

УДК 811.161.2'243:61-057.875

## LEARNING THE UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE BY FOREIGN MEDICAL STUDENTS

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The article focuses on the issue of learning Ukrainian as a foreign language by students of higher educational institutions and medical students. The textbooks and manuals used by foreign medical students in learning Ukrainian as a foreign language are described. The important methodological techniques in the study of Ukrainian for foreign students are characterized. The functional approach to selecting and presenting language material is highlighted. The focus is placed on the practical aspect of language learning, specifically on the application of Ukrainian as a foreign language in both professional settings and everyday life. The motivation of medical students is of great importance when learning Ukrainian. In order to achieve results in teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language, it is necessary to take into account not only traditional teaching principles and methods (*explanatory-illustrative, reproductive, problem-based, partial-exploratory, research*), but also innovative (*interactive methods, use of modern technical teaching aids, extracurricular situational and thematic language learning, inclusive method, method of cultural and mass activity*) which enhance the learning process and the level of students' knowledge. Internet technologies facilitate students to independently process and study new materials and enable them to have control over knowledge acquisition (online). Simultaneously, these technologies **provide teachers with access and editing capabilities of database questions, defining task selection criteria, reviewing database registration forms, and administering these databases.**

*Key words:* Ukrainian as a foreign language, learning Ukrainian by foreign medical students, motivation of foreign students, methodology of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language, methodological techniques for learning Ukrainian as a foreign language.

### DOI:

**Introduction.** Learning the Ukrainian language is one of the main requirements not only for foreign students studying at Ukrainian universities, but also for medical students. Communication is one of the key components of learning Ukrainian by foreign medical students, as the process of communication enables them to integrate into society in which they live, to have a sufficient vocabulary, and to develop their thinking skills in response to the situations and environment they encounter. The ability to communicate is important not only for an average person, but also for a healthcare professional, as they need to listen carefully and understand the patient, provide accurate recommendations and even support. Professional speech, including medical speech, is part of the national language. Medicine itself, with all its forms and means of expression and application in society, is an integral part of the national culture, and therefore it incorporates both language and numerous traditions, interacting with other branches of science. Since medicine is one of the most widespread professions in Ukraine, the functioning and study of medical professional speech is one of the most relevant issues in linguistics [16].

Scholars V. Bader, I. Zozulia, T. Kasyanenko, V. Kovzhenko, T. Kosmeda, I. Kochan, H. Onkovych, L. Palamar, O. Turkevych, H. Shvets and others investigated the problem of learning Ukrainian as a foreign language H. Onkovych [14] and L. Palamar [15] made a significant contribution to the development of methods of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign

language, in particular, they are the authors of doctoral dissertations. O. Turkevych, in her research on the study of Ukrainian as a foreign language, identified four stages in the formation of the methodology of teaching Ukrainian [21 : 140]: 1. The existence of a methodology for teaching a foreign language within **the scope of pedagogy**. 2. **The development** of the methodology of teaching foreign language as a separate science. 3. The active functioning of the methodology of teaching Russian as a foreign language. 4. The origin of the methodology of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language. I. Kochan analyzed the issue of the formation of methods of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language [10], G. Shvets [17]. T. Kosmeda provided an overview of methodological support for Polish students [13]. T. Kasyanenko studied the principles of optimization and innovation in teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language [9]. L. Bey and O. Trostynska, in their studies on this topic, noted that when learning Ukrainian as a foreign language, it is necessary to take into account psycho-pedagogical and socio-pedagogical factors, the level of knowledge at the time of learning, and communication needs [2 : 43].

N. Lytvynenko, M. Tyshkovets, T. Melnyk, H. Kozub, T. Tukova, K. Heichenko, O. Mysyk, L. Bodnariuk, O. Kucherenko, Y. Kosenko, and others investigated the peculiarities of studying medical terminology in the course of Ukrainian as a foreign language. However, despite the considerable amount of didactic literature available, there is still a need for teaching methodological materials for the effective learning of specific medical topics by foreigners.

Thus, the aim of the article is to identify the obstacles that foreign students face in learning the Ukrainian language, to describe the learning of Ukrainian as a foreign language by medical students, and to characterise important methodological techniques in teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language. The task is to review and systematize the main materials on the methodology of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language used by the teachers of Andrey Krupynsky Lviv Medical Academy.

**Main part.** The language is not only a living organism that evolves and improves, but also a mirror of the cultural, moral, and psychological state of society as a whole and its individual representatives. In fact, it serves as a certified passport of the country in which it functions. It is the most effective tool for influencing the consciousness and emotional aura of a person, capable of radically influencing their attitude towards the universe in all its aspects, as everything that exists in the surroundings and consciousness of an individual has a linguistic equivalent. The practice of teaching a language as a foreign language “from scratch” proves that it is through language that a teacher can not only shape a new linguistic world for the subject of this process, a new lexical mosaic of the world’s picture, but also create a new system of views on society, state organization, and moral values. In fact, a new language can “mould” a new personality, direct it to other activities, and even impose its preferences upon it. [12 : 181].

A positive aspect is that the publication of textbooks and manuals on Ukrainian as a foreign language has significantly increased in Ukraine and abroad in recent years [20]. M. Lutsiuk claimed that within the framework of a foreign language course, it is impossible to teach and learn this language ‘**in general**’, but it is possible to master its fragments - a purposefully constructed and therefore effective subsystem of this language. The construction of such a functional subsystem is carried out in three stages: first, the scope of final knowledge that the student wants or needs to acquire is determined; then the selection, minimization and dosage of factual material covering the entire and redundant sphere of target communication is carried out, and only after that the learning strategy is chosen [6]. Special attention should

be given to textbooks designed for medical students [1], pharmaceutical students [7], in particular, the textbook “Ukrainian Language for Foreign Students” written by Lysenko N.O., Kryvko R.M., Svitlychna E.I., Tsapko T.P. where phonetic, lexical and grammatical material is given systematically and logically [7]. For the study of common vocabulary, an important resource is the textbook from the “Yabluko” series by Maryana Burak, published by the Ukrainian Catholic University [3]. It consists of a textbook, a workbook, and audio materials, and it covers the study of the Ukrainian language at three levels: elementary, intermediate, and advanced. It includes texts and information on Ukrainian studies and is extremely useful for students. These textbooks and manuals enable teachers of Ukrainian as a foreign language to combine and use a variety of methods, techniques and exercises to develop and consolidate phonetic and grammatical knowledge and skills of foreign students.

Foreign medical students, like other students who come to study in Ukraine, expect to be taught to speak and communicate in another language. In order to maintain their interest in learning the language, it is necessary to create a proper programme and present the material in a variety of ways. After all, students of Andrey Krupynsky Lviv Medical Academy study Ukrainian for four semesters (the first is a compulsory component, and the next three are optional). Thus, at the initial stage, it is always important to provide students with the material that they can use to construct basic dialogues, and to maximize opportunities for communication and their engagement into communicative activities. Students should be familiarized with words that indicate attitudes (positive or negative), forms of address, interrogative pronouns, words indicating temporal or spatial relations, and possessive words. Therefore, at the beginning of the language course, it is necessary to: 1) provide students with an essential number of lexical units needed for constructing basic dialogues, including filler words, expressively colored words, phraseological units, and vocabulary from various functional styles; 2) introduce linguistic and cultural vocabulary related to Ukraine; 3) familiarize with emotional options that help to form individual speech; 4) master the basic principles of Ukrainian phonetics and orthoepy [8].

In order to get foreign students interested in learning Ukrainian, the following should be done:

- choose the proper level of workload. The lessons should not be too easy, as they may seem uninteresting to students, and overloaded, as they can cause stress and misunderstanding;
- systematic learning of any language, including Ukrainian, is effective;
- constantly motivate and engage foreign students, emphasizing the significance of language in all spheres, avoid rushing them with tasks, point out and pay attention to their strengths and achievements;
- initially activate receptive phonetic competencies before moving on to productive ones (i.e., comprehension before speaking);
- to ensure effective learning of the presented material, it is recommended for the teacher to speak slowly and avoid unnecessary words, keeping in mind that they are not proficient in the language. Later on, the pace of speech can be adjusted to a normal speed, as heard in the natural language environment;
- combine different language skills (speaking, listening, writing, reading). All these activities should be linked by a common theme (for example, during a practical lesson on parts of human body, it is recommended to name the terms for these parts, read them, pay attention to the concept of somatisms in Ukrainian and terms derived from Greek and Latin, read texts and make a dialogue with these lexemes);

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- pay more attention to aspects that are challenging for foreign learners, for example, cheek, jaw, and repetition of complex sounds (shch, dz, dzh, etc.);
  - avoid overwhelming students with a huge amount of vocabulary; instead, group words by categories: terms for body parts, terms for systems of organs, organs and their parts, terms describing the center of mass and longitudinal axis of the body, terms describing the positions of main parts of human body, terms for main planes and sections, terms for movement, etc.
  - gradually increase the level of difficulty: tasks should be interconnected, with one task naturally flowing into another (for example, starting with terms used in everyday life (blood), then moving on to terms used in scientific literature ((haematic), discussing their interchangeability;
  - combine different types of tasks, as different students may have different learning preferences: some may learn better through listening, some through physical movement (e.g., writing something down), and some may only remember what they see;
  - use multimedia resources.

In order to achieve results in teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language, it is necessary to take into account the principles and methods of teaching. Key concepts in teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language include *principles, approaches, methods, techniques, and content*.

The *principles of teaching* are the fundamental guiding principles that determine the specifics of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language. The general linguistic and didactic principles of teaching are as follows: *consciousness, visibility, scientificity, systematicity, accessibility, activity, creativity, and collectivity*. In addition, in the **process of teaching** Ukrainian as a foreign language, the principles of *active communication of practical orientation, cultural informativeness, preference for the native language, novelty, concentration, as well as the communicative-situational principle* are applied.

Considering the motivation, age, geographical origin, cultural background, social context, and linguistic specifics of foreign individuals pursuing medical studies is an important factor to take into account. This is because students from various regions of the world bring their unique characteristics and circumstances to the learning environment. Communication is a fundamental principle and method of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language. The teaching material is organized into two content areas: *communicative and linguistic*. Teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language is oriented towards the practical goal of mastering the language as a means of communication in everyday life and obtaining professional education in Ukraine. As a result, this necessitates adopting a functional approach when selecting and presenting language units, representing them in relevant situations and themes, and compiling textbooks.

The functional approach, in contrast to the traditional one, focuses on penetrating the semantic richness of the grammatical form. For example, the central task of functional morphology is to establish the place and significance of **components of grammatical categories** in the realization of universally typological and nationally peculiar meanings, as well as to determine the inventory of formal presentation of conceptual categories. Applying the results of the functional approach to the description of linguistic units in linguodidactics ensures practical proficiency in the foreign language. Special attention should be paid to motivating foreign students to learn Ukrainian. An essential aspect is to acquaint foreign students in non-language higher education institutions with fundamental terminology concepts and their professional language, thereby enhancing their vocabulary with both general intellectual terminology and specialized lexicon. Thus, the Ukrainian language serves as a means of communication and interaction with representatives of other

nations for foreign citizens. In education, the cultural or intercultural approach to teaching continues to develop within the framework of the concept of “dialogue of cultures”, with the aim of developing students’ multilingual literacy. Therefore, in our opinion, mindless memorization of texts in a foreign language that has no practical value for students’ future professional activities is unnecessary in modern higher educational institutions. Students should be prepared on the basis of high-quality modern authentic educational material for the conscious use of the Ukrainian language in their future life and work [5].

*Teaching techniques* refer to specific actions and operations carried out by the teacher directly during the teaching process. These include methods of explaining teaching/learning materials, such as *description, comparison, contrast, semanticization*, and others. The term “approach” encompasses a set of concepts that denote the systematic organization of knowledge acquisition and transfer process, involving all participants in the learning process — the teacher and the student [19 : 173]. Accordingly, the methodology of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language distinguishes *extralinguistic, systemic, communicative, functional, activity-based, individual, personal, comprehensive, competency-based, and cultural approaches*, as well as the *approach of interconnected learning*, which play a crucial role in teaching language to foreign medical students.

*Method* (from the Greek “metodos” that means “way of research, knowledge”) is a system of rules and approaches to the study of phenomena and patterns of nature, society and thinking; a path, a way of achieving certain results in cognition and practice, that is, a way of organizing the theoretical and practical mastery of reality [11]. According to O. Turkevych, the methodological terminology system encompasses several thematic classes of terms in the methodology of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language: a) methodological; b) linguistic; c) psychological and methodological; d) socio-cultural. The most common traditional methods of teaching foreign languages include *grammar-translation, conscious-comparative, audio-lingual, audio-visual, conscious-practical, and communicative* [22]. They are considered to be effective and include the following components: 1) *grammar-translation* (vocabulary and grammar knowledge is formed based on literary, social and political texts containing correct grammatical forms); 2) *conscious-comparative* (comparison of similar and different linguistic phenomena in Ukrainian and the native language); 3) *audio-lingual* (repeated listening and speaking of language samples); 4) *audio-visual* (studying basic structures, most frequent units, patterns of verbal and non-verbal behaviour); 5) *conscious-practical* (teaching language by four types of communicative activities: reading, writing, speaking, listening); 6) *communicative* (development of students’ speech and thinking activity and learning and consolidation of new material in the process of communication) [18]. They are actively used in teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language to medical students.

To improve the communicative skills of foreign medical students, the following methods are used: *explanatory-illustrative method* (expanding vocabulary and building syntactic units based on work with illustrations, reproductions, samples, diagrams, etc.), *reproductive method* (reproducing the learnt lexical and grammatical units in the process of communication), *problem-based method* (learning new material is based on a relevant problem important to the audience), *partial-exploratory method* (students independently determine the meaning of lexemes using dictionaries, try to clarify them based on the context, search for synonyms and antonyms, derive grammar rules based on the given examples, etc.), and *research method* (learners perform small individual research tasks, such as identifying common lexical units in Ukrainian and their native language using a dictionary, identifying

groups of proper names, finding similarities in etiquettes formulas between Ukrainian and their native language, in grammatical forms and construction of syntactic structures, etc.).

For more effective teaching and learning, teachers should combine both traditional and innovative methodological approaches in practice that enhance the learning process and students' level of knowledge. Internet technologies facilitate independent processing and studying of new material for students, enabling them to work on and learn new content autonomously. The innovative methods include the following: 1) *interactive method* (creating a relaxed atmosphere of communication between students and the teacher or among students themselves, engaging in creative simulations of specific situations, undertaking small projects, role-playing games, interviews, brainstorming sessions, decision tree exercises, fishbowl, discussions, case studies, and more), 2) *use of modern technical teaching aids* – computer and multimedia technologies, the Internet (appropriate for knowledge control, storing and using educational lexical materials, preparing projects or presentations about the country, etc.); 3) *extracurricular situational and thematic language learning* (acquiring vocabulary and grammar in various spheres of official and everyday communication, such as in a shop or at the cash register, at the post office or bank, in a restaurant, café, or canteen, at the library, in administrative institutions, on the street, in transport, at the theater, museum, on an excursion, at the clinic or pharmacy, and so on); 4) *inclusive method* (involving Ukrainian students in classes for foreign students and, accordingly, foreign students in lectures and practical classes for Ukrainians) and etc.; 5) *method of cultural and mass activity* (encouraging participation in state, public and national celebrations, academic events, such as Teacher's Day, Christmas, New Year, birthdays of Lesya Ukrainka and Taras Shevchenko, Easter, etc. [4].

T. Kasyanenko, T. Kudina, L. Matsko and others studied the modern methods and technologies. T. Kasyanenko emphasised that nowadays the computer-assisted teaching method is becoming increasingly widespread in teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language. Instrumental means used in learning Ukrainian as a foreign language, consist of many components, among which are: 1) *user registration*; 2) *administration tools*; 3) *presentation of training materials*; 4) *testing and assessment tools for users*; 5) *training and learning tools*; 6) *storage of statistical data on user testing results*. Teaching and testing tools allow teachers to: generate test tasks from a database based on criteria set by the course developer; use test tasks of various types, such as selecting one option from the given choices or selecting multiple options, and entering responses; include images, animations, audio, and video files; implement contextual approach; provide statistical data on test results at the end of the test, which are recorded in the results database; set a time limit for completing the test.

This allows foreign students to control their learning (online), while providing teachers with access to and editing capabilities of question databases; defining criteria for task selection assignments; reviewing database registration forms, and administering these databases, among other functions [9].

To enhance the assimilation of material, tasks are compiled for medical students and according to Turkevych O. [22] are grouped as follows: 1) by method of performance: oral and written; 2) by purpose: training and assessment; 3) by place of performance: classroom and home; 4) by method of performance: individual, pair, group; 5) by language levels: phonetic/lexical/grammatical/syntactic; 6) by method of performance: exercises based on the example, constructive, creative; 7) by type of language activity: exercises for listening, reading, writing, speaking; 8) by placement in relation to the text: pre-text, in-text, post-text; 9) by the presence of models and answers: instructions, examples, comments, key to

the exercise, answer to the exercise; 10) by purpose: control and training tasks, etc.

**Conclusions.** Thus, each language has its own unique characteristics in learning. The task of a teacher is to motivate foreign students and effectively explain the importance of the Ukrainian language for both professional study and communication in society.

Considering that it is only the third year that Andrey Krupynsky Lviv Medical Academy has been enrolling foreign students, the next step in learning Ukrainian as a foreign language is to write a textbook, as the curriculum has been written, medical tasks have been developed, and a lot of material has been collected. It is obvious that language teaching should be systemic and practical.

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## ВИВЧЕННЯ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ МОВИ ІНОЗЕМНИМИ СТУДЕНТАМИ-МЕДИКАМИ

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Статтю присвячено проблемі вивчення української мови як іноземної студентами вищих навчальних закладів та студентами-медиками. Зазначено підручники та посібники, якими послуговуються іноземні студенти-медики при вивченні української мови як іноземної. Схарактеризовано важливі методичні прийоми у вивченні української мови для іноземців. Виділено функціональний підхід до відбору й подання мовного матеріалу. Акцент зроблено на практичному аспекті вивчення мови: використання української мови як іноземної не лише в професійній діяльності, а й на побутовому рівні. Мотивація студентів-медиків має неабияке значення під час вивчення української мови. Для того, щоб досягнути результатів у викладанні української мови як іноземної, слід зважати на принципи навчання та методи не лише традиційні (*пояснювально-ілюстративний, репродуктивний, проблемного викладу, частковопошуковий, дослідницький*), а й інноваційні (*інтерактивні методи, використання нових технічних засобів навчання, позааудиторне ситуативно-тематичне вивчення мови, інклюзивний метод, метод культурно-масової активності / діяльності*), які покращують результат навчального процесу й рівень знань студентів, адже Інтернет-технології допомагають студентам самостійно опрацювати та вивчати новий матеріал і змогу здійснювати контроль над засвоєнням знань (у режимі онлайн), а викладачам забезпечує можливість доступу та редагування баз даних із запитаннями, визначення критеріїв вибору завдань, перегляду бази даних реєстраційних форм, здійснення адміністрування цих баз даних.

*Ключові слова:* українська мова як іноземна, вивчення української мови іноземним студентами-медиками, мотивація студента-іноземця, методика викладання української мови як іноземної, методичні прийоми вивчення української мови як іноземної.

*Стаття надійшла до редакції 20.04.2023  
доопрацьована 26.04.2023  
прийнята до друку 01.05.2023*