COVID-19: NEW STRATEGY OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES

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Abstract

The global pandemic has affected most of the world's countries. Education has become remote due to the inability of students to attend the universities, institutes and colleges. Many of the world's leading universities have successfully adapted their educational programs to the new conditions. There have also been significant changes in the field of foreign language teaching. The content of teaching a foreign language for professional purposes has been adapted and transferred into an electronic format. An electronic course of training of medical Russian was created. The authors developed a methodological training strategy consisting of several stages and implemented in each of its lessons. When creating electronic exercises, the authors used the capabilities of the i-spring electronic platform. The center of each lesson is the text (more precisely, a typical logical and semantic scheme for organizing a class of texts). At the pre-text stage, students learn to build sentences that express the components of a typical logical-semantic scheme. At the pre-text stage, they master this scheme and already at the post-text stage they learn to create similar text works on the topic indicated in the lesson. In parallel, work is underway on the microthermosystem, which corresponds to the thematic zone declared in the lesson. In each lesson a methodical strategy "from simple to complex" is implemented; from non-communicative units to a higher-level communication (text). The presented strategy has been tested remotely since the beginning of the pandemic situation and has shown positive results and students' satisfaction.

Keywords: COVID-19, strategy of teaching a foreign language, Russian language as foreign, distant technologies

1 INTRODUCTION

The pandemic of the new coronavirus infection COVID-19 has changed the education system around the world. Nowadays, students' education in higher education institutions takes place only in a remote format through various platforms that provide an opportunity for each student to take an active part in the educational process.

According to the data published by UNESCO, as of June 15, 2020, almost 1.1 billion people were killed. Schoolchildren and students worldwide were unable to attend schools/universities, which accounted for

about 62.3% of their total number (April 1-5, 2020, this figure peaked at 91.3%). The governments of 123 countries decided to suspend classes in schools and universities and switched to a distance learning format.

2. EXPORT OF WORLD LANGUAGE EDUCATION: AN OVERVIEW

2.1 Educational Language Platforms

Currently, the struggle of different countries in the global education market is developing in the field of online learning. Notable universities (Harvard University, London School of Economics, Moscow State University, Peoples ' Friendship University of Russia) present a large number of online courses for students from all over the world.

In the field of language education, such educational platforms as EdX, Coursera, Future Learn, Udemy, Openlearning, Alison, Stanford Online, Yale and others are leading (see the Reference list with links to the platforms). These platforms contain a variety of Massive Open Online Courses for learning foreign languages, including teaching foreign languages for special purposes. In the distance format, students have the opportunity to listen to lectures, do various exercises, communicate with teachers, which will significantly increase the student's language competence. Moreover, students have the opportunity to receive a certificate that testifies to the completed training and formed knowledge and skills .

In order for a foreign language course to be uploaded to a particular platform, teachers actively use various resources, which are a kind of constructors containing exercise templates for creating educational content. They are generally user friendly and teachers do not experience difficulties while creating the course.

2.2 Educational Resources-Templates for creating Language Content

We will briefly analyze the most successful, in our opinion, resources, their features, focusing on such criteria as: the specifics of content creation, content support, and the system of teachers' reporting on training results. These criteria are the main ones while creating a training course. Successful ones, as the experience of creating e-courses shows, are such platforms as Moodle and I-spring, since they are most focused on teaching students at the university and have the appropriate functionality. The rest, presented on the market, are more suitable for corporate training and do not match the goals of distance learning at the university.

Moodle is a free, open source e-learning system that has been translated into more than 100 languages and supports a large number of plugins. Moodle is suitable for organizing training in universities and training centers. Moodle is relatively more difficult to set up than commercial platforms. Any teacher who is familiar with this platform can create courses. Moodle is easy to integrate with other platforms, such as WordPress or Zoom webinars.

You can upload presentations, images, videos, audio, and text files to Moodle. In Moodle, you can create text lectures, surveys, tests, and more. As for the reports that a teacher can upload, in Moodle we can customize the reporting system for ourselves — choose only the data that we need to analyze students' performance. For example, a teacher can see how much time they spend studying the course, how often they visit the platform, and what mistakes they make in tests.

The set of reports in the teacher's system depends on the plugin he/she installs. There are 38 of them in total. For example, we can set up statistics on the progress of users and their activity, the popularity of courses, the work of the platform (error collection, number of visits, etc.).

I-spring allows the teachers to create video lessons, webinars, podcasts, courses, articles, presentations, books, tests of various formats and interactive simulators. You can create them individually or collect them in thematic courses. This is a kind of add-in in PowerPoint format that allows you to create courses from presentations. You can also upload presentations, images, videos, and audio files to the platform.

The course will be available from any device, including mobile ones (smartphone or tablet). In iSpring Learn, you can upload such types of reports by group as: 1) by texts, dialogues, tasks; 2) by users; 3) by materials; 4) by events; 5) by training programs.

The suggested in the article strategy of teaching a foreign language for professional purposes, namely, teaching Russian as a foreign language for medical purposes, is presented on the basis of the i-spring platform.

Let's take a closer look at the strategy that is embedded in the system of teaching Russian as a foreign language for medical purposes.

3. THE ESSENCE OF STRATEGY OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN MEDICAL PURPOSES

3.1 The Methodological and Methodological Guidelines of the Presented Strategy

When creating the author's learning strategy, the authors of the article took into account the following factors, which determine the educational value of the textbook on Russian as a foreign language in general.

1. Following M. N. Vatyutnev, we believe that an electronic textbook should have methodological reasoning, consistency and "stability in time". It must contain new and original materials. Finally, the textbook should reflect "those directions that are destined to become dominant in the future" (Vatyutnev, 1984, p. 62). In the context of the tasks of this work, the last of the provisions formulated by the scientist becomes particularly relevant. On the one hand, the textbook should be aimed not only at the formation of skills that a foreign medical student needs to solve the problems of today, he needs "here and now". The textbook should lay the foundations for further professional and communicative development of a foreign specialist. On the other hand, it should certainly reflect the best of the new language education technologies and methodological strategies: those that have already confirmed or confirm their effectiveness in the practice of teaching Russian language as foreign.

2. In the development of these provisions, we will give a very accurate observation based on many years of experience in scientific, methodological and teaching activities by T. M. Balykhina. According to the scientist, the content of a good textbook should be necessary and sufficient to achieve the planned goals, and the educational material presented in it should be available for students to master in the time allotted by the standard (Balykhina, 2010, p. 158).

The essence of the strategy comes down to that fact that the center of each textbook lesson is a text (more precisely, a typical logical-semantic scheme for organizing a class of texts). At the pre-text stage, foreign applicants learn to build sentences that express the components of a typical logical-semantic scheme. At the in-text stage they master this scheme and already at the next stage study to create similar text works on the topic indicated in the lesson. At the same time, a micro term system is developed according to the thematic zone stated in the lesson. Each lesson implements the methodical strategy "from simple to complicated", i.e., from non-communicative units to a higher level communication (text).

3.2 Implementation of the Methodological Strategy in the Context of Modern Training Conditions for Foreign Medical Students

The textbooks implement the author's methodological strategy for foreign applicants to acquire professional and communicative competence. Let us consider it in more detail using a lesson from e-book as an example. At the beginning of the lesson, the main terms of the topic are presented. Their pronunciation is drilled and semantization is carried out:

Fig.1 The semantization of the lexis

To drill the material the students are suggested to do the tests that are provided by iSpring quiz maker. The students have to match the pictures to the written words and expressions.

Сопоставьте элементы с их значениями:

мочевыделительная система
нервная система
дыхательная система
опорно-двигательная система
пищеварительная система

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Fig.2. Drilling of the lexical material

Systemic and lexical unit relations are worked out. The students have to match the synonyms and antonyms.

Подберите антоним к слову
верхний

☐ тонкий

☐ нижний

☐ правый

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Fig.3. Systemic and lexical unit relations' drilling

The next stage involves working on combinability of words and training skills for the correct and adequate use of new words in a sentence-statement:

Расставьте слова по своим местам:

конечность

здоровая

пузырь

полость

печень ротовая верхняя мочевой

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Fig.4 The drilling of the correct and adequate use of new words in a sentence-statement

Compensatory skills and abilities are developed: students, if necessary, should be able to determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word based on the context, derivational and other links, without recourse to a dictionary:

Сопоставьте элементы с их значениями:

<input type="text"/> пищевод	<input type="text"/> circulatory system
<input type="text"/> кровеносная система	<input type="text"/> blood
<input type="text"/> пища	<input type="text"/> food
<input type="text"/> пищеварительная система	<input type="text"/> esophagus
<input type="text"/> кровь	<input type="text"/> digestive system

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Fig.5. Drilling of the combinatory skills

The next stage is work on the product of a sentence-statement. Complex speech patterns of sentence classes are presented to the students, including: 1) a sentence class model: a) a typical value of a sentence class; b) a scheme of its structural organization; 2) a sample of the discursive implementation of a sentence

class model. For training, a meaningful plan is set in tabular form, students learn how to express the necessary “typical meanings”, and then formulate questions to these sentence-statements:

Выберите правильный вариант ответа:
Кровеносная система ... сердце и кровеносные сосуды: артерии, вены, капилляры

☐ включает

☐ состоит из

☐ исключает

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Fig.6. Drilling of the sentence statement

When all the necessary sentence models have been worked out, they are “assembled” into a single logical-semantic scheme of the text: its semantic components in real discourse are expressed by means of sentence classes that students have previously learned to create.

The next unit of exercises is aimed at teaching reading strategies (skim/search and study reading) as well as forming skills of semantic analysis. The above typical logical-semantic scheme is used as a tool for this analysis. To check the comprehension of the text the students may fulfil the following test.

Выберите правильный ответ из вариантов, предложенных в списке:

(1) Организм — это живое , которое систем органов. В организме есть кровеносная, дыхательная, двигательная, пищеварительная, мочевыделительная и другие .

(2) Опорно-двигательная система и . Скелет включает , позвоночник, , верхние и нижние .

(3) Нервная система включает , головной и мозг. Головной мозг находится в . Спинной мозг располагается в .

(4) Пищеварительная система включает , глотку, пищевод, желудок, поджелудочную железу, двенадцатиперстную кишку, печень, тонкую и толстую , прямую кишку.

(5) Глотка располагается над . Пищевод находится между желудком и . Желудок располагается под . Двенадцатиперстная кишка находится между желудком и тонкой . Тонкая кишка располагается перед толстой кишкой.

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Fig.7. Text comprehension test

Or to check the comprehension of the text it is possible with the following test to arrange the words into their places.

☰ Список вопросов Вопрос 1 из 1 | Набрано баллов: 0 из 10

тонкой кишкой. Тонкая кишка располагается перед толстой кишкой. Прямая находится за толстой кишкой.

(6) Мочевыделительная система состоит из , мочеиспускательного канала. находятся над мочеточниками. Мочевой пузырь находится между мочеточниками и мочеиспускательным . Мочеиспускательный канал находится под мочевым .

(7) Кровеносная система включает : артерии, вены и капилляры.

(8) Сердце находится в центре грудной . Сердце состоит из четырёх : левого предсердия и левого желудочка, правого предсердия и правого желудочка.

есть другие системы нервы кишка череп, позвоночник, грудну... пузырём

камер живое тело находится каналом. сердце и кровеносные сосуды клетки.

под печенью. ротовую полость, глотку, пи... Почки желудком и глоткой кишку.

почек, мочеточников, мочев... мышц и скелета в позвоночнике. в черепе

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Fig.7. Text comprehension test

After the completion of this work, students learn how to produce a monologue. This work is carried out with the gradual removal of supports. Students learn to make a simple nominative plan (in view of cognitive complexity and labor intensity, this work is divided into stages and distributed among several lessons). The first stage of developing the skills of monologic speech involves retelling the text read with reference to the compiled simple nominative plan. Then students are offered a series of plans for messages on similar topics. For example, if the text of the lesson is titled "Heart Structure", students are offered such plans as "Liver Structure", "Kidney Structure", etc. Students create monologic statements on the proposed plans. After that, in order to transfer the formed skills to the conditions of real discourse, students are asked to talk about the structure of the organ (organ system) that they are now studying in human anatomy classes, pick up information on the Internet and compose a message on a similar topic, etc.

Each lesson in the e-textbook includes a unit of tasks for independent work to provide additional training of skills and competencies formed in class. Each textbook includes appendices containing a) typical schemes of the logical-semantic text organization; b) lists of sentence models; c) general training dictionaries.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The strategy that was implemented in an electronic textbook created with the help of the i-spring constructor, has been tested since the i total lockdown was introduced on the territory of the Russian Federation. First-year students showed satisfactory results, which were obtained while testing foreign students. This indicates that the professional communication skills of medical students were formed.

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