



Privolzhsky Research Medical University

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN MEDICAL PRACTICE BY MASTERING FOREIGN LANGUAGES



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Medicine is an interdisciplinary science, which involves both natural and human sciences.

The art of proper communication is known to have the same, if not greater, healing power as treatment has.



Doctors should also pay attention to the **improvement of their skills to have a well-organized communication** with their patients.





One of the best ways to learn the art of proper communication is through learning foreign languages.





Mastering foreign languages healthcare workers learn how to:

- ✓ Listen to people more patiently;
- ✓ Tolerate others' different tastes, beliefs, traditions, opinions;
- ✓ Use different linguistic communication means efficiently to build trust between them and patients;
- ✓ Express the information unclear for patients due to specific medical terms using common phrases.





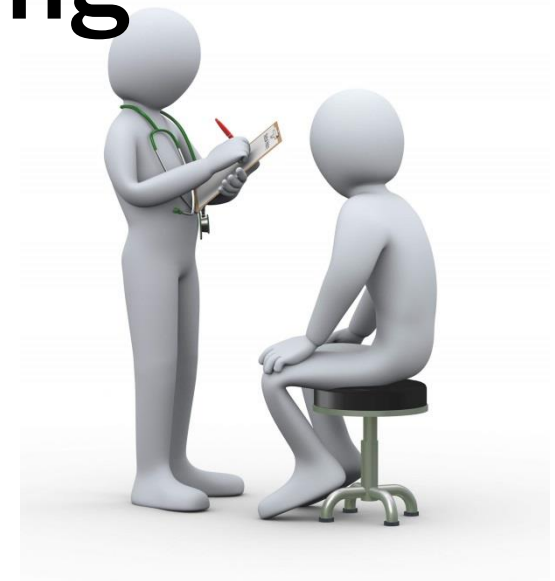
1. Patient Listening

Learning a foreign language requires regular practice and devoting a lot of time; therefore, it teaches

patience

which is important to:

- establish **trustworthy doctor-patient relationship**, which is a key factor for therapeutic treatment success;
- **delve into** the physical, emotional and social impact of **patient problems** on their life quality as well as determine the pain origin → **provide holistic care and correct treatment**;
- **make patients content** with the level of medical care in general → **avoid lawsuits** provoked by patients' dissatisfaction due to not being listened to properly.





2. Tolerance



While learning foreign languages, one also gets acquainted with another culture full of different traditions; it teaches to

accept people as they are

which is important to:

- be familiar with **non-verbal aspects** (eye contact, gestures) stemming from patient's beliefs and a background;
- remain nonjudgmental;
- **avoid quarreling** and arguing → ensure a successful communication;
- **enable globalization.**



3. Linguistic means of communication

1. ***The emphatic pause*** and ***sentence stress*** → emphasizing the most important part of the sentence said to a patient;
2. ***The hesitation pause*** (common with patients) → re-asking a question specifying it to make it clear for a patient;
3. **Pauses** → listening attentively to a patient to make the communication patient-centered as to let patients express their feelings, concerns, and think of the first manifestation of a disease and the condition of its occurrence;
4. ***Reduced questions*** (“Why not?”, “How?”, “When?”) → facilitating history taking;
5. ***Syntactic repetitive constructions*** → verification of the information given by a patient before.
6. **Syntactic repetitive constructions** → determining how well a patient understood new information concerning his disease, medicines, restrictions.



4. Ability to express oneself within the limited vocabulary

Being a beginner in learning a foreign language implies a lack of vocabulary, which is a barrier for sharing a lot of thoughts demanding the knowledge of more difficult grammar structures and unfamiliar words.

That forces learners to

express themselves using common phrases



- **overcoming comprehension difficulties** due to the difference between doctor's and patient's lexicon;
- ability to **switch** from a medical language **to an everyday language easily**;
- immediate detailed **explanation in simple language** despite the habit of using specific terms inside a medical community.



Conclusion

Learning foreign languages doctors can

- ✓ **improve their communication skills that are very important in everyday practice;**
- ✓ **develop such personal qualities as patience, tolerance, creativity, which make it possible to have a successful dialogue with a patient;**
- ✓ **imply different linguistic means of communication more efficiently.**

Thus, the art of proper communication might be, indeed, improved by learning foreign languages.



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Thank you for your attention!