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UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

ABSTRACTS

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University Teaching and Learning

Comparing Teaching of Sports Terminology Online and Face-to-Face: Sport Students' Perspectives

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1. Latvian Academy of Sport Education

Objectives

The objectives of this study is to compare the advantages and limitations of learning sports terminology by sport science students online and face-to-face and to find out the challenges and opportunities offered by each approach.

Materials and Methods

The study encompasses theoretical and practical parts. In the theoretical part, the authors critically analyze the literature on the online learning of foreign languages as compared to learning foreign languages in person. In the practical part, the authors analyze the results of survey distributed among students of sport science who completed a course in sport terminology in a foreign language studying both online and in person in spring and fall 2022. The survey included multiple choice questions, questions where students have to give evaluation on Likert scale 1-5, as well as write open-end questions where students had to write their own answers.

Results

The survey was answered by 36 students from different study years, who studied sport terminology in English, German, Russian or Latvian (foreign students studying in Latvia). All students had both online and face-to-face classes. The majority of students noted that their language skills have improved to a various degree (3 and 4 on Likert scale 1-5). When asked about improvement in particular areas during online and face-to-face studies, the students noted improvement in different areas and skills depending on the study mode (online as opposed to face-to-face). When asked about the relative advantages and disadvantages of online studies, the most frequently cited advantage was flexibility, and the disadvantages were related to technical problems.

Conclusions

Both online and face-to-face studies of sport terminology in foreign languages had their advantages and disadvantages from students' perspectives, which affect their progress in improving language skills. The results of the survey show particular areas where more attention needs to be paid in developing and delivering study courses.

Consensus Recommendations on Dental Terminology in Latvian

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Objectives

The rapid scientific and technological development in dentistry in the last decades has introduced dentistry with new terminology, the rendering of which in Latvian needs to be clarified for text creators, translators and readers. The current scientific literature in the Latvian language in the field of dentistry is scarce; however, there is a lack of Latvian scientific literature in the field of dentistry, and the existing terms are often used inconsistently due to a lack of clear guidelines. Currently available dental terminology resources are “Terminologia medica” by K. Rudzītis (published in 1973, 1977 and 2005) and “Stomatoloģija” by G. Pakalns, V. Pakalne, A. Skāgers (published in 1983), where only a small number of dental terms are included, often with outdated meanings. There is a need for an open-access digital tool which would provide the guidelines for scientific writing in dentistry in Latvian, as well as promote the elimination of jargon in popular scientific literature, medical business and other fields.

Materials and Methods

An expert panel of nine specialists from different fields of dentistry and one terminology expert was formed. Over the course of two years, the panel held “round table” discussions, to decide on terminology for nine topics (general, radiology, cariology and paediatric dentistry, periodontics, endodontics, maxillofacial surgery, oral medicine, prosthodontics and orthodontics).

Results

More than 1500 terms have been compiled and approved so far. Both long-standing and well-known terms used in dentistry, as well as newly created terms, are considered. A digital glossary with translations and definitions of English terms used in dental practice and science in Latvian, including current classifications of diseases, treatment methods, materials and devices, will be issued.

Conclusions

The suggested terminology in Latvian is recommended for use in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, research, popular scientific publications, as well as in clinical practice.

Designing Interactive Video Experiments in Physics towards Enhanced Online Learning Experiences

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Objectives

Practical laboratory is a recognized way to learn science and acquire skills like problem-solving or critical thinking, beneficial in any field. This can be challenging when student possibilities to access the lab setup physically are limited. Online lab activities, such as collecting data from an experiment pre-recorded on video can be a prospective alternative. However, video experiments might require another scaffolding than traditional laboratory instruction. This work aims to find instructional designs for optimal learning experiences with online experiments in physics. It explores student perception of the video experiments and how various interactive features added to a video may influence personal engagement and group work during an online lab work activity.

Materials and Methods

Video experiments were designed and recorded based on physical practical works of the Medical Physics course at Riga Stradins University in the academic year 2021/22. Various interactive features, such as labels, navigation hotspots, self-check questions, branching scenario, were added to the videos using H5P technology. The video experiments were tested in the study process with groups of undergraduate students. Data was collected via anonymous self-report questionnaires and observations.

Results

Students positively perceived video experiments, yet their learning experiences varied. Received feedback suggests that video quality and instruction clarity were key aspects, whilst interactivity was an appreciated extra. Compared to traditional video, respondents working with interactive video reported higher flow, facilitated by better navigation and control over their experimentation. Meanwhile, student collaboration could go up or down depending on the interactive features added to a video. The different experiences can be explained with the varying cognitive load.

Conclusions

H5P technology is a simple and effective way to improve online video experiments with features that assist learners and help engage them in the task; however, they also contribute to cognitive challenge, which should be considered by instructors.

Implementation of Authentic Assessments in Short-Cycle Professional Higher Education Distance Learning Studies: Case Study

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1. College of Business Administration

Objectives

The objective is to analyze the process of introducing authentic assessments in distance learning short-cycle professional higher education study programs and its relationship with student involvement in the learning process and academic achievements, based on the case study of the College of Business Administration. The questions raised for the research are: 1) what are the success factors of introducing authentic assessments in short-cycle professional higher education distance learning studies; 2) how authentic assessments are related to students' involvement in the learning process and academic achievements.

Materials and Methods

A qualitative research design was applied. The following activities were carried out: 1) Qualitative analysis of the process of introducing authentic assessments; 2) Moodle study course summary analysis for student engagement assessment; 3) Analysis of students' final evaluations at the College of Business Administration.

Results

The results reveal several factors necessary for a successful implementation of authentic assessments, including achievable study goals, criteria for determining success, grading scale, and transparency. They also indicate the connection of authentic assessments with student engagement and academic achievements in the study process.

Conclusions

One of the key aspects of professional skills assessment is that it must be authentic. Authentic assessment, implemented through authentic tests, is one in which the student applies the material learned to a new situation, context, scenario, and requires analyzing and deciding what information and skills are important and how to use them. Authentic assessments are constructed to reflect real-world situations and assess students' ability to effectively and efficiently use their repertoire of knowledge and skills in solving real-life problems.

Interactive Game: Nomenclature of Skin Efflorescences to Teach Dermatology and Venereology

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Objectives

Our objective was to create an interactive game, which would effectively promote the ability of medical students to recognize various skin lesions and further correctly diagnose skin diseases.

Materials and Methods

In the work process dermatological images from clinical patients were obtained, prepared and selected. Further durable and reusable cardboard cards were prepared and printed for on-site classes. Obtained images were used to create a H5P question bank to adapt the activity also to remote working conditions. We obtained feedback from the students by verbally reflecting on the game.

Results

The basis of clinical dermatology and venereology is the ability to recognize the visual characteristics of skin diseases and prescribe the necessary examinations. The first practical class in the study course “Dermatology and venereology” for 5th year medical students includes the acquisition of knowledge about the description of the local status of the visible skin changes and the principles and methods of diagnosis of skin diseases, where theoretical knowledge about the terminology of primary and secondary skin efflorescences is essential. Our created activity promotes work in groups and mutual discussions between students, as well as strengthens knowledge about the terminology of skin lesions. This, in turn, facilitates the course of future practical classes and work in medical institutions with patients becomes more meaningful. The student is able to better define skin and venereal diseases, outline their etiopathogenesis and describe clinical manifestations that allow them to be recognized from each other and from other diseases.

Conclusions

By independently trying to sort out skin efflorescences and consolidate knowledge about the terms of various skin changes, an understanding is created that is essential for successful learning of the entire study course.

Is Artificial Intelligence, Including Chat GPT and Others, a Professor’s Assistant or a Threat in the Process of Legal Education?

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Objectives

At the end of November 2022, the artificial intelligence-based system Chat GPT “Generative Pre-trained Transformer.” developed by the Open AI Company was launched. This event already created a great resonance among law schools all over the world. GPT allows it to generate new text that is similar to the examples it has seen. The co-author of the presentation is definitely the Open AI team because the theses, ideas, and problems of the presentation are concentrated in the report thanks to the answers given by AI to the questions asked by the author about the topic of the report. The ability to use these technologies can significantly affect the study process, so it is important to identify potential problems related to the application of AI in the legal education process in time.

Materials and Methods

Materials: Various Internet resources; Answers provided by Chat GPT

Methods: analytical, descriptive, and law interpretation methods.

Results

Presentation to the conference and preparation of the article for the magazine “Jurista vārds”

Conclusions

1. The use of MI in the process of educating lawyers has several positive benefits, for example, the ability of students to independently improve their knowledge, perform self-control of works before submitting them, etc.
2. The lecturer can also effectively use Chat GPT in the process of student training, planning, structuring study tasks, generating questions, answer options, etc.
3. However, the use of these programs also has possible side effects, namely, currently the system is able to fool the Turnitin plagiarism control algorithms and some types of tests, such as essays, reports, and remote exams, could become a very ineffective tool for testing students’ knowledge.

Potential of Coaching in the Learning Process

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1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives

Coaching is rooted in various cognitive, behavioural, and learning theories and fosters the belief that people have all the resources they need to achieve their goals. Practical coaching intends to facilitate, support, challenge, and guide a change to achieve goals, especially for young people. Therefore, the aim of this research was to gain insight into the potential of coaching to support students, help them focus on their studies, and reduce the risk of dropping out.

Materials and Methods

The RSU Career Centre's experience is used, which is based on conducting coaching sessions, using tools such as emotion cards, feeling thermometers, paper-based scales, graphics for time planning, self-assistance strategies, and stress management exercises. In addition, for this research's aim, a scoping literature review was carried out by a search conducted in the PubMed database to complement the research framework.

Results

The results of the literature overview show an increase in publications reflecting the role of coaching in the learning process, facilitating sustainable reflective practice, and promoting a student-centered approach to education. Coaching improves youth resilience, encourages action-based behaviour, and enhances self-directed learning. In perspective, coaching would result in lower drop-out rates caused by the inability to integrate into a new environment. However, it should be noted that students who are already stress-affected are reluctant to take up the support of coaching. Therefore, the work of encouragement and engagement is also important.

Conclusions

Coaching assists young people to be more specific about their goals, to work towards achieving them, and supports the completion of the learning process. Students receive the opportunity to assess their strengths and weaknesses and understand the way forward after graduation. However, despite the growth of findings on the positive impact of coaching on the learning process and graduate education, some organisational and financial issues remain regarding the practical implementation of this process.

Potential of Work-Based Studies in Higher Education in Latvia in Economics and Business Study Field

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Objectives

Socio-economic transformations in the globalized economy induce number of opportunities, necessities and challenges also within higher education and its relation to the labour market. The pressure on higher education builds on the demand of changing skills and competences by the labour market and also on the changing demand of the format and reach-out of higher education by students and potential students. One of the joint aspects of these two perspectives is the increasing demand thus necessity to link the two areas – higher education and labour market. One of such linking formats is known – work-based education (WBE) to ensure that the studies interact significantly with the real-time labour market. So far, the WBE is more provided in professional and vocational education. In some countries (e.g. Austria) WBE practices also on a doctoral level. But for the academic or professional bachelor and master level studies, particularly in social science, WBE is not widely practiced and in many aspects lacks the understanding and provisional, inc., legislative regulation. Thus, the major objective of the research is to determine what are the major challenges and opportunities of WBE particularly in higher education in Latvia in the study fields of Business and Economics.

Materials and Methods

Materials and methods: monographic research and content analysis for the exploration of scientific literature and legal framework assemblage; SWOT analysis in relation to WBE opportunities and challenges; a survey among companies and universities for empirical quantifiables followed by statistical and graphic analysis.

Results

Research results will contribute to the discussion of the WBE in higher education, providing case-specific insights for Latvia, including legal framework provisions and practical implications.

Conclusions

Conclusions of the research shall suggest further guidelines and road map for modern and effective higher education system reform with specifics of WBE in undergraduate and master level studies of economics and business.

Skills Monitoring in the Work Environment – Pilot Project for Placement Improvement

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Objectives

Rīga Stradiņš University has developed and implemented a skills monitoring system to manage students skills acquisition in theory (level A), simulated environment (levels B1,B2) and work environment (levels C1,C2). During lectures and practical classes, RSU academics are able to ensure skills acquisition and assessment at levels A-B2, but so far, the skills monitoring was not practically related to the skills acquisition in the work environment, during the placement within the study process. To evaluate the concept of skills monitoring in the work environment, a pilot project “Skills monitoring in the work environment” was implemented in cooperation with healthcare institutions.

Materials and Methods

The pilot project was implemented in cooperation with partners - Emergency Medical Service, Paul Stradins Clinical University Hospital, and Children’s Clinical University Hospital, to monitor skills for 2nd (Nursing Studies) and 6th (Medicine) year students (08.2022-01.2023). For the project, a potential list of placement skills and an electronic skills reporting system were developed, in which the placement supervisor assessed the students’ skills after each on-duty shift. After the placement, the participants were invited to the focus group discussions to provide feedback on the concept of skills monitoring in the work environment.

Results

Participants admit that a structured list of skills provides an opportunity to prepare for the planned placement and to manage the acquisition of skills more purposefully during the placement. The electronic reporting system is more convenient, and skills assessment by levels enables a structured assessment of the student’s abilities, as well as provides the university with objective feedback on the student’s preparedness for practice in a real work environment.

Conclusions

The results of the pilot project show that the concept of skills monitoring provides support to placement supervisors in managing placements, ensuring structured assessment of the student’s skills, and such approach should be improved and introduced at all placement sites.

Use of Natural Language Processing to Classify Open-Ended Responses on Course Evaluation Questionnaires at Rīga Stradiņš University

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1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives

Student feedback is used to continuously improve the study process at Rīga Stradiņš University (RSU). Student responses on Course Evaluations Questionnaires is analysed by various stakeholders (lecturers, study programme directors, university administration etc.) and improvements to multiple aspects of the study process (lectures, classes, assessment, learning materials etc.) are made on several levels (course, study programme or institutional level). One of the challenges in obtaining actionable information from the student feedback on Course Evaluation Questionnaires is the amount of work required to systematically analyse student responses to the open-ended questions. This research developed and evaluated a Natural Language Processing solution to support the analysis of such text based feedback.

Materials and Methods

To obtain student feedback on the study process, RSU uses online study course evaluation questionnaires. Students evaluate multiple aspects of course quality using closed and open-ended questions. In the Spring semester of 2022, students submitted 13 thousand completed questionnaires with more than 9 thousand open-ended responses.

A semi-automated classification system was developed by the RSU Centre for Educational Growth to label student responses on open-ended questions with meaningful categories, for example, “Assessments”, “Independent Work”, “Lectures” based on keywords used in the student response text.

Until year 2023 this classification was done manually. To improve this process RSU Department of Information Technology developed a machine learning algorithm to automate and extend the classification of student responses.

Results

Use of Natural Language Processing methods allows a more precise and faster division of student responses into pre-defined categories. During the training process a machine learning algorithm also identified new keywords for labelling student responses, extending the previously used classification schema.

Conclusions

Natural Language Processing and machine learning algorithms can be used to enhance study quality by supporting acquisition of actionable insights from open-ended student feedback on the study process and outcomes.

Simulation-Based Teaching and Learning

Assessment of Online Training of Practical Skills in 6th-Year Medical Students

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Objectives

There are still a lot of uncertainty regarding efficacy of the online teaching of practical skills. Development of some technical skills in such way may be challenging for students. The goal of this study was to assess the practical skills of the 6th-year medical students, who mainly been trained online during C-19 pandemic.

Materials and Methods

Five different clinical skills had been assessed in 137 students during Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE). All manipulation included in the OSCE were previously trained in the online mode, then students had the opportunity to improve their skills in a skill lab (optional and unsupervised activity). Clinical skills in the OSCE were – “basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation”, “simple interrupted skin suture”, “high O2 concentration mask placement”, “peripheral venous catheter insertion”, “due date estimation”, “laryngeal tube insertion”, “bag-mask ventilation”. Each manipulation was evaluated by max 5 points. The average points and rate of errors (%) were calculated for each manipulation.

Results

The lowest average points and a higher rate of errors were observed in performing “simple interrupted skin suture” 4.4 (11.2%). Higher average points and a lower percentage of errors were seen performing “bag-mask ventilation” 4.7 (7%), “basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation” - 4.8 (4.8%), and “due date estimation” - 4.7 (5.3%). The lowest rate of errors was observed in such manipulations as “laryngeal tube insertion” - 4.8 (3.9%), “peripheral venous catheter insertion” - 5 (2.6%), and “high O2 concentration mask placement” - 5 (0.4%).

Conclusions

Online teaching could be used for development of practical skills in medical students, but for complex motoric skills additional supervised “hands-on” training should be recommended.

Development and Application of Custom-Made Task Trainers for US-Guided CVC Insertion

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Objectives

CVC insertion is a common medical manipulation performed in intensive care units, but according to our survey performed in Cēsis regional hospital medical personnel avoid performing this manipulation due to a lack of practical experience. Knowledge and skills of CVC insertion can be acquired in various ways, thus performing manipulation on real patients or practicing on specialized task trainers. Our study is based on the development of custom-made task trainers for US-guided CVC insertion and the evaluation of their effectiveness.

Materials and Methods

In order to improve CVC insertion skills in Cēsis regional hospital specialized training course was developed and held. Specialized CVC insertion task trainers were manufactured using 3D-printed molds and silicon solution. Intending to increase the acoustic impedance of the task trainer microcrystalline cellulose was added to the silicon solution in the following concentration/ratio 1:100. Simulated veins were made of elastic latex tubing and fulfilled with the simulated blood. Training of medical personnel consisted of a theoretical course followed up with practical exercises using custom-made task trainers.

Results

Twelve out of thirteen course participants admitted that practicing manipulation on the task trainers brought them confidence and the necessary tactical experience in order to improve their performance in the US-guided CVC placement in real life.

Conclusions

Custom-made task trainers for US-guided CVC placement are providing a realistic experience and can be used for educational purposes. However, there is still some space for improvement in the manufacturing process. Increased durability of the material as well as testing different compounds and compositions of silicon solutions for better US observation shall be further evaluated and analyzed.

Development of Recommendations on Improvement of Non-Technical Skills of Medical Practitioners in Framework of Continuing Professional Development

***Mr. Reinis Upenieks**¹*

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives

To describe process, challenges and insights of development of recommendations on improvement of non-technical skills in continuing professional development of medical practitioners.

Materials and Methods

Draft recommendations are developed based on theoretical assumptions (andragogy (Knowles), deliberate practice (Ericsson); double loop learning (Argyris & Schön); meaningful learning (Ausubel); medical curricula evaluation (Kirkpatrick); experiential education (Dewey); experiential learning (Kolb); community of practice (Lave & Wenger); situated learning (Lave & Wenger); transformative learning; (Mezirow)) and series of practical studies (e.g., Upenieks, 2019; Kaulēns & Upenieks, 2021; Upenieks, in-press).

Results

There are draft recommendations developed on different levels (systemic, provider, trainer and trainee) to enhance improvement of non-technical skills of medical practitioners within continuing professional development framework.

Conclusions

While importance of non-technical skills in health care is no more argued and based on number of studies, development of those, especially for practitioners not bended to formal education, seems to be challenge. It comprises curricula, learning and teaching approaches as well as value dimension, mediated by underlying normative (legislative) framework.

Gamification To Develop Students’ Self-directed Learning Skills in English Lessons of Form 5

Ms. Anna Holberga¹

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Objectives

The aim of the Paper is to explore what gamification elements can help to develop students’ self-directed learning skills in English lessons of Form 5, because self-directed learning skills are essential for students’ further life. Besides, in her previous study the author discovered that gamification is an effective tool to keep students interested and motivated.

Materials and Methods

A case study as a research method was chosen. The data collection methods included a questionnaire, the author’s self-evaluation and reflections of English lessons, and feedback from the students.

Results

Accordingly, it was found that students might lack distinct skills that make up self-directed learning. Different gamification elements can help engage students in the lesson.

Conclusions

The author concluded that awards, levels, a story narrative, curve of interest and engagement were the most effective gamification elements for improving students’ reflection and motivation to learn independently. This leads to a decrease of behavioural issues as well. Since the learning needs and wants of each student may differ, the teacher must act as a guide to the students, using elements of gamification to motivate the students and provide different activities that would help the students become independent learners.

Innovative Simulated Hospital Environment Enhances a Wide Skillset of Third-Year Medical Students

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Objectives

Simulated environment is a key training phase in medical studies. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic numerous challenges arose in education field, including the possibility for medical students have their practical placement in the real clinical environment at university hospitals. For this reason, a simulated hospital was created at Riga Stradins University (RSU) Medical Education Technology Centre (METC). An intensive, close to real life simulated hospital was organized for students of RSU with simulated patients, mannequins and simulated scenarios, also mentors who guided and supported students. In this article we demonstrate the main innovative solutions that made this event a success.

Materials and Methods

The two-week long simulated hospital (December'21 and April'22) gathered ~140 international 3rd year students who had to take care for more than 30 simulated patients and 8 equipped mannequins.

The students had to attend not only the patients, organize logistics, run the labs, but also fill in the clinical documentation (patient charts, drug scheduling, referrals, patient safety incident reporting-learning system), as well as answer real phone calls, divide and prioritize tasks for the day.

The students filled out a self-evaluation survey before and after, gave feedback regarding the training process.

Results

According to the post-survey in scale from 1-to-5 (from poor to excellent) in 2021 the students (n=63) evaluated the practical placement and concept of simulated hospital as satisfying (24%) and good (57%), whereas in 2022 the students (n=82) evaluated it as good (37%) and excellent (54%).

However, the students had challenges finding the right tools, learn to use equipment in such a short time and calculate the right amount of medication before attending the patient.

Conclusions

The simulated hospital will be repeated as a training also after the pandemic as an annual part of medical students' curriculum, because it gives an essential chance for students to train, using their technical and soft skills in a safe environment that would not be possible elsewhere.

Technical Innovations for a Successful Simulated Hospital

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1. Medical Education Technology Centre, Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives

A worldwide crisis is a fruitful soil for creative innovations. During the COVID-19 pandemic when most of the educators faced restrictions working with their students, making it very challenging to ensure the practical placement at hospitals. Therefore, the team at Riga Stradins University (RSU) Medical Education Technology Centre (METC) came up with a simulated hospital concept to provide the students with the much-needed practice. In this article we'll mention some of the innovative solutions used for this event.

Materials and Methods

The two week long simulated hospital was organised at RSU METC (December'21 and April'22) taking up two floors, including: Nurses station, supply room, diagnostic suite, two departments: surgical and internal disease with simulated patients and mannequins.

Simulated patients had been trained with disease scenario, had a specific make-up, were equipped with custom-made simulated modules (wound care, catheters, injection sites). In addition, their beds were equipped with custom-made nurse call button that resulted as an audio-visual signal via Bluetooth).

The mannequins were featured with custom-made NG tubes ileostomy bags, catheters, and were connected to the simulated vital sign monitors. The Nurses station was equipped with real computers and telephones to coordinate patient care, transportation and delegate daily chores.

Last, but not least, all the hospital rooms had cameras with open broadcast software (OBS) system that allowed the academic staff to monitor student work, evaluate them and assist if necessary.

Results

All solutions helped the medical students to enhance their skills that otherwise wouldn't have been possible. The simulated hospital environment was created as close as possible to the one at university hospitals with real patients, including challenges that usually medical students face.

In the feedback survey the students evaluated their experience as positive, gave suggestions about what could be improved for the next simulated hospital events.

Conclusions

The simulated hospital experience is a great project for medical students, as well as for the academic and technical staff to improve both: their technical and soft skills.

Scientific Workforce

Use of Infrared Camera in Determination of Muscle Fatigue during Manual Handling of Loads: Preliminary Data

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Objectives

Thermography is an analysis technique based on the acquisition of infrared images. The temperature of a surface is determined by measuring the infrared radiation it emits. Literature data report that the temperature variations on the skin surface derive from muscle heating and blood flow; these temperature variations were correlated with the values of the electromyographic parameters.

The aim of the study was to investigate, through IR thermography, muscle fatigue during a workload.

Materials and Methods

A sample of 10 healthy volunteers was asked to lift a 10 kg load, without breaks, for 5 minutes, generating a NIOSH risk index of 1.00 (ISO-11228-1).

The symmetry of the spine was evaluated using the spine3D, an optoelectronic three-dimensional, non-invasive detection system of the back and spine which allows an accurate assessment of vertebral pathologies and postural alterations. The following measures were assessed before (t0) and after (t1) the test: the strength of the dominant biceps (B) and triceps (T), using a BioFet dynamometer.

The muscle temperature of the dorsal (D) and lumbar (L) regions was measured using a FLIR E54 IR camera before and after the test.

Results

From the analysis of the preliminary data, a significant variation of the temperature of both the dorsal and lumbar tracts was observed. Also a significant depletion of arm muscle strength was observed after muscle activation (t1).

Conclusions

Thermography is an easy-to-use and non-invasive tool, which allows an accurate analysis of the temperature variation which, correlates with muscle activation.

As demonstrated in other studies, an increase in temperature, correlated to greater muscle activation, can be correlated with muscle fatigue.

The use of the thermal imaging camera will allow us to better observe the effects, even in the long term, of this type of action and probably also provide us with more useful information for future updates regarding the risk assessment.

Teaching and Learning Medical Humanities

Academic Staff Doubles Team a Way to Enhance Students’ Collaborative Leadership Doing Study Course “English for Dentistry”

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Objectives

According to Peter Drucker in a doubles team members cover their teammates, adjusting as necessary to their teammates’ talents and weaknesses and to the changing demands of the game. By collaborative leadership, we mean the process of engaging collective intelligence to deliver results across organisational boundaries when ordinary mechanisms of control are absent. The objective is to study if throughout the delivery of study course “English for Dentistry” to students of Faculty of Dentistry attaining the study course objective is future-proof educational outcome.

Materials and Methods

Data were collected during the period of academic years 2015/16 till 2020/22 at RSU from Faculty of Dentistry 1st year students taking part in a cross-sectional study.

Results

To ensure that students’ attaining “English for Dentistry” course objective is future-proof educational outcome the elements of research have been integrated into the study course. Students design questionnaires and collect data from Latvia-based respondents, thus conducting a cross-sectional study in small groups. This study year doubles playing with my colleague from the USA, Robert D. Leier, Professor in Applied Linguistics, we are able to go even further and provide the opportunity for students to reach respondents in America and carry out a comparative study. Collecting the data on dental routine and studying dental health of another country population and afterwards making comparison with home country respondents, students expand their horizon, demonstrate their linguistic and Dentistry-specific skills and exhibit acquired competences.

Conclusions

The requirements for doubles-type teams are quite stringent, involving intense commitment, trust and collaboration on the part of the team, nevertheless, academic environment fosters building such teams. Collaborative leadership fights a silo mentality and fosters ‘fluid intelligence’, the capacity to think flexibly across boundaries. RSU academic environment creates the climate that promotes high-quality collaboration forging a shared purpose that inspires all participants, harnesses collective intelligence and ensures accountability for results.

Archetype of the Shadow: Understanding Human Disposition towards Evil

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Objectives

In the last few decades, archetype theory has become one of the most important concepts in psychology. It is fundamental to building a comprehensive and deep understanding of human psychology, behavior and contemporary culture.

We are living in a time when the history is repeating itself – a war has broken out again in Europe. After February 24, 2022, when the Russian forces invaded Ukraine, more and more reports began to emerge about the incredible atrocities taking place in this war. The evidence was overwhelming, and the content is horrific beyond belief. While still trying to get over the initial shock, it is necessary to ask: how is such evil possible? How can a human being commit something like that - where is the root of this evil?

The answer is offered by Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology. In his time, Jung devoted much attention to the question of how Nazism arose and flourished in Germany resulting in war and holocaust. His answer focuses on the depth structures of the collective unconscious, namely the archetypes, among which one of the most important ones is the archetype of the Shadow.

As it is defined by Jung, Shadow is an archetypal structure of the personal part of the psyche, the rejected part of the Ego: “the thing he has no wish to be” (Jung, CW 16, § 470). Shadow consists of all the elements of the personality that have been deemed worthless, harmful, disturbing, and have thus been dissociated. Does this mean that evil is rooted deeply into the fabric of human existence? How can we handle it? Is the unconscious evil? What is the relation between good and evil? These and other questions will be addressed in the presentation.

Doctor-Patient Relationship from Medical Ethics Perspective

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Objectives

Study aim is to describe and analyze the types of doctor-patient relationship from medical ethics perspective from 1950s-1960s till now

Materials and Methods

The research material is basic literature in medical ethics.

Methods: philosophical reflection based on the analysis of literature.

Results

The doctor-patient relationship practiced in the 1950s and 1960s became the role model for parent-child relationship. Paternalism was also the dominant factor in the doctor-patient relationship until the 1960s. In the 1970s, the dominant view of the doctor-patient relationship was that of power and conflict of interest, with the patient benefiting and the doctor having the opportunity to be in charge. The role of technology in the doctor-patient relationship has increased significantly from the 1980s to the present day.

The patient-doctor relationship has also changed considerably: from complete trust and confidence in the healthcare professional to the patient's willingness to adjust the doctor's instructions or even the radical decision to self-medicate. Technology is helping to make the communication process between doctor and patient smoother and easier, but at the same time the process of digitalization, together with commercialization, has increased the alienation between doctor and patient. The need for direct, face-to-face communication has not waned and will hopefully not disappear in future, as it is necessary for both parties to fully apply themselves to treatment process and achieve the stated treatment goals.

Conclusions

- The doctor-patient relationship has evolved continuously since the 1950s, with changing power dynamic between both sides of the partnership.
- While initially doctors were the undisputed authority and patients merely had to abide by the doctor's opinion, in today's digital age not only has the influence of technology on the doctor's decisions increased significantly, but also the patient's ability to influence these decisions.

Implementation of Simulation-Based Learning Process for Law Students

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Objectives

Along with changes in economic, political, legal and sociological processes in the world, changes also occur in the higher education system. Currently, information technologies are developing rapidly and becoming a part of any person's daily routine and an object of increased interest of young people. The development of information technology provides various advantages, including organizing the study process for students studying law. One of the ways to ensure acquiring the learning content in a high quality is the use of interactive learning tools, such as the development and practical execution of simulations.

The purpose of the study is to reveal and reflect the basic principles of the development of simulations, the practical importance and advantages of application of the simulations in the training process of law students.

Materials and Methods

The following research methods are used: monographic (literature review); analytical (studying the theoretical literature, clarifying the opinions of the authors); survey method (obtaining information through questionnaires, interviews, discussions with students about the positive and negative aspects of the already developed simulations); logically constructive (for expressing conclusions and proposals).

Results

As a result of the research, the authors come to the conclusion that the use of simulations within the learning process promotes students' interest in learning the content of the topics covered in the relevant study courses.

Conclusions

The study is based on literature research, analyzing the insights expressed by several authors. Attention is also focused on the goals set in policy planning documents and legal acts in the field of education.

Real execution of simulations increases students' knowledge; promotes deeper understanding; develops students' skills by working with realistic problem situations and document analysis.

Latin Roots in Other Languages (Including the Non-Romance Languages)

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Objectives

For many years lecturers of the RSU Language Centre have been motivating students to learn Latin and they want to make their studies as easy and interesting as they can. The lecturers are always interested in the students' back-ground and languages they know.

The majority of the students from Latvia have never studied Latin, but some of them learned French, Spanish or Italian in the Secondary school or had some private language courses. Approximately 50 % of the International students studied Latin at High School; they are Italian, Spanish, French or Portuguese native speakers. Therefore, the lecturers want to show the students how the knowledge of different languages can help them to memorize certain Latin nouns and/or adjectives. They do believe if the students could notice the relationship between the languages, it would help them to learn the words quicker and the Latin course would become more attractive to the students than it is.

Materials and Methods

Students' questionnaires from the feedback of the course; textbooks, the students use; direct observation during the classes; home assignments, the Public health students had in the previous years; comparison of these items in their native tongue and/or the languages they speak and Latin.

Results

We are planning to introduce the data obtained in this study in our new text-books for the students of different study programs. The obtained results can be used to motivate the students to study Latin and increase their interest in learning the language not only for preparing for the practical classes but, for instance, doing research work.

Conclusions

The knowledge of basic Latin is essential for students to receive a good higher education. Lecturers from the Language Centre teach medical students but they believe that the data obtained from this study are beneficial for teaching other students as well.

Living and Knowing: Phenomenological Analysis of the Embodied Experience of Covid-19 Vaccine Hesitancy

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1. University of Latvia

Objectives

Vaccine hesitancy, defined by the World Health Organization as ‘delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines despite availability of vaccination services’, is recognised as one of the major challenges of the global vaccination efforts against infectious diseases, including COVID-19. In our ongoing research we try to approach COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy in Latvia by focusing on the embodied experience of vaccine hesitant persons, by carrying out a phenomenologically informed qualitative research study, based on the methodological framework called ‘Phenomenological interview’ (Høffding and Martiny 2016) which integrates the qualitative interview with phenomenological philosophy. In Phenomenological interview phenomenology provides a conceptual framework for data collection and analysis.

At the moment we have concluded our data collection phase, during which we performed 16 semi-structured interviews, and we are now in the data analysis phase. But it is already possible to discern a number of important embodied aspects of vaccine hesitancy. One of our tentative findings is that one of the possible motives for vaccine hesitancy might lie in the way we as embodied persons live through events, and how this direct, concrete embodied experience differs from how science represents those same events.

This research is funded by the Latvian Council of Science, project *Hesitant bodies: phenomenological analysis of the embodied experience of vaccine hesitancy*, project No. lzp-2021/1-0360.

Høffding, Simon, and Kristian Martiny. 2016. “Framing a Phenomenological Interview: What, Why and How.” *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 15 (4): 539–64. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11097-015-9433-z>.

New Trends in the Sociology of Medicine

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Objectives

New approaches and topics have appeared in the field of Medical Sociology in recent years due to the Covid-19 pandemic and prompt social changes in our societies. The Covid-19 pandemic acted as a trigger for highlighting problems in health care systems, permeating social inequalities and communication patterns. Consequently, social scientists in Medical Sociology have started reexamining conventional topics, theoretical approaches and research methods. The aim of the paper is to review recent topics in the scientific discussion of Medical Sociology.

Materials and Methods

The qualitative content analysis was made reviewing scientific articles (n=109) within the subfield of Medical Sociology that have been published between 2020 and 2022.

Results

The results of the content analysis show that examination of the content of publications in scientific journals is a significant phenomenon by itself. Based on those reviews, we see that researchers have come up with topics in Medical Sociology that are not mentioned as often, and are less known in scientific discussions. E.g., topics on aging or Sociology of Age, Sociology of Disability, Sociology of Medical Ignorance, global health, digital health care, adaptive communication and care models may be designated as new or even forgotten within the conventional discourse of Medical Sociology.

New research methods are also being used in the field of Medical Sociology, i.e., digital storytelling (DST) as a tool of approaching marginalized populations. Qualitative research methods are mostly used in order to establish experiences of patients as well as healthcare workforce, for instance, how nurses describe their work with Covid-19 patients. The Covid-19 pandemic has allowed us to reflect on the resilience and effectiveness of the health care system as well as trust in medicine and science in society.

Conclusions

In conclusion, intensive work reexamining conventional discourse in Medical Sociology is being done; hypothetically, we can expect more diversity in research topics and methods.

Normative Layers in the Embodied Experience: Phenomenological Analysis of COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy

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1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives

The global vaccination progress have faced serious challenges both in Latvia and worldwide. One of the issue was growing scepticism about the usefulness and safety of vaccination, known as vaccine hesitancy as it is defined by WHO. Our ongoing study is focused on motives and reasons of delay in acceptance of vaccines in the context of embodied experience. Phenomenological inquiry into the subject could provide more in-depth, accurate and comprehensive explanation of vaccine hesitancy, understood in the embodied existence of the decision-making subject.

This research is funded by the Latvian Council of Science, project *Hesitant bodies: phenomenological analysis of the embodied experience of vaccine hesitancy*, project No. lzp-2021/1-0360.

Materials and Methods

The study is conducted as a qualitative empirical research which integrates semi-structured in-depth interview within the framework of phenomenological methodology, using approach called ‘Phenomenological interview’. As for now we have finished data collection phase (16 interviews) and data analysis phase, it is possible present some preliminary findings on the embodied aspects of vaccine hesitancy.

Results

In this paper I will focus on the concepts of normality/normativity as a key feature in explaining vaccine hesitancy. According to phenomenology a norm is not an objective category or a statistical average, it is rather described as an integral part of habitual experience. One can distinguish two essential aspects of normality in phenomenology: (1) embodied normality which originates in the subjective experience, (2) intersubjective normality which is embodied through the collective socio-cultural norms. Our study shows that covid-19 pandemics and the following vaccination campaigns interrupt with both embodied and intersubjective normality thus affecting decision-making process on the issue of vaccine acceptance.

Conclusions

Our study presents empirical evidence that embodied experience plays a crucial role in vaccine hesitancy, therefore it should not be disregarded in the public communications about necessity of vaccination against covid-19 and other diseases.

Phenomenology's Application to Healthcare: Patient Objectification and Quality of Care in Teleconsultation

Dr. Māra Grīnfelde¹

1. Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, University of Latvia; Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives

Phenomenological philosophy has been engaging in an ongoing dialogue with many other disciplines, including medicine and health care. Since the end of the 20th century, many phenomenologists have written about the importance of the phenomenological approach to the health care focusing on the lived experience of the patient. It is precisely because of this emphasis on the lived experience that phenomenology has been combined with qualitative research – a combination, which has proven to be especially fruitful in the field of health care. In this paper I will demonstrate how phenomenology can ground qualitative research, leading to the generation of new knowledge in the field of health care. I will do this by focusing on the question: if and how does the video medium in teleconsultation contribute to the objectification of the patient, and what kind of impact it has on the quality of patient-health care professional relationship?

Materials and Methods

I am using methodological approach Phenomenologically Grounded Qualitative Research (Køster & Fernandez, 2021), which entails the use of phenomenological philosophy's concepts (the lived body and the object body) to ground 14 semi-structured interviews about the patient experience of teleconsultation.

Results

Patients experience themselves for the most part as lived bodies during teleconsultation, which means that their sense of agency (control and responsibility) is increased in teleconsultation.

Conclusions

The lack of patient objectification in teleconsultation leads to the transformation of both the role of the patient (from passive recipient to an active participant) and the traditional hierarchical patient-doctor relationship. These results have implications for the improvement of the quality of health care both online and in person. This work is prepared within Postdoctoral research project “Healing at a distance: phenomenological analysis of patient experience of clinical encounter in telemedicine” (1.1.1.2/VIAA/4/20/622).

Shared Decision Making in Medicine from the Perspective of Health Communication – Challenges and Strategies

***Mrs. Laura Bitiniece**¹*

1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives

Objective of this paper is to inquire how research in Health Communication can inform Bioethics, specifically on the research done investigating provider-patient communication. Using different methods (ethnography, discourse analysis, coding conversations, content analysis, interviews, surveys) researchers of Health Communication suggest that reference to autonomy alone doesn't solve the actual patient's problem of making the best medical decision. The provider-patient communication might be described in at least two ways – as shared decision making and as mutual persuasion. In both cases patient relies heavily on the provider to guide the decision making, often asking for direct influence. In specific communication situations the refusal of the provider to guide the decision or to give recommendation might create distress, confusion and the feeling of abandonment.

Materials and Methods

This paper examines the latest research on provider-patient communication in the sphere of Health Communication to determine the types of difficult conversations in medicine and to inquire after the communication strategies to facilitate shared decision making and the best outcome.

Results

Whilst shared decision making remains the best option for decision making in medical setting overall, it might be misunderstood both by the patient and the provider. Skills both in health communication for the provider and patient education is crucial to avoid misunderstandings, conflict and other bad outcomes in difficult conversations.

Conclusions

Shared decision making focuses on the moment of decision making, but the approach of mutual persuasion in provider-patient communication allows for a better understanding of the dynamics involved in communication in health care, seeing how both parties exert their influence on clinical interactions. Considering this might lead to better communication (and hence treatment) outcomes.

Through the Lens of Students’ Feedback: Best Practices in Teaching Russian Medical Terminology

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1. Rīga Stradiņš University

Objectives

As Rīga Stradiņš University (RSU) students provide their feedback on the study courses they complete, it has been noted that the courses of the Russian Medical Terminology (RMT) are consistently evaluated in a positive way. The present study aims at specifying what aspects of the RMT courses contribute to their genuine appreciation expressed in the students’ feedback.

Materials and Methods

The present research is a case study that analyses a collection of students’ feedback (162 participants) over the course of seven years (2015–2022). The study identifies the most common feedback topics and interprets the students’ feedback in terms of best methodological practices in teaching RMT courses. The RMT lecturer’s perspective is ascertained through an interview with her. The questions of the interview are based on the student’s feedback to identify the teaching approaches that result in an effective course delivery.

Results

The most prominent topic of the students’ feedback (35% of feedback items) is the way the lecturer delivers the course and communicates with the students. The second most consistent topic (26% of feedback items) is the usefulness of the course. The third most common topic is the course being well-adjusted to the mixed-ability groups taught in the RMT courses. The last but not least common topic (9% of feedback items) is the course being well-structured. The lecturer provides her insight on the methodology of working with mixed-ability groups and structuring the study courses according to the students’ needs.

Conclusions

According to the results of the study, the teacher’s personality and student-teacher interaction are the major contributors to the success of the RMT courses. Almost equally important is the students’ awareness of being able to use the acquired knowledge and skills in their practice. The students also appreciate the way the lecturer copes with one of the biggest challenges of a language classroom– working with mixed-ability groups.

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