СЕРІЯ «Психологія»

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BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACADEMIC ENGLISH FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES COURSE SYLLABUS

Abstract. The article presents the overview of the current laws and resolutions that were adopted in Ukraine in terms of postgraduate education and requirements for teaching foreign languages to PhD students in particular. The author describes the experience of teaching Academic English for Medical Purposes to PhD students of the National Medical University, Kyiv, Ukraine. This paper aims to address principal practical considerations for the design and implementation of the Academic English for Medical Purposes course syllabus. The structure of the AEMP course syllabus is based on educational and professional needs of the PhD program participants as well as their need for academic excellence. The requirements for an academic physician in terms of supporting and function-specific competencies are also taken into consideration. The AEMP course syllabus addresses the formation, development and improvement of the PhD students' skills in academic reading and writing, academic listening and speaking. The AEMP course syllabus is designed in a way that ensures its relevance, feasibility and flexibility. The PhD students' involvement into the annual review of the course syllabus contributes to their greater support and their higher motivation and interest in learning. The course syllabus covers clinical topics and issues on professional ethics, integrity and emotional intelligence as well as addresses communication and team management skills. Due to the AEMP course syllabus the degree program participants become familiar with the common guidelines that should be strictly followed for a successful publication in an international peer-reviewed medical journal as well as practice their academic writing skills necessary for writing different types of papers, routine professional correspondence and official documentation. The AEMP course syllabus attempts to provide the PhD students of the NMU with an opportunity for continuous education and development.

Keywords: course syllabus design, educational needs, professional needs, scientific excellence.

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ОСНОВНІ ПРИНЦИПИ РОЗРОБКИ ТА ВПРОВАДЖЕННЯ СИЛАБУСУ КУРСУ «АКАДЕМІЧНА АНГЛІЙСЬКА МОВА ДЛЯ МЕДИЧНИХ ЦІЛЕЙ»

Анотація. Стаття присвячена огляду чинних законів та постанов, які були прийняті в Україні щодо організації післядипломної освіти, та вимогам до викладання іноземних мов аспірантам. Спираючись на власний досвід викладання академічної англійської мови для медичних цілей аспірантам Національного медичного університету (Київ, Україна), автор статті узагальнює основні практичні міркування щодо розробки та впровадження силабусу курсу «Академічна англійська мова для медичних цілей». Структура курсу базується на освітніх та професійних потребах аспірантів і враховує вимоги до лікаря-науковця з точки зору оволодіння ним допоміжними та функціональними компетентностями. Програма курсу «Академічна англійська мова для медичних цілей» спрямована на формування, розвиток і вдосконалення умінь та навичок аспірантів з академічного читання та письма, академічного слухання та мовлення. Програма курсу розроблена таким чином, щоб забезпечити її актуальність, ефективність та гнучкість. Залучення аспірантів до щорічного її перегляду в формі анкетування, яке визначає їхні нагальні професійні потреби, сприяє більшій підтримці, вищій мотивації та інтересу до навчання. Силабус курсу охоплює клінічні теми та питання професійної етики, доброчесності та емоційного інтелекту, а також розглядає навички спілкування та управління командою. Завдяки навчальній програмі курсу аспіранти ознайомлюються із загальними правилами, яких слід чітко дотримуватися для успішної публікації в міжнародному рецензованому медичному журналі, а також удосконалюють навички академічного письма, необхідні для написання різних видів документів, щоденного професійного листування та оформлення офіційної документації. Курс «Академічна англійська мова для медичних цілей» забезпечує безперервну освіту та розвиток його учасників.

Ключові слова: дизайн навчальної програми, освітні потреби, професійні потреби, академічна досконалість.

Introduction. Postgraduate education in Ukraine has undergone fundamental changes suggested by the revolutionary provisions of the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" that was officially brought into action in September, 2014. The Law specifies an academic autonomy that entitles all higher educational establishments of Ukraine, which are licensed by the state to prepare Doctors of Philosophy, to initiate,

design and implement their PhD course programs. Today, Ukrainian higher educational institutions are empowered to produce real life, effective and flexible PhD programs that allow them to achieve significant advances in the PhD students' academic performance and scientific productivity, their readiness to excel in the national and foreign academic and non-academic settings. Such PhD programs are highly valued because they can be easily and immediately adjusted in response to constantly changing educational and professional needs of the PhD program participants. In this regard these programs turn out to have an exceptional motivational force.

Analysis of the latest researches and publications. The law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" introduces a Doctor of Philosophy degree as an educational and the first scientific degree for which the students may apply as soon as they have been awarded a Master's degree. PhD students are eligible for a Doctor of Philosophy degree on completion of the PhD curriculum and successful public dissertation defense [1].

PhD students are offered a four-year program of studies that they must fully cover. This program ensures acquisition of the competencies outlined in the National Framework of Qualifications, including foreign language competencies at the level that would be enough for oral and written presentation of own research and its findings, active participation in the professional and scientific discussions as well as reading and understanding of the specialized scientific literature. In this regard Academic English for Medical Purposes is included in the list of compulsory disciplines delivered to PhD students according to the PhD program of studies [2].

The scientific contribution of PhD students depends on some underlying factors, including, but not limited to, adequate theoretical knowledge, practical and communication skills, sufficient level of independence, responsibility and integrity. The National Framework of Qualifications sets up an array of requirements for Doctors of Philosophy, who must demonstrate: new conceptual and methodological knowledge that lays the foundation of the directions for further research; critical thinking skills including analysis of complex issues and synthesis of new ideas, strategic problem-solving skills; leadership and proper communication skills; ability to initiate, develop and launch original innovative research projects; continuous self-development and self-improvement, education of others by the expansion of knowledge [3].

A PhD program of studies should be designed with the view to provide acquisition or refinement of the outlined abilities and skills. Successful implementation of the PhD program that complies with the international standards is almost impossible without high-quality teaching of Academic English for Medical Purposes to PhD students. It is a well-known fact that adequate English level, along with high professionalism, ensures a wide access to cutting-edge scientific information, provides real academic mobility, efficient scientific cooperation, makes Ukrainian researchers highly competitive in the field of global medical science, helps

them build up impactful and productive scholarly and teaching careers as well as promotes their social and cultural development.

The term English for Academic Purposes (EAP) first came into general use through the British organization SELMOUS (Special English Language Materials for Overseas University Students) later known as BALEAP (British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes). EAP is regarded as a branch of English for specific purposes (ESP). EAP begins with the learner and the situation, it places more focus on reading and writing, teaches formal and academic genres of the language [4]. EAP includes academic writing, academic listening, academic reading, and academic speaking [4].

Cloud, Genesee, and Hamayan studied the nature of academic language that they called content obligatory language. These researchers observe content obligatory language as the one that includes technical vocabulary, special expressions, multiple meanings of words, syntactical features, and language functions that are integral to different academic content areas [5].

The academic context has proved to provide subject matter that is sufficiently specific and relevant to satisfy learners' needs but also sufficiently general to be applicable across a fairly wide range of context [4].

Needs analysis is fundamental to an EAP approach to course design and teaching. Needs analysis leads to the specification of objectives for a course, to an assessment of available resources and constraints, which in turn lead to the syllabus and methodology. The syllabus is implemented through teaching materials, and is then evaluated for effectiveness [4].

Jordan observes four dimensions of needs: those of the target situation, of the employer or sponsor, of the student, and of the course designer and /or teacher [6]. In our case, the target situation is a PhD program in medicine, the employer /sponsor - Ministry of Health of Ukraine, the student - postgraduate students, the course designer - Department of Language Studies.

The purpose of the article is to address principal practical considerations for the design and implementation of the Academic English for Medical Purposes course syllabus in the framework of the PhD program at O.O. Bogomolets National Medical University, Kyiv, Ukraine. The Academic English for Medical Purposes course syllabus is oriented toward meeting the requirements for the new generation of the Ukrainian medical researchers and their sophisticated academic and professional needs.

Main text. The Academic English for Medical Purposes course syllabus (the AEMP course syllabus) is an intensive, in-depth English-language for specific purposes program that is delivered to PhD students at O.O. Bogomolets National Medical University and is an integral part of their regular PhD curriculum.

The AEMP course syllabus attempts to activate and develop the PhD students' academic language competency that contributes greatly to their oral and written professional and situational communicative independence in terms of comprehensive

understanding of authentic scientific medical texts, oral and written presentation and discussion of own research and its findings, dealing with official documentation, effective listening and conversation maintenance.

The AEMP course syllabus consists of 120 academic credit hours of tutorials (academic speaking and listening skills) and 60 academic credit hours dedicated to self-study work (academic reading and writing skills). The total number of academic credit hours is relevant to 6 credits ECTS. Once 6 credits (ECTS) have accrued, the AEMP course is considered completed. The AEMP course syllabus is composed of four thematic modules:

Module 1. Public health problems and concerns.

Модуль 2. Acute and chronic illnesses and their management.

Модуль 3. Infectious diseases and their management.

Модуль 4. Surgery and oncology.

Each thematic module encompasses principal topics for self-study work and in-class discussions, grammar topics and written tasks for self-study work and is covered within 45 academic credit hours (tutorials - 30 academic credit hours and self-study work - 15 academic credit hours).

Needs analysis of the immediate situation leads to developing in-house materials that are practical and feasible. In-house materials have the great strength of responding directly to the local needs [4]. These materials lay the foundation of the AEMP course syllabus.

The needs under observation are educational, professional and scientific excellence.

Professional needs

PhD students are educated and trained to serve as academic physicians later, who must be efficient in a clinical work, research, teaching and administration [7].

It is important to identify the full range of knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics necessary for an academic physician in order to design the program that satisfies professional needs of the future academic physicians [7].

Within four roles of an academic physician (clinician, teacher, researcher, administrator), 5 common or supporting competencies and 11 specific or function-specific competencies were identified by the researchers with the help of semi-structured interviews and critical incidence technique [7]. Supporting competencies include communication skills, team management skills, continuous education and development, professional ethics and integrity, emotional intelligence (empathy, emotion regulation, emotion management). Function-specific competencies were described within teaching skills (subject matter knowledge and dedication to teaching), clinical skills (conceptual thinking and decision making, patient focus, medical knowledge and clinical skills), administrative skills (leadership skills and business financial knowledge), and research skills (research knowledge and knowledge of research project, conceptual thinking and data analysis, innovation, creativity, dedication, research ethics) [7].

Scientific excellence

Scientific excellence is closely connected with an excellent scientific record of an academic physician. Scientific excellence can be measured by innovation and originality of the project, description and design of the research project, former research activities and scientific experience, work experience abroad, publications approved by high-ranking journals, number of publications and citations [8].

In terms of the new «social contract» for science, scientific excellence is measured by the scientific research alignment with societal problems, concerns and preferences; technical innovations within a short-time frame; increasing use of scientific expertise in societal decision-making [9].

Sunken states that there is not just one excellence, there are many different types of excellence for the many different parts of the scientific ecosystem. The researcher is sure that today for the overall project to succeed, all the individual areas have to perform at the highest level, and the individual players have to be allowed to play to their talents [9].

Educational needs are predetermined by professional needs and a need for scientific excellence. With this in mind, the AEMP course syllabus was designed.

The design of the AEMP course syllabus was carried out in compliance to the requirements for Doctors of Philosophy, which are outlined in the relevant normative documents of Ukraine, educational and professional needs of the PhD students, a set of skills necessary for scientific excellence in medicine.

Besides, from 2016, the year of the PhD program introduction at the NMU, to 2021 the needs assessment survey was conducted in order to find out more detailed information about current educational, professional and scientific needs of the PhD students that were starting out their studies. The first-year postgraduate students were offered ''Educational, professional and scientific needs questionnaire'' immediately after their admission (usually a month prior to the start of the program of studies). The participants of the survey answered the following questions:

1. What job responsibilities do you perform?
2. What does excellent medical work performance look like?
3. What does excellent scientific work performance look like?
4. What are your current or prospective hospital department projects that you need to back up?
5. What problems you are having in meeting hospital department requirements or supporting the projects?
6. What steps must be completed to accomplish your professional goals?
7. What steps must be completed to accomplish your research goals?
8. What knowledge and skills would you like to acquire or develop in an attempt to boost the level of productivity, quality, patients' satisfaction as well as improve your professional attitude, relationships at workplace, enhance your medical career and scientific achievements?
9. How would you know that you are succeeding in your professional and scholarly career?

This practice has been introduced as routine. It enables the faculty members to keep the AEMP course syllabus in line with the needs that are described by the degree program participants. The survey greatly supplements course providers' own observations and contributes to the PhD students' involvement in learning process as in this case they are more likely to support the initiatives of the department and stay motivated and focused on the AEMP course. These initiatives are connected with the structure and content of the AEMP course syllabus that is reviewed and updated annually in accordance with the newest trends in medical science and current needs of the PhD students. Analysis of the target situation, needs of the employer and the student allowed the course designer to define the major Academic English for Medical Purposes skills that should be acquired by the PhD students willing to obtain their scientific degree in Medicine. These skills pertain to academic reading, academic writing, academic listening, and academic speaking and include:

• Reading of academic medical texts (scanning, skimming, study reading).

• Reading/writing integration skills including summarizing, synthesizing, critically responding to text input, writing a research paper [10].

• Writing different types of papers (various kinds of academic essays, annotations, summary papers, reaction papers, journal articles, book reviews, synthesis papers, literature reviews, scientific reports and research findings) as well as practicing routine correspondence with partners, organizing committees, commissions, foreign medical government and non-government agencies.

• Demonstration of adequate knowledge of medical terminology, sufficient academic writing skills necessary for a project presentation, submission of a request, application, sponsor letter, motivation letter and curriculum vitae.

• Using complex grammatical structures and language patterns within a functional tradition identified for major disciplinary genres (subordinate conjunctions, long noun phrases, nominalization [11, 12], passive constructions, emphatic structures and inversion, impersonal constructions).

• Demonstration of proper listening skills while listening to the speakers in academic settings (monologues, dialogues, interviews, conversations).

• Analysis and adequate oral interpretation of the scientific and medical information.

• Oral presentation of research findings and scientific reports.

• Expression of personal opinion and participation in the discussions on the content, methods, modern achievements in medical science. Demonstration of adequate reasoning, explanation, description, comparison and assessment skills as language functions [13].

• Demonstration of proper verbal and non-verbal communication skills during interaction with different target audiences and people.

The structure of the AEMP course syllabus logically corresponds with the indicated educational and professional needs as well as a need for academic excellence and requirements for an academic physician in terms of supporting and

function-specific competencies. The AEMP course syllabus addresses the formation, development and improvement of the highlighted skills in academic reading, academic writing, academic listening, and academic speaking. The principal topics for tutorials were chosen based on the information provided by the World Health Organization on its official website in terms of the health issues being currently under discussion in the global medical community [14].

The AEMP course syllabus is delivered through a weekly tutorial with the application of innovative teaching techniques [15], creative tasks, work with online audio and video resources, brainstorm, role play, real-world learning), self-study work, counseling, and extracurricular activities including monthly meetings of the English-speaking club initiated and supported by the department, participation of the PhD students in the international workshops, seminars, trainings and conferences (as a speaker or a poster presenter), publications in the international peer-reviewed medical journals.

Conclusions. The AEMP course syllabus is designed in a way that ensures its relevance, feasibility and flexibility. The course designers take into account the existing requirements for Doctors of Philosophy, which are outlined in the normative documents of Ukraine, educational and professional needs of the PhD students, a set of skills necessary for scientific excellence in medicine. The PhD students' involvement into the annual review of the course syllabus contributes to their greater support of the initiatives of the department and their higher motivation and interest in learning. The AEMP course syllabus attempts to provide the PhD students of the NMU with an opportunity for continuous education and development. The course syllabus covers clinical topics and issues on professional ethics, integrity and emotional intelligence as well as addresses communication and team management skills. Due to the AEMP course syllabus the degree program participants become familiar with the common guidelines that should be strictly followed for a successful publication in an international peer-reviewed medical journal as well as practice their academic writing skills necessary for writing different types of papers, routine professional correspondence and official documentation. The implementation of the AEMP course syllabus includes extensive application of the acquired skills in academic reading and writing, academic listening and speaking at the workshops, trainings, conferences, scientific competitions, medical projects as well as international publications in the peer-reviewed print and on-line editions. The information on the academic achievements of all PhD students is organized in the form of their personal profiles (portfolio).

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