



## Chapter II. HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF PEDAGOGICAL RESEARCH

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**Галина БІЛАВИЧ,**

доктор педагогічних наук, професор, професор,  
професор кафедри початкової освіти та освітніх інновацій,  
Прикарпатський національний університет імені Василя Стефаника (м. Івано-Франківськ, Україна)

**Halyna BILAVYCH,**

Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor,  
Professor of Department of primary education and educational innovations,  
Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)  
*ifosuhcvas@gmail.com*  
ORCID ID 0000-0002-1555-0932

**Іван БІЛАВИЧ,**

кандидат педагогічних наук, Ph.D (доктор медицини),  
викладач І клініки анестезіології та інтенсивної терапії,  
Варшавський медичний університет (м. Варшава, Республіка Польща)

**Jan BILAWICZ,**

Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Ph.D (doctor of medicine),  
Assistant I Department of Anesthesiology and Intensive Care,  
Warsaw Medical University (Warsaw, Poland)  
*bilawicz@wp.pl*  
ORCID ID 0000-0003-4561-4690

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### РОЗВИТОК УКРАЇНСЬКОМОВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ В СТУДЕНТІВ-ІНОЗЕМЦІВ У ПРОЦЕСІ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ПІДГОТОВКИ В ЗАКЛАДАХ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ УКРАЇНИ

**Анотація.** Формування українськомовної компетентності студентів-іноземців – важливий аспект їхньої інтеграції в українське суспільство та освітній процес. Основною метою цієї діяльності є забезпечення належного рівня володіння українською мовою для навчання, повсякденного спілкування та майбутньої професійної діяльності. У процесі професійної підготовки майбутніх фахівців у галузі медичної освіти для розвитку українськомовної компетентності студентів-медиків необхідно враховувати такі чинники: організація навчального процесу (рівневий підхід: оволодіння рівнями B1–B2 за Загальноєвропейськими рекомендаціями з мовної освіти), комунікативний підхід організації навчального процесу на діяльнісній основі (розвиток діалогічного, полілогічного мовлення тощо), акцент на розвитку навичок розмовної мови, що дає змогу студентам ефективно спілкуватися у реальних ситуаціях; створення комунікативно насиченого середовища, спілкування з носіями української мови інтеграція культурологічного компонента: ознайомлення з українською культурою, традиціями та історією для формування міжкультурної компетентності; розвиток мовних навичок (у галузі фонетики – практика правильної вимови звуків, наголошування слів, інтонація); у галузі лексики, граматики (синтаксис, пунктуація) – вивчення базового словникового запасу, основних граматичних конструкцій, необхідних для розуміння та побудови висловлювань, володіння українським мовленнєвим етикетом, мовними формулами вітання, прощання, вибачення, прохання, подяки тощо. Ключовими навичками щодо володіння українськомовною компетентністю є читання, письмо, аудіювання та говоріння. Використання сучасних технологій навчання забезпечує успішність цього процесу. Формування українськомовної компетентності в студентів-іноземців сприяє не лише академічному успіху, а й їхньому особистісному розвитку, кращому розумінню українського суспільства та адаптації до нового середовища.

**Ключові слова:** українськомовна компетентність; іноземні студенти; медичні університети; комунікація; професійне навчання; культурна дипломатія; комунікативні навички.

### DEVELOPMENT OF UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE AMONG FOREIGN STUDENTS IN THE PROCESS OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AT HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF UKRAINE

**Abstract.** Formation of Ukrainian language competence of foreign students is an important aspect of their integration into Ukrainian society and educational process. The main goal of this activity is to ensure the proper level of Ukrainian language



proficiency for learning, everyday communication and future professional activity. In the process of professional training of future specialists in the field of medical education, the following factors must be taken into account to develop Ukrainian language competence of medical students: organization of the educational process (level approach: mastery of levels B1–B2 according to the Common European Recommendations for Language Education), communicative approach to organizing the educational process on an activity basis (development of dialogical, polylogical speech, etc.), emphasis on the development of spoken language skills, which allows students to communicate effectively in real situations; creating a communicatively rich environment, communication with native Ukrainian speakers, integration of the cultural component: familiarization with Ukrainian culture, traditions and history to form intercultural competence; development of language skills (in the field of phonetics – practice of correct pronunciation of sounds, word stress, intonation); in the field of vocabulary, grammar (syntax, punctuation) – studying basic vocabulary, basic grammatical constructions necessary for understanding and constructing statements, mastering Ukrainian speech etiquette, language formulas of greeting, farewell, apology, request, gratitude, etc.

The key skills for acquiring Ukrainian language competence are reading, writing, listening and speaking. The use of modern teaching technologies ensures the success of this process. The formation of Ukrainian language competence in foreign students contributes not only to academic success, but also to their personal development, better understanding of Ukrainian society and adaptation to a new environment.

**Keywords:** ukrainian language competence; foreign students; medical universities; communication; professional training; cultural diplomacy; communication skills.

## INTRODUCTION

**The problem formulation.** Before the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, Ukrainian higher education was quite attractive to foreign students. The factors that contributed to this include the high level of education, internationally recognized scientific achievements, effective teaching methods, higher education institutions (HEIs) offering quality education, as well as the fact that obtaining higher education in Ukraine is not only prestigious, but also profitable (compared to other European countries, the cost of education is much lower). In addition, according to Expat Insider 2016, Ukraine became the most affordable country in terms of living costs and took second place in the ranking in terms of personal financial satisfaction.

Foreign students living in Ukraine have the same rights, freedoms and obligations as Ukrainian citizens (State Enterprise «Ukrainian State Center for International Education»).

Training future specialists from among foreign students in Ukraine is one of the directions of cultural diplomacy, effective forms of scientific and educational cooperation, which contributes to strengthening the authority of Ukraine in the international arena, since foreign students after graduation receive a European-style education, their diplomas are recognized in the world. In view of this, the problem of developing Ukrainian-language competence of foreign students as higher education students, who are trained in Ukrainian higher education institutions under a special professional training program for foreigners in studying the language and culture of the country and in the process of studying individual specialized disciplines, where an important component is the formation of Ukrainian-language competence, is becoming more and more relevant. The formation of Ukrainian-language competence of foreign students is a necessary condition for their integration into Ukrainian society and the educational process. The main goal of this activity is to ensure an adequate level of proficiency in the Ukrainian language for study, everyday communication, and future professional activities.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The issue of professional training of foreign students has been the focus of attention of many researchers. Various aspects of professional training of medical specialists, including the formation of Ukrainian-language, intercultural, and communicative competencies, have been studied by N. Hantimurova (2024), N. Fedchyshyn, Yu. Rudyak (2019), S. Kostyuk (2018), I. Levenok (2019), Zh. Rahrina (2017), N. Kalashnik (2016) and others. (Ya. Proskurkina, Z. Rodchyn, L. Bidenko, O. Semenog, V. Lonshakova and others). Scientists are developing educational and methodological support (curriculums, textbooks, manuals, test tasks, etc.) in the Ukrainian language for foreign students (Burnos, Levenok, & Pylypenko-Fritsak, 2018; Nazarevych, & Havdyda, 2017).

At the same time, the analysis of the above sources indicates the need for further study of the problem of forming Ukrainian-language competence of foreign higher education applicants.

## THE AIM AND RESEARCH TASKS

The purpose of the article is to characterize the development of Ukrainian-language competence among foreign medical students in the process of their professional training in higher education institutions of Ukraine.

## RESEARCH METHODS

In the process of research, theoretical methods of scientific search were used: analysis, synthesis, generalization of scientific sources, educational and methodological literature, normative educational documents; empirical methods: pedagogical observation of the process of Ukrainian-language education of foreign students, which made it possible to highlight the state of development of the problem in theory and practice, to clarify the state of formation of Ukrainian-language competence of foreign students of medical specialties in higher education institutions of Ukraine.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

According to the official data of Ukrainian State Center for International Education (as of 2023), the most popular specialties chosen by foreign students in Ukraine include medicine (24,224 people), dentistry (2,792 people), pharmacy, industrial pharmacy (2,376 people) (State Enterprise «Ukrainian State Center for International Education»).



As of January 1, 2023, 51,676 students from different countries of the world were studying in Ukraine (Fig. 1). The number of foreign students in 2021–2022 reached 84,136 people. Due to the Russian-Ukrainian war, the number of foreign students in Ukraine decreased by more than 30,000 people, reaching the level of 2011–2012, when 53,664 were studying in our country. The same trend was observed in 2014–2015, when, due to the beginning of the Russian invasion in 2014, in the eastern regions of Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea, the number of foreign students decreased by more than 6,000 people, compared to the previous («peaceful») 2013–2014: then almost 70,000 students from different countries of the world studied in Ukraine (State Enterprise «Ukrainian State Center for International Education»). As we can see, Russian aggression negatively affected the process of obtaining education by foreign students in Ukraine, the number of foreign students decreased by more than 30,000 people.

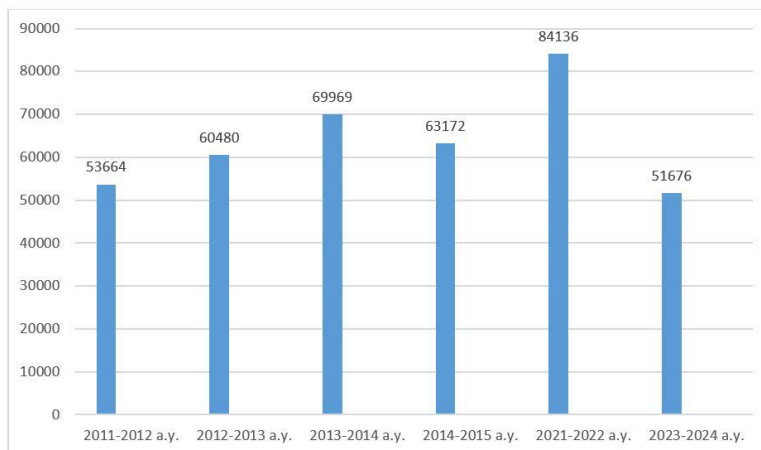


Figure 1. Number of foreign students in Ukraine in 2011–2023

Source: (State Enterprise «Ukrainian State Center for International Education»)

The same dynamics can be observed in the example of leading medical universities of Ukraine. For example, in the Ternopil National

Medical University named after I. Ya. Horbachevsky (hereinafter referred to as TNMU) in the years of 2019–2020 the number of students was over 2300 people (International Students' Faculty). Students from over 50 countries of the world (the largest number of students were from Nigeria, India, Ghana and other countries) received medical education here in the specialties of «Medicine», «Dentistry», «Pharmacy» and «Nursing». In 1997, there were only a few dozen foreign students at Ternopil State Medical Academy. Currently, the HEI has the opportunity to recruit up to 500 foreign students each new academic year (Hantimurova, Fedchyshyn, & Rudiak, 2019, pp. 7–8). As of 2023, 1,737 foreign students are studying here. Despite the high level of professional training at TNMU, which is among the most popular among foreign students (State Enterprise «Ukrainian State Center for International Education»), the challenges of war negatively affect the number of foreign medical students.

The same trend is characteristic of the Faculty of Training of Foreign Citizens at Ivano-Frankivsk National Medical University (hereinafter referred to as IFNMU), where since 1992 the training of foreign students has been started. The independence of Ukraine has led to a radical change in priorities in the HEI, in particular regarding the expansion of ties with foreign partners and the training of highly qualified medical specialists for foreign countries. In the early 1990s, the university was attended by people from three countries: Romania, Pakistan, and Cameroon. Over the next ten years, we did not observe such active dynamics as, for example, at the TNMU; the total number of foreign students at the IFNMU did not exceed 20 people annually, which is explained by objective factors: during the Soviet era, Ivano-Frankivsk region was closed to free visit by foreign citizens due to the Ukrainian resistance (UPA activities) to the Moscow-Soviet regime, as a young independent state Ukraine was not known on the world map, including on the world market of educational services. Since 2002, the number of foreign students at IFNMU has been actively growing. Therefore, there was a need to create a faculty for training foreign citizens, it was founded on May 18, 2005. And already in 2010, 857 people studied here, in 2018 – 1423 students. At the beginning of 2022, 1893 students from Algeria, Bulgaria, Gabon, Ghana, Ecuador, Egypt, Zambia, Zimbabwe, mostly from India (1380 people), Iraq, Spain, Jordan, Cameroon, Canada, Kenya, Congo, Lebanon, Libya, Malawi, Maldives, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria (114 people), the Netherlands, Germany, Pakistan, Palestine, Poland (175 people), Rwanda, Syria, USA, Turkey, Hungary, France, Switzerland, etc. studied at the faculty for training foreign citizens. During this time, students from 46 countries of the world have received education at IFNMU (Faculty of Training of Foreign Citizens).

The key tasks of professional training of foreign medical students include theoretical and practical training of highly qualified specialists with moral and spiritual values, competitive in the domestic and international labor markets. In view of this, great attention is paid to the acquisition by students of deep knowledge of the theoretical foundations and modern methods of diagnosis, treatment and prevention of diseases, communicative development, Ukrainian-language competence through mastering the Ukrainian language. According to the global scale of the Common European



Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment, the following levels of proficiency in the state language have been established: elementary level of the first degree (A1); elementary level of the second degree (A2); intermediate level of the first degree (B1); intermediate level of the second degree (B2); fluent level of the first degree (C1); fluent level of the second degree (C2).

The content of the tasks for determining the level of proficiency in the Ukrainian language corresponds to the Classification of levels of proficiency in the state language and requirements for them, approved by the decision of the National Commission on State Language Standards of June 24, 2021 No. 31 (Levels of proficiency in the state language, 2021). In accordance with the Procedure for verifying the level of proficiency in the state language (see Table 1), the unified requirements for the examination procedure and assessment criteria, approved by the decision of the National Commission on State Language Standards of May 13, 2021 No. 20, the level of proficiency in the state language is determined based on the calculation of points for the written and oral parts and their conversion into percentages from 0% to 100%. According to the results of the study, foreign medical students must master the Ukrainian language at the B1–B2 level (Levels of proficiency in the official language, 2021).

**Table 1**

**Levels of proficiency in the Ukrainian language for foreign students and requirements for them**

<b>Levels of proficiency in the Ukrainian language.</b>	<b>Requirements for levels of proficiency in the Ukrainian language.</b>
Intermediate level of the first degree.	A person understands the main content of clear, standard information on topics that are close and often used at work, in study, during leisure time, etc. The level of knowledge of the Ukrainian language enables handling most situations that may arise while traveling in Ukraine. A person can express himself/herself simply and coherently, in particular on topics of personal interest; is able to describe personal experience, events, dreams, plans, and provide brief explanations of the point of view on some events.
Intermediate level of the second degree.	The person can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including specialized discussions in his/her field; can communicate with native speakers with a degree of speed and spontaneity that makes regular relationships with them possible without causing difficulties for either party; can express himself/herself clearly and in detail on a wide range of topics, in particular, expressing his/her opinion on a particular issue, giving the advantages and disadvantages of different positions.
Fluency level of the first degree.	The person can understand a wide range of complex and long texts and recognize the hidden meaning in them; can express himself/herself quickly and spontaneously without noticeable difficulties in finding the means of expression, use the Ukrainian language easily and accurately in communication, learning and for professional purposes; can express themselves clearly, structured and in detail on complex topics, demonstrating knowledge of grammar rules.
Fluency level of the second degree.	Fluency level of the second degree. A person easily understands practically everything he hears or reads, can summarize information from various oral or written sources, make a reasoned presentation in a logical, coherent form, and also express himself spontaneously, quickly and accurately, conveying the most subtle shades of meaning even in complex situations.

A means of forming Ukrainian language competence of foreign students studying in medical specialties is the discipline «Ukrainian as a foreign language» (English-language form of instruction) for foreign students of higher educational institutions of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine (Ukrainian language as a foreign language (English-language form of instruction, 2016).

Teachers of medical higher education institutions are actively working on creating educational and methodological support (Burnos, Levenok, Pylypenko-Fritsak, 2018; Nazarevych, Havdyda, 2017). In order to form Ukrainian-language competence of foreign students, taking into account the requirements for proficiency in the levels of Ukrainian as a state language (Levels of proficiency in the state language, 2021), the provisions of the Standard Program for the discipline «Ukrainian as a foreign language» (English-language form of instruction, 2016) for foreign students of higher educational institutions of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, leading specialists of medical HEIs (IFNMU, TNMU, Zaporizhia State Medical University, Sumy State University, etc.) closely cooperate on the implementation of unified requirements for the compilation of textbooks, teaching aids for foreign medical students. Accordingly, certain requirements have been created for the structure and content of professionally oriented texts, tasks, etc. (Levenok, 2018, p. 116).

The development of communication skills allows foreign medical students to confidently integrate into the professional environment, provide high-quality medical care, and establish effective interaction with patients and colleagues. The integration of foreign medical students into the Ukrainian-speaking environment is an important task that affects their successful learning, social adaptation, and further professional activities. This requires systematic work that covers linguistic, cultural, and social components.





The integration of foreign medical students into the Ukrainian-speaking environment contributes not only to their professional development, but also to the creation of conditions for the harmonious coexistence and mutual enrichment of different cultures within Ukrainian society. Studying Ukrainian as a foreign language in medical universities of Ukraine is a key aspect of the training of foreign students, which ensures effective professional activity, successful integration into the educational process and communication with patients. This process includes the formation of both general language competence and specialized knowledge of medical terminology. The features of studying the Ukrainian language at medical universities include a professional orientation (the main emphasis is on mastering medical terminology and developing professional communication skills), practical orientation (training is aimed at developing skills in working with documentation, conducting consultations, discussing clinical cases, and working in medical teams), language adaptation (special attention is paid to understanding the linguistic realities and cultural aspects of communication in Ukraine), communicative approach (using dialogues, role-playing games, and simulations to model real situations), project method (performing tasks that include creating medical reports and presenting clinical cases), use of interactive technologies (video and audio materials from real medical consultations, using specialized online platforms for studying the Ukrainian language, mobile applications to enrich medical vocabulary), cultural integration (getting acquainted with the culture of Ukraine, excursions, participating in festivities, events, lectures on the history and traditions of Ukraine, etc.), support for the international community (foreign students have the opportunity to participate in the work of associations that promote integration and exchange of cultural experience), etc.

The basis of the formation of Ukrainian-language competence is a communicative approach. In our opinion, one of the pedagogical conditions for the effectiveness of professional training of medical students in medical higher education institutions is the creation of a rich Ukrainian-language environment, where foreign students will actively communicate with the Ukrainian native speakers. Such an environment will serve the active communicative activity of future doctors. This communicative and active approach should ensure professional training at all stages of training. Thus, foreign citizens study at IFNMU in three stages: pre-university preparation (studying the language and fundamental disciplines), undergraduate education in the main specialties («Medicine», «Dentistry», «Pharmacy, Industrial Pharmacy») and postgraduate education (studying master's program, clinical residency, postgraduate study). After completing their studies, students of IFNMU receive an international diploma (Faculty of training of foreign citizens). Since 2003, a preparatory department with a licensed admission capacity of 300 people has been operating at the faculty, where students can master the basics of Ukrainian conversational and professional communication of a future doctor.

It is important to familiarize foreign students with the innovations of the New Ukrainian Spelling, which came into force in 2024. One of the pedagogical conditions for the formation of Ukrainian-language competence of foreign medical students is a highly professional teacher, who for foreign applicants for higher education should become not just a person who transmits certain knowledge, but also a good mentor, a coach who will help integrate into the Ukrainian-speaking environment and adapt to new socio-cultural conditions, especially in the face of Russian aggression and other challenges. As scientists rightly note (Hantimurova, Fedchyshyn, & Rudiak, 2019), «the task of teachers in the first year of study is to bring the level of socio-cultural, personal and educational development of foreign students as close as possible to the level of domestic first-year students», since the majority of foreign students who come to study in Ukraine «do not possess the basics of the culture of communication in the Ukrainian language, speech and everyday etiquette», therefore an important component of the professional activity of a teacher in a higher education institution is teaching foreign students intercultural and interpersonal communication, Ukrainian speech etiquette. The principle of continuity in education assumes that during the first two years of study in Ukrainian higher education institutions, foreign students acquire new and improve acquired knowledge and skills in communication in Ukrainian, which they will be able to apply in future clinical practice, since after the third year they attend professional classes in Ukrainian hospitals and communicate with Ukrainian-speaking patients (Hantimurova, Fedchyshyn, & Rudiak, 2019, p. 8).

An important element of the educational process is extracurricular work with foreign students, organization of meaningful cultural leisure, creation of Ukrainian clubs/centers, involvement of students in Ukrainian traditional holidays, ceremonies, traditions, acquaintance with Ukrainian literature, culture, history, art, local lore, etc., involvement in amateur artistic activities (creative evenings, concerts, University Days, Shevchenko holidays, Independence Day of Ukraine, etc.), volunteer activities, scientific research work, sports events, charity work, etc.

### **CONCLUSION AND PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Formation of Ukrainian language competence of foreign students is an important aspect of their integration into Ukrainian society and educational process. The main goal of this activity is to ensure the proper level of Ukrainian language proficiency for learning, everyday communication and future professional activity. In the process of professional training of future specialists in the field of medical education, the following factors must be taken into account to develop Ukrainian language competence of medical students: organization of the educational process (level approach: mastery of levels B1–B2 according to the Common European Recommendations for Language Education), communicative approach to organizing the educational process on an activity basis (development of dialogical, polylogical speech, etc.), emphasis on the development of spoken language skills, which allows students to communicate effectively in real situations; creating a communicatively rich environment, communication with native Ukrainian speakers, integration of the cultural component: familiarization with Ukrainian culture, traditions and history to form intercultural competence; development of language skills (in the field of phonetics – practice of correct pronunciation of sounds, word stress,



intonation); in the field of vocabulary, grammar (syntax, punctuation) – studying basic vocabulary, basic grammatical constructions necessary for understanding and constructing statements, mastering Ukrainian speech etiquette, language formulas of greeting, farewell, apology, request, gratitude, etc.

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