

# Linguocultural Adaptation of Students of the Medical University in Conditions of Multilingualism

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***Abstract. The analysis of modern publications on the adaptation of foreign students to the conditions of studying in Russia revealed the primary attention to social and psychological problems. This article presents a study conducted at Northern State Medical University of Arkhangelsk (NSMU) aimed at describing the linguocultural adaptation of the foreign students. The results of the survey allow to establish the main criteria for the successful linguocultural adaptation and to identify problems associated with the insufficiently effective organisation of the cultural life of foreign students and the difficulties of their study trips. It also contains recommendation on improving the website of the educational institution.***

*Keywords – linguocultural adaptation, multilingualism, inophone, terminology, communication skills\*.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Russian education is becoming attractive for foreigners, the number of foreign citizens studying in Russian higher education establishments has increased significantly and medical professions have become the most demanded. The Ministry of Education and Science defined the goals of the long-term socio-economic development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2020. The concept of educational and research activity in higher education shows a growth in the quality of student training and an increase in the admission of foreign students [1]. In the modern world, it is relevant to study the linguocultural adaptation of foreigners to the educational process at the university.

Northern State Medical University is working actively with foreign students who are getting the medical profession. Having arrived to a foreign country, inophones go through a difficult period of getting used to the new cultural conditions in a different language environment. The conducted studies allowed to analyse the conditions and establish the most effective tools or the adaptation of foreign students to the linguocultural environment in conditions of multilingualism.

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## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Adaptation (from late lat. adaptatio – adjustment) is a type of interaction of the individual with the social environment, during which the requirements and expectations of its participants are coordinated. This is a complex process of adjustment, development and formation of the students' personality in the educational space of the university in the aspect of the interaction of socio-cultural and linguistic information fields.

Modern researchers who study migrants in Russia (V. Petrov, S. Modnov, L. Ukhova T. Rakhimov) mainly focus on social problems of foreigners - way of life, climate, housing, financial situation, environment [5, 6, 7, 8]. However, attention should be paid to the multicultural environment of higher education in Russia, multilingual features, as well as linguistic and cultural adaptation and the profile of learning of inophones.

## III. MATERIAL AND RESEARCH METHOD

In order to identify the features of foreign students' linguocultural adaptation, a survey was conducted at Northern State Medical University. The study involved 60 people, of whom 40% were students of the first year, 30% of the second one, 25% of the third one, 5% of the fourth one.

Northern State Medical University has a large number of representatives from different states of India. The survey showed that students speak 10 different languages (Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi, Malayalam, Punjabi, Urdu, Rajasthani, Hindi, etc.), while the official languages of India are English and Hindi. Communication of students generally takes place in nationally oriented groups. However, in addition to representatives from India, the university has students from other countries. As a result, the languages that unite all migrants are English and Russian.

Particularities of the foreign students' adaptation are determined primarily by communication skills that are formed in the educational and cognitive activity. The Russian language is a language of social and cultural communication, a means of education, a tool for mastering the future profession. Foreign students form the

communicative competence, that implies knowledge of the language system and language skills of communication. To obtain communicative competence is to communicate in a foreign language depending on the communicative situation, to produce various types of oral and written utterances; to translate professional texts from a foreign language into Russian and vice versa. To learn Russian as a foreign language is to conduct speech activity:

1. unconsciously
2. with full automaticity
3. according to the standards of the studied language
4. at a normal pace.

In the process of adaptation of foreign students to the living conditions in Russia, the personal-activity approach is used. For the most effective adaptation of inophones, presentation of the content of educational material is organised as a multidimensional structure (linear, spiral, mixed). This way of presentation makes it possible to:

- 1) diversify the education content,
- 2) translate its individual parts in various ways,
- 3) master medical vocabulary and terminology by memorising and understanding it in depth, what is achieved through linguistic analysis.

Thus, students expand and deepen the range of knowledge, increasing the amount of theoretical and practical skills. In the process of the adaptation to life in Russia, they receive the most significant help and support from their fellow countrymen (62%) and teachers (59%).

The study conducted by the authors was aimed at obtaining a qualitative assessment of students' acquired knowledge of common vocabulary, as well as professional-oriented medical discourse. A questionnaire survey of foreign students showed that this approach to the study of educational material allows to consolidate the typological features of medical terminology in different subject fields with the expansion, deepening and identification of new links, according to 59% of students. The study of medical terminology and grammatical structures begins at an early stage of learning the Russian language, which allows to master the medical program [2]. The greatest difficulties are connected to the mastering of the grammar system, as 82% of the respondents indicated.

It is well known that the mechanical memorization of foreign words and expressions is absolutely pointless and does not bring results, therefore the pragmatic possibilities of applying the acquired knowledge become the criterion of successful preparation for clinical practice. Bilingualism, consciously mastered in the learning process, has a powerful educational and cultural potential. Future doctors are actively exploring different forms of cooperation, successfully using two languages in their communication practice: Russian and English. Teamwork with Russian students gives high results and foreign students like it very much (80% of respondents noted this in the questionnaires). Dialogue, as a form of communication, simulates professional exchange, helps to practice language units and grammatical structures and contributes to the formation of speech behaviour [3]. By solving communicative tasks, students imitate the

professional «doctor-patient» communication, and also make the active memorization of professional vocabulary easier.

Foreign students in Russia strive to master not only the peculiarity of the professional language, but also the peculiarity of cultural norms and accepted social relations. Generally, they tend to follow frequent statements, accepted norms, thereby successfully replenishing their vocabulary. It is necessary to teach foreign students to use written and oral language correctly. In order to facilitate the process, specialized texts, education and training programs, dictionaries of medical terms are used. Teachers also introduce interactive teaching methods that take into account the interfering influence of the mother tongue, and much more.

It is necessary to know the traditional patterns to ask and answer questions in a foreign language because it allows to:

- 1) get intelligible answers,
- 2) direct the information transfer,
- 3) intercept and keep the initiative in a conversation,
- 4) attract attention,
- 5) make communication more effective.

In this aspect, linguistics teaches reasonable social behaviour. It is necessary to develop skills for applying the official, friendly, slangy modes of address in the Russian etiquette. Older people or strangers must be addressed as «vy», it's also preferable in a formal setting. «Ty» is used in an informal setting and with relatives and acquaintances (in English, in both cases the pronoun «you» is used). It is also relevant to study the forms of communication with strangers. In modern Russian language, there is no single form to address strangers, the forms like «devushka» (girl), «molodoy chelovek» (young man), «zhenshchina» (woman), «muzhchina» (man) are used. Doctors usually use definite-personal constructions to attract attention, such as «Skazhite, pozhaluista» (Tell me, please), «Povtorite» (Repeat), «Prostite» (Excuse me) etc. [4]. During the medical practice, knowledge of common language forms helps foreign students to conduct a dialogue with the patients.

The system of studying the peculiarities of Russian history, national traditions and culture is solved in various forms of classroom and extracurricular work. During the learning process, teachers use modern technologies such as multimedia tools and Internet resources [8], video materials that are an effective means of mastering oral communication in the Russian language, reading original texts on professional and general cultural topics, considering the age interests of students. As a result, students master the skills of searching, collecting and processing information according to their professions. They are able to present oral monologic speeches and to speak on professional and social topics. Senior students write their research papers in Russian, comparing the medical research of their home country and Russia, making presentations at conferences.

The survey showed that introduction of foreign students to the Russian culture through doing group trips, celebrating traditional Russian holidays, visiting museums, theaters, libraries, etc. is an effective lever for adaptation, integration and overcoming the barriers of alienation. The relevance of this type of work was noted by 89% of foreign students.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Of all the factors, the study of the Russian language is the most important and determining factor that contributes to the rapid adaptation of foreigners in Russia. The implementation of this task is associated with the provision of educational services at a quality level and is associated with a planned, integrated formation of the identity of a doctor at a higher medical education establishment. As a result, according to the majority of students (73%), the high quality of language training they receive fully coincides with their wishes.

The study revealed a problem related to the systematic organisation of the cultural life of foreign students and the possibility of their study trips in Russia, which was noted in the questionnaires (14%).

For a more comfortable adaptation of foreigners, it is necessary to use the Internet as much as possible. The university's website should contain not only information in Russian and English related to the timetable and training sessions, but also information on transport infrastructure, information on the location of shops, service centers, theaters, museums with prices for services which might be useful for foreign students in the Russian cultural field (7%).

#### V. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the adaptation of foreigners to the educational environment of the higher education establishment in Russia is a complex phenomenon that includes various forms of adaptation, which is associated with the formation of new personal qualities by mastering new social roles, acquiring new values, and understanding the significance of the future profession. The training of foreign students is aimed at the overall development of professional, informational, cognitive, communicative and general cultural competencies.

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