulbashna, Tkachuk, Zakharova, 2016)

"Holding debates". Debating is a very effective way to apply students' foreign language competence. This activity gives students the chance to both speak and listen. Learners learn to express their options, and how to use them in persuading speech, their confidence in using language will rise while performing this activity. At the same time, they learn to speak both accurately and fluently. Topics for debates may be quite different but they should be related to medical issues for example different methods in treating dental diseases. Though it is extremely important to emphasize that this activity should be used with students who have high level of foreign language competence; otherwise, it will demotivate students speaking foreign language. This will turn into a great obstacle in students' foreign language competence formation.

At the stage of production students' talking time (STT) should prevail over teacher's talking time (TTT). The focus of this stage is on fluency of students' speech. During this stage the teacher should pay attention to the mistakes, but they are supposed to be corrected after the finishing of the task. The teacher may make notes of students' mistakes and point them out after the learners have finished their speech. In our country there is a strong belief that each student's mistake should be corrected at once. It is an issue which requires thorough consideration. Own pedagogical experience reveals the fact that pointed out an error during the students' speech or discussion makes learners lose their train of thought. So, the method of this stage conducting needs to be improved in the way to give a chance to the students to express their points of view and after that encourage them to correct their errors.

VERIFICATION STAGE OF THE LESSON

On account of the difficulties related to future dentists' foreign language competence formation, it is beneficial to implement the additional *Verification stage* (5min). The main concept of it is to summarize and review all learned material for the lesson. It may include a few short tasks or questions to check students' understanding of the presented material. (Kulbashna, Zakharova, Tkachuk, 2017, p. 213)

CONCLUSION STAGE IS THE FINISH OF THE LESSON

The final stage of the PPP lesson is "*Conclusion*" (2–5 min). It aims at summarizing students' knowledge of the lesson. Like the introduction stage it should not take long time, but it is important to finish the lesson leaving good impressions to encourage the students to continue studying English.

THE NECESSITY OF USING TRANSLATION IN A CLASSROOM

Another important issue to consider about methodology of conducting PPP lesson is the use of native language in the classroom. British methodologists J. Harmer (2001), (2000), J. Scriverener (2002), S. Thornburry (1999), P. Ur (1996) teach English foreign students, so they have only English to communicate. On account of it, they do not mention the necessity of using translation into native language in the classroom. Though, the researcher Numan M. Al-Musawi (2014) from University of Bahrain states that translation is an activity that aims to facilitate the communication process by interpreting the information received in one language into another language, and vice versa. The scientist stresses the importance of using translation during foreign language competence formation. The author defines the notion "translation" as a cognitive activity that assists students in learning new phrases and expressions in the target language, and using them to communicate to others. On another hand it is a problem-solving exercise, in which the students develop their capabilities in data analysis and processing. Translation is considered by Al-Musawi as a "supporting pillar for learning the target language" (p. 3). Notwithstanding the foregoing, the use of native language in a classroom should be kept to a minimum in order to motivate students speak English. But the amount of the native language using depends on the level of the students. A teacher should move from using native language at the elementary level towards avoiding using native language at the advanced level of students' foreign language competence.

THE RESULTS OF APPLYING PPP LESSON IN A CLASSROOM

The pedagogical experiment was carried out to check the level (beginner, elementary, intermediate or advanced) of foreign language competence of dental students at the foreign languages department of the Bogomolets National Medical University. The results of the experiment are represented in the table 1 "Comparative characteristics of students' and teachers' assessment of the foreign competence level formation". Teachers were asked to identify students' level of foreign language competence. The results of their survey are represented in

the table 1 as “Teachers’ assessment” (TA). Students were also asked to identify their own level of foreign language competence and the results are represented with “Students’ assessment” (SA). There were 60 first-year students in 4 groups who took part in the experiment.

Table 1

Comparative characteristics of students’ and teachers’ assessment of the foreign competence level formation								
Level	Experimental group				Control group			
	The beginning of the term		The ending of the term		The beginning of the term		The ending of the term	
	SA	TA	SA	TA	SA	TA	SA	TA
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Beginner	5	9	0	0	9	0	9	0
Elementary	59	73	46	55	64	90	59	82
Intermediate	20	9	36	27	18	5	27	9
Advanced	16	9	18	18	9	5	5	9

The analysis of the conducted survey evidences that students’ assessment (SA) and teachers’ assessment (TA) do not coincide. In some cases students have more critical assessment than teachers. The students’ self-assessment is represented with the results: the amount of experimental groups’ learners with beginner and elementary levels decreased for 9 % and 13 % correspondingly, when the amount of intermediate and advanced levels increased for 13% and 9%.

Teachers’ assessment is represented with the results: the amount of experimental groups’ students with a beginner level declined for 27 %, the amount of students with intermediate and advanced levels increased for 18 % and 9% comparing to controlled groups.

The obtained results allow making a conclusion that the new offered methodology improved the level of future dentists’ foreign language competence formation.

CONCLUSIONS

The methodology of future dentists’ foreign language competence formation grounding the Cambridge methods of English language teaching was substantiated and proved by conducted experiment in Bogomolets National Medical University. The new additional “verification stage” was implemented in the sequence of the lesson. It allows students to summarize new information once again. Methods of new material presentation were developed by applying deductive approach and use of “realia” in the classroom. Grammar and vocabulary components were defined as equally important ones, and methods of their teaching were considered point by point. Techniques of error correction were thoroughly studied at different stages of the lesson, and some recommendations were provided. Methods of foreign language competence formation will increase future dental specialists to improve foreign language competence in vocabulary and grammar components. It can be used as a launch pad for the development of their professional competence.

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