

Situational approach to foreign language teaching for future veterinarians in higher education institutions

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Annotation. The situational approach occupies an essential place in the methodology of teaching foreign languages to students of higher education institutions of any specialty, including 211 "Veterinary Medicine," because the successful formation of foreign language communicative competence is possible only through participation in various communication situations, as a result of which they gradually acquire experience in using language and speech means, master the norms of communicative behavior, master strategies, and tactics for implementing various communicative goals. The aim of the article is to determine the notion of situational approach in teaching and define its use in foreign language teaching of veterinary medicine students at the Ukrainian universities. The implementation of this approach involves situational modeling of honest communication, the creation by verbal description or illustrative visualization of specific communicative situations. Implementing a situational approach to teaching a foreign language gives students a real opportunity to immerse themselves in various situations in the professional life of a specialist with a specific profile. The situational approach focuses on the use of typical real situations of professional communication in the field of veterinary medicine as the basis for constructing the content of the subject of foreign language teaching for students of the relevant specialty, the selection and organization of language material, the method of presenting speech samples, the conditions for mastering foreign language speech, which sets its subject and goals. The situational approach to foreign language teaching offers a dynamic and practical framework for language learning that prioritizes real-world contexts and meaningful communication. By focusing on the application of language in various situational contexts, this approach helps learners to develop both their linguistic abilities and cultural understanding, making them more confident and capable in using the language in authentic scenarios.

Keywords: situational approach, foreign language learning, veterinary medicine program, learning text.

Ситуативний підхід до навчання іноземної мови майбутніх ветеринарів у закладах вищої освіти

Анотація. Ситуаційний підхід займає суттєве місце в методиці навчання іноземних мов студентів вищих навчальних закладів будь-якої спеціальності, в тому числі 211

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«Ветеринарна медицина», оскільки успішне формування іншомовної комунікативної компетенції можливе лише через участь у різноманітних ситуаціях спілкування, в результаті чого вони поступово набувають досвіду використання мовних і мовленнєвих засобів, опановують норми комунікативної поведінки, опановують стратегії і тактики реалізації різноманітних комунікативних цілей. Метою статті є визначення поняття ситуаційного підходу в навчанні та визначення його використання у навчанні іноземних мов студентів ветеринарної медицини ВНЗ України. Реалізація цього підходу передбачає ситуативне моделювання щирого спілкування, створення шляхом словесного опису чи ілюстративної візуалізації конкретних комунікативних ситуацій. Реалізація ситуативного підходу до навчання іноземної мови дає студентам реальну можливість зануритися в різноманітні ситуації професійного життя фахівця певного профілю. Ситуаційний підхід орієнтований на використання типових реальних ситуацій професійного спілкування у сфері ветеринарної медицини як основи для побудови змісту предмета навчання іноземної мови для студентів відповідної спеціальності, відбору та організації мовного матеріалу, методики подання зразків мовлення, умов оволодіння іншомовним мовленням, що визначає його предмет і цілі. Ситуаційний підхід до викладання іноземної мови пропонує динамічну та практичну основу для вивчення мови, яка надає пріоритет контекстам реального світу та змістовному спілкуванню. Зосереджуючись на застосуванні мови в різних ситуаційних контекстах, цей підхід допомагає учням розвивати як свої лінгвістичні здібності, так і культурне розуміння, що робить їх більш впевненими та здатними використовувати мову в автентичних сценаріях.

Ключові слова: ситуаційний підхід, вивчення іноземної мови, освітні програми з ветеринарної медицини, навчальний текст.

Introduction

The Situational Approach to Foreign Language Teaching is a method that emphasizes the use of real-life contexts and situations to facilitate language learning. Rooted in the belief that language is best learned when it is meaningful and relevant, this approach focuses on teaching language through practical scenarios that learners might encounter in everyday life. It aims to equip students not only with grammatical rules and vocabulary but also with the ability to communicate effectively in diverse situations, whether in social, professional, or academic contexts.

The situational approach occupies an essential place in the methodology of teaching foreign languages to students of higher education institutions of any specialty, including 211 "Veterinary Medicine," because the successful formation of foreign language communicative competence is possible only through participation in various communication situations, as a result of which they gradually acquire experience in using language and speech means, master the norms of communicative behavior, master strategies, and tactics for implementing various communicative goals, etc. Therefore, it involves designing various communicative situations that activate the student's cognitive and speech activity, arouse interest, and capture the imagination. It thus bridges the gap between theory and practice, allowing learners to engage with the language in a way that mirrors how it is used in the real world.

Many scholars worldwide have researched the issue of situational approach in the foreign language teaching, among them: Arcos M., & Vega M., Du J., Huang A. F., Yang S. J., & Hwang G. J. study the situational approach towards foreign language learning; De Silva Joyce H., & Feez S., Polio C. investigated the use of text as a main means of foreign language learning in the approach. Among Ukrainian scholars, we should mention the following: Vyshnevska K., Shvets G. and Polyakova G. study the contextual approach; Lobachuk I. and Morska L. have investigated the situational approach towards foreign language learning; Cherchata L., Korol L., Pavlyk O., Ovsienko L., Melnychenko G., Susol L. research textual approach in the foreign language

learning. However, all abovementioned approaches and methods are interconnected and interrelated. Therefore, it is important to consider the use of situational approach in foreign language learning as an important educational tool.

The aim of the article is to determine the notion of situational approach in teaching and define its use in foreign language teaching of veterinary medicine students at the Ukrainian universities.

The tasks of the article is to provide definition of situational approach towards foreign language teaching; analyze works of scholars about this approach; determine the aspects of the implementation of the approach; define the role of the text in the implementation of the approach.

Results

Shvets H., Lobachuk I. and Du J. explain the importance of using the situational approach, in fact, by the situationality of communicative activity as one of its essential features [1; 2; 3]. Any language, becoming an absolute abstraction, acquires a specific embodiment in speech, which is always situational since both the addresser and the addressee of the speech message are within a specific context. This context determines the motives and needs of communication, its subject-content plan, and the choice of appropriate language means by its participants. Therefore, according to their statements, the communicative situation represents a “fragment of reality” in various spheres of communication, including professional and labor, and is the initial basis of the speech act. In this regard, the situational approach occupies one of the leading places in teaching a foreign language to students of various specialties.

The essence of this approach is that Huang A.F., Yang S.J., Hwang G.J. see the organization of students' educational and communicative activities in a given situation of professional communication. By obeying the norms of verbal behavior regulated by it, the student masters typical professional communication strategies and learns the most optimal means of linguistic expression. Situations and cases of professional communication become specific examples of constructive or non-constructive communicative actions in professional activity, as well as correct or incorrect use of linguistic means of expression, due to the comprehension of which he is formed as a communicatively competent specialist [4].

The implementation of this approach involves situational modeling of honest communication, the creation by verbal description or illustrative visualization of specific communicative situations, which represent “a dynamic system of interacting specific factors of objective and subjective aspects that involve a person in foreign language communication and determine his behavior within the framework of one act of communication” [5, p.140]. During interaction with such situations, students master the material, in particular language forms and speech clichés, and learn to make their choice following professional practice needs. Due to this, situational learning provides the ability to respond constructively and promptly in various communicative situations based on proper mastery of the necessary units of the foreign language, structures, and patterns of expression.

According to Vyshnevska K., Polyakova H., Arcos M., Vega M. the situational approach to learning a foreign language is based on the idea of acquiring foreign language knowledge and skills in specially simulated situations of professional communication for various purposes. In particular, they distinguish: 1) illustrative situations that present examples of foreign language communicative behavior, examples of the implementation of various communicative intentions in the process of professional interaction; 2) simulation situations aimed at reproducing examples of adequate verbal behavior in the process of foreign language professional communication; 3) problem situations that are oriented towards identifying a specific communicative dilemma, contradiction and creative search for ways and means to overcome them [6; 7; 8].

Morska L. associates situational learning of a foreign language with higher efficiency and less laboriousness. Taking into account the variability of its functioning as a means of communication between specialists of different professions, the situational approach makes it possible to model the process of honest communication in various spheres of professional activity, taking into account the specifics of the relevant language and speech material, and thus narrow down the entire wide range of means of a foreign language, its units and phenomena of different levels - lexical, grammatical, stylistic, etc., to the specific needs of specialists of a particular field and facilitate its mastery for the implementation of unique goals. In her opinion, the main advantage of such an approach lies in bringing the educational process closer to actual communicative practice because, through situational learning, students learn a foreign language and gain practical experience in using it in various professional situations [9].

The fundamental characteristic of such situations in the process of learning foreign languages in higher education institutions is considered by scientists Shvets H., Lobachuk I., Du J., Arcos M., Vega M., to be their professional orientation, i.e., integration into the context of future professional activity [1; 2; 3; 8]. Therefore, they define the initial basis for constructing communicative situations as the typical professional tasks and responsibilities of a specialist in a particular field and the successful implementation of specific speech actions, including using a foreign language. As a result, by "acting out" in these situations, students imitate professional activity, determine the necessary communicative strategies, select language tools for their implementation, and check the models of their communicative behavior and reactions in different communication conditions. At the same time, due to the orientation of situational foreign language learning to actual professional tasks, this approach provides students with a deep understanding of the significance of a foreign language as a tool for performing specific professional duties and tasks and, accordingly, contributes to the formation of a sustainable internal need to master it.

Implementing a situational approach to teaching a foreign language gives students a real opportunity to immerse themselves in various situations in the professional life of a specialist with a specific profile. It plays a particularly important role in teaching a foreign language to students who are candidates for professions that involve active interaction with people, which undoubtedly includes the veterinarian profession. The communication of representatives of these professions is characterized by an extremely wide range of communicative situations, which necessitates the systematic teaching of a foreign language to students of the relevant specialties on a situational basis to provide them with a stable and sufficiently diverse communicative environment, which contributes to the consistent mastery of various models of foreign language professional communication.

The situational approach focuses on the use of typical real situations of professional communication in the field of veterinary medicine as the basis for constructing the content of the subject of foreign language teaching for students of the relevant specialty, the selection and organization of language material, the method of presenting speech samples, the conditions for mastering foreign language speech, which sets its subject and goals. Therefore, it allows you not only to master the units of a foreign language in terms of form and meaning but also to understand the professional contexts in which it is used and learn to transfer typical speech patterns to various situations of professional communication.

The text is the material basis for implementing the situational approach to learning a foreign language. Only through the text as a carrier of linguistic and extralinguistic information, Martsyn S., Melnychenko H., Susol L., De Silva Joyce H. & Feez S., emphasize, that students can fully comprehend the multifaceted functions of language, learn the richness of its units, the norms of their use in a specific communicative situation [10; 11; 12]. Teaching a foreign language on a text basis, according to their beliefs, prevents excessive theorizing in the process of processing foreign language material, its mechanical memorization along with the loss of the feeling of a "living" word, and promotes meaningful mastery of foreign language units in their

“natural language environment, direct functioning in speech,” and not in isolation, abstractly [13, p. 110].

The important role of text in teaching a foreign language is also emphasized by Pavlyk O., Polio C., because language is objectified, “lives” in the text, respectively, through the analysis of the text that integrates linguistic signs and cultural meanings, the student can fully master the language. Using text as the basis for teaching a foreign language makes it possible to master language units in the unity of their form, meaning, and functions and to comprehensively master the norms of their use in all types of speech activity [13; 14]. Through working with text, students perceive, analyze, and remember phenomena and language units, determine the features of their functioning, establish semantic and grammatical connections between them, and then create and produce their speech with their help. In this context, scientists emphasize such an important linguodidactical property of the text as the possibility of direct access to speech practice.

We consider the interpretation of the essence of the text as a product of a complex speech-thought process, which is implemented in the form of a specific written or oral work following the motive, purpose, intention, and idea of the speaker and is characterized by a clear, logically consistent structural organization, compositional and stylistic unity [15, p. 126]. It encompasses a set of sentences connected by logical and lexical-grammatical connections into complete semantic integrity. Therefore, it appears as a complex structural-semantic unit that can serve as the basis for multi-level work on foreign language speech and speech material, starting from the identification of the form and meaning of units, their semantic and grammatical relations, continuing with reproduction and ending with creative use in formulating a statement-reaction.

According to Lyubashenko O., a text in teaching foreign languages has exceptional value as a systematized model of the functioning of various linguistic phenomena, structures, and units within the framework of a topic, situation, problem, genre, or social context. Given this, she emphasizes the special significance of the process of teaching a foreign language to students of various specialties of texts of a professional orientation as unique segments of professional foreign language speech, which represent, on the one hand, information on the specialty, and the other hand, material for linguistic analysis [16]. Such a text, in her opinion, contributes to the comprehensive mastering of methods of encoding information in stable word combinations, terminological units, speech genres, and styles characteristic of the corresponding specialty, the accumulation of a thesaurus fund and terminological-professional text structures and the development of the need to express oneself on the professional problems raised in it using the appropriate language structures.

In the text, as Varzatska L. aptly emphasizes, “units of all language levels function, united in accordance with the laws of text formation, which provide for the preservation of the logical and semantic unity of the statement, taking into account genre and style features” [17, p. 34]. In the text, language units and forms acquire functional and stylistic, communicative meanings, which becomes the most effective basis for mastering the ability of coherent, correct foreign language speech. Given the different content and linguistic features, the researcher differentiates different types of texts that can be used in the practice of teaching a foreign language, namely: 1) scientific, presenting theoretical information within the professional field; 2) journalistic, containing popular information regarding the sphere of professional activity; 3) conversational, presenting styles and genres of speech in various situations of professional communication.

The variety of texts that can serve as the basis for teaching foreign languages to students of various specialties creates the problem of their selection. In this context, we consider the arguments of scientists Cherchata L., & Korol L., De Silva Joyce H., Feez S., Polio C. on the importance of relying on such requirements as 1) compliance with professional and communicative needs; 2) thematic diversity and content relevance; 3) usability and prevalence

of linguistic material; 4) genre variability; 5) feasibility and accessibility of content information and the language form of its presentation; 6) authenticity, standardization of language forms and means of expressing content, etc. to be apt [18; 12; 14]. Compliance with these requirements is essential for forming a high-quality, representative informational, lexical-grammatical, genre-stylistic terms text library for teaching professional foreign language speech to applicants of various professions, including veterinary medicine doctors.

Conclusions

The situational approach to foreign language teaching offers a dynamic and practical framework for language learning that prioritizes real-world contexts and meaningful communication. By focusing on the application of language in various situational contexts, this approach helps learners to develop both their linguistic abilities and cultural understanding, making them more confident and capable in using the language in authentic scenarios. It challenges traditional methods that may rely heavily on rote memorization or abstract grammar exercises, instead fostering an interactive and immersive learning environment.

This method not only supports the development of language skills but also encourages learners to think critically, adapt to different communication situations, and use the language in a more natural, functional way. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the Situational Approach remains relevant and effective, providing learners with the tools they need to communicate successfully in diverse real-life situations, whether in professional, social, or academic settings.

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