



# METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF DEVELOPING CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCY IN GENERAL PHYSICIANS IN POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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## Abstract.

*Introduction:* Ukraine's integration into the Common Education Space as part of the Bologna process, health care reforming, rapid growth of international contacts, involvement of doctors in medical expeditions, peacekeeping missions make the issue of intercultural communication of specialists, in particular the development of their cross-cultural competence, of great interest.

*The article aims* to determine the methodological aspects of general physicians' cross-cultural competence development in the system of postgraduate medical education, in particular, the approaches, methods, techniques, and technologies presented by researchers in scientific papers.

*Methods:* literature data analysis, expert evaluation, generalization.

*Results and discussion:* the efficiency of general physicians' cross-cultural competence development and the formation of a positive attitude to second language acquisition depend largely on such teaching methods, approaches and techniques as: content and language integrated learning, pair-interviews, brainstorming technique, roundtable technique, modeling problems, think-pair-share, role-playing games, case study teaching method. The use of authentic materials and crowd-based technologies in foreign language study increases general physicians' motivation and interest in learning. The choice of teaching methods, approaches and techniques should be based on the structural model of general physicians' cross-cultural competence.

*Conclusions:* general physicians' cross-cultural competence development in postgraduate medical education institutions is facilitated by a creative combination of various teaching methods, innovative learning technologies with the use of authentic materials.

**Keywords:** *cross-cultural competence, postgraduate medical education, professional life, advanced training, methodological aspects.*

**Introduction.** The main current trends of social development in the XXI century involve Ukraine's integration into the Common Education Space as part of the Bologna process, health care reforming (Kulbashna, 2016, p.113), rapid growth of international contacts, involvement of doctors in medical expeditions, peacekeeping missions (Dudikova, 2012, p.38). All of this make the issue of intercultural communication of specialists, in particular the development of their cross-cultural competence, of great interest.

Understanding a different culture is fundamental for successful intercultural adaptation, associated with overcoming cultural and language barriers, accepting norms, values, behaviour patterns of the new ethnic environment. Today, when the borders between states are increasingly blurred, the development of general physicians' cross-cultural competence becomes actual, being not only their personal but also their professional need. An example to illustrate this is the case of COVID-19 pandemic, when Ukrainian doctors, promoting equal access to

medical services and patient safety, actively cooperate with colleagues from other countries, sharing their positive professional experiences (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2006. Cultural competence in health: a guide for policy, partnerships and participation. Canberra: ACT: Commonwealth of Australia). Gaining such experience while expanding international contacts in medicine and science, using new information and nanotechnologies to overcome serious health threats, epidemic spread, man-made and environmental disasters is ensured by the development of cross-cultural competence as a requirement of doctors' professional life, since they must respect the needs of the representatives of different cultures.

It is obvious that developing cross-cultural competence is an integral part of general physicians' professional life and postgraduate medical education institutions play a major role in that regard. Therefore, the academic staff aim to develop methodological support of this process, which would meet modern requirements and contributed to continuing professional development.

**Sources.** The topic of the formation and the development of cross-cultural competence in the vocational pedagogics is explored by a great number of scientists in their dissertations: I. Bakhov (2011), M. Holoviashkina (2013), O. Zelikovska (2010), M. Kornilova (2012), D. Titova (2011), A. Tokarieva (2013), Ye. Kovrykova (2013) and others. Their research concerns interpreters, managers, educators, economists. In the academic papers of A. Petrov (2009) and D. Demchenko (2010), who studied the formation of foreign language competence in higher education institutions, the issues of overcoming communication barriers in foreign economic and legal activities are partially covered.

Foreign scientists reveal the problem of cross-cultural competence of various specialists in many contexts such as modernization of education (D. Brown, S. Dwyer, S. Senzaki), promoting global economic relations (G. Baumgratz, R. Lehmann), culture and ethics of business communication (J. Bunce, C. Kwantes, S. Stadler, M. Yedder), healthcare (K. Barzykowski, G. Bernhard, C. Klingler, K. Wesolowska).

It should be noted that in the modern world "knowledge of foreign languages and cultural characteristics becomes a vital necessity for a huge number of people" (Kostenko et al., 2019). In this regard, considerable attention is paid to the issue of intercultural collaboration, which is represented in the scientific works of such Ukrainian scientists as N. Avsheniuk (2018), N. Dichek (2019), O. Lokshyna (2019), M. Savchenko (2018) and others.

However, despite the significant number of scientific papers on various aspects of vocational

training, the issue of general physicians' cross-cultural competence is not entirely understood, which raises the importance of its research.

**The article aims** to determine the methodological aspects of general physicians' cross-cultural competence development in the system of postgraduate medical education, in particular, the approaches, methods, techniques, and technologies presented by researchers in scientific papers.

**Methods:** literature data analysis – to identify the most effective approaches, methods, techniques, and technologies for the development of general physicians' cross-cultural competence; expert evaluation – to determine the most efficient methodological techniques in practical activities of foreign language educators at postgraduate medical education institutions; generalization – to draw conclusions on the development of general physicians' cross-cultural competence at postgraduate medical education institutions.

**Results and discussion.** To achieve the aim of the study, we have used the results of the structural analysis of general physicians' cross-cultural competence, which revealed that it is based on three components, each with the corresponding content:

cognitive – a set of culture-specific knowledge, nonverbal specifics of another culture and the ability to interpret these specifics when communicating; knowledge of a foreign language; the ability to systematize and generalize knowledge;

affektive – emotional evaluation of the nonverbal communication: correct understanding of the situation, adequacy, self-reflection, tolerance, flexibility, openness, sympathy;

behavioral – managing nonverbal behavioral stereotypes: the ability to resolve conflicts, control stressful situations and overcome stress (Pylyp, 2016, p.92).

Based on the structure of general physicians' cross-cultural competence, we considered it necessary to carry out scientific research on the approaches, methods, techniques, and technologies used to develop this competence, as well as to study the practical experience of educators in the system of postgraduate education.

The analysis of scientific papers of L. Dudikova (2012), A. Shcherbakova (2015), O. Rembach (2017) shows that the development of cognitive component of cross-cultural competence is better achieved when using such approaches, methods, and techniques as content and language integrated learning, contextual supervision, simulation exercises, role play, think-pair-share, interactive tasks, etc. Thus,

O. Rembach (2017, p.397) remarks that foreign language is an important tool of cross-cultural development as part of vocational training, as it is an essential element of entering the world of foreign

culture. Mastering foreign language contributes not only to a personal enrichment but it also changes a personal view of life. That is why language integrated learning is of great importance in this context.

Based on the content of the affective component of cross-cultural competence, the effectiveness of its development largely depends on such approaches, methods and learning techniques as seminar-discussions, pair interviews, case study, psychological assessment trainings, in particular tolerance and reflexivity trainings, as well as professional sensitivity case analysis, which increase general physicians' motivation and interest in learning. In view of this, we should mention Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001), according to which the most effective teaching methods are trainings that promote active cooperation in a group to solve learning tasks based on an activity approach and aimed at developing skills, abilities and social attitudes; seminars focused on developing the ability to independently acquire knowledge, analyze and summarize data for the production of new knowledge, products, etc. Special attention should be paid to the principles of learning content selection for the competence based training of specialists in the system of postgraduate education. The authentic professional texts, audio and video materials play a significant role in this context, as they reflect all important components of the linguistic and socio-cultural reality of the country. Such materials, in addition to the educative value, are good for the introduction to an effective communication and a better understanding of the nonverbal language. Thus, when watching videos, general physicians perceive not only the speech of speakers, but also their facial expressions, gestures, emotions, which allows them

to give an emotional assessment of communication and as a result better understand it.

Both Ukrainian and foreign researchers agree that it is important to be aware of the problems that arise during intercultural communication, understand the values and generally accepted norms of behavior of other cultures. That is why, in our opinion, the development of the behavioral component of cross-cultural competence can be better achieved by using such methods as brainstorming, round table, problem-based situations modeling, play-based learning approach, creative problem solving activities aimed at improving conflict resolution skills, ability to manage stressful situations and overcome stress. It's worth noting that the discussion should involve not only those problems that relate to professional activities, but also those that help develop basic virtues of the Ukrainian intelligentsia: global thinking, awareness of harmony and integrity of the world, introduction to the world and national culture, tactfulness and personal decency, community and personal commitment, etc. (Yershova, 2015, p.120). Our experience has proven that these topics provoke lively discussions among the audience members of advanced training courses, which helps to improve their communication skills using functional vocabulary.

One of the tasks of our study was to determine the most efficient methodological techniques in practical activities of foreign language educators at postgraduate medical education institutions. To solve this problem, 11 experts were asked to put in order the approaches, methods and techniques listed in the table used for the development of general physicians' cross-cultural competence, where 1 is the most effective, and 15 is the least effective. The results of the task are presented in *table 1*.

Table 1

*Ranking of the approaches, methods, techniques used to develop general physicians' cross-cultural competence*

<b>Approaches, methods, techniques of general physicians' cross-cultural competence development</b>	<b>The importance</b>
1) Content and language integrated learning	1
2) Contextual supervision method	15
3) Simulation exercises	10
4) Role play	7
5) Think-pair-shair	6
6) Interactive tasks	12
7) Seminar-discussions	9
8) Pair interviews	2
9) Case study	8
10) Psychological assessment trainings	13
11) Problem-based situations modeling	4
12) Play-based learning	10
13) Brainstorming	3
14) Round table	5
15) Creative problem solving activities	14

As we can see, according to the experts, the most important are such approaches, methods and techniques as content and language integrated learning, pair interviews, brainstorming, round table and problem-based situation modeling.

It should be noted that all experts highlight the need to use different learning methods and techniques as it increases the motivation to learn and develops cognition interest.

Recently, digital services have been widely used when learning a foreign language in at higher education institutions, which encourage teachers to create a virtual space of the discipline (Petrenko et al., 2020). In this context, crowdsourcing platforms and cloud services, which can be used at all stages of the educational process, are of great scientific and methodological interest for us. In particular, learning through the Mindmeister Platform and the Google Cloud Platform involves expanding the vocabulary, creating a glossary for a new topic, activating new vocabulary by passing tests as part of an individual work, expressing learners' own opinions on the topic etc. Moreover, a virtual space of the discipline with the use of crowd-based technologies helps develop the decision-making skills in unusual situations and the creativity in problem solving. It is important that the use of such technologies is possible both when working in groups and individually.

**Conclusions.** Literature data analysis on the research problem and the results of an expert evaluation show that the development of general

physicians' cross-cultural competence and the formation of a positive attitude to a second language acquisition can be achieved by the following approaches, methods, techniques and technologies: content and language integrated learning, pair interviews, brainstorming, round table and problem-based situation modeling. The educational content selection, in particular authentic texts, audio and video materials, play an important role as it help not only be completely immersed in the target language and culture, but also improve the understanding of the nonverbal communication. The use of crowd-based technologies in a foreign language learning is effective at all stages of the educational process and contributes to an increase of general physicians' motivation and interest in learning.

Thus, the development of general physicians' cross-cultural competence at postgraduate medical education institutions should involve a creative combination of different teaching methods and techniques, the use of authentic materials and innovative learning technologies. The choice of the approaches, methods, techniques and technologies, the selection of the educational content should be based on the structure of general physicians' cross-cultural competence and the content of its components.

The directions for future research are in determining the pedagogical conditions for the development of general physicians' cross-cultural competence at postgraduate medical education institutions.

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## Методичні аспекти розвитку міжкультурної компетентності лікарів-терапевтів у закладах післядипломної освіти

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### Реферат.

**Актуальність:** інтеграція України в єдиний освітній простір у рамках реалізації Болонського процесу, реформування системи охорони здоров'я, стрімке зростання міжнародних контактів, залучення лікарів до роботи в медичних експедиціях, миротворчих місіях зумовлює актуалізацію проблеми міжкультурної комунікації фахівців, зокрема розвиток їхньої міжкультурної компетентності.

**Мета дослідження** полягає у визначенні методичних аспектів розвитку міжкультурної компетентності лікарів-терапевтів у системі післядипломної медичної освіти, зокрема форм, методів, прийомів, технологій, представлених дослідниками в наукових працях.

**Методи:** аналіз літературних джерел, експертна оцінка, узагальнення.

**Результати:** встановлено, що успішному розвитку міжкультурної компетентності лікарів-терапевтів та формуванню у них позитивного настрою на оволодіння іноземною мовою сприяють такі форми, методи та прийоми організації освітнього процесу, як: навчання мови через інтеграцію, парні інтерв'ю, методи "мозкового штурму", "круглого столу", моделювання проблемних ситуацій, метод обміну думками, рольові ігри, розв'язання професійно значущих проблемних ситуацій-кейсів. З'ясовано, що використання автентичних матеріалів та крауд-технологій при вивченні іноземної підвищує мотивацію та інтерес до навчання у лікарів-терапевтів. Основою для вибору форм, методів та прийомів потрібно розглядати структурну модель міжкультурної компетентності лікарів-терапевтів.

*Висновки:* успішному розвитку міжкультурної компетентності лікарів-терапевтів у закладах післядипломної медичної освіти сприяє творче поєднання різних форм, методів, інноваційних технологій навчання з використання автентичних матеріалів для добору місту навчання.

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**Ключові слова:** *міжкультурна компетентність, післядипломна медична освіта, професійна діяльність, підвищення кваліфікації, методичні аспекти.*

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