THE FOCUS ON CONSECUTIVE VERB CONSTRUCTIONS IN MEDICAL ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES

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The English language training of researchers and teaching staff at medical universities has become a priority task in higher medical education. Catenative verbs constitute one of the most challenging aspects in learning English as a second language. The article examines the features of catenative verbs while teaching the course in professional English for PhD students and academic staff at higher medical educational institutions. The aim of the study was to examine and systematize the most common challenges in using consecutive verbs in medical English. The authors developed their own concept of presenting the training material, and the proposed approach was tested in the development of the textbook "Medical English for Academic Purposes" (2018), which was written in the context of current trends in internationalised higher education, involving the training of specialists who will work in the modern English language educational and scientific environment. The ability to use catenative verbs correctly is an essential prerequisite for successful communication, intercultural reciprocal understanding and international cooperation in the context of rapid development of integration in Ukraine, which renders the present research relevant. A series of training exercises were presented, aimed at clarifying the lexical peculiarities of modern English. The most commonly used consecutive verbs, their significance and contextual role in professional communication have been analyzed. The proposed system of didactic materials is introduced.

tended to support courses in professional English for PhD students and academic staff at higher medical educational institutions. The study of consecutive verbs is important to eliminate possible mistakes and avoid misunderstanding in medical communication. The authors believe that the professional development of PhDs and academic and clinical teachers of English-speaking medical students will promote academic mobility, scientific cooperation and the training of foreign students to international standards, and thus contribute to the development of higher medical education in Ukraine.

**Keywords:** catenative verbs, Medical English for Academic Purposes, academic staff, PhD students.

A verb is termed "catenative" or "consecutive", when it is followed by another verb within the same clause [1; 5]. Catenative verbs constitute one of the most important aspects in learning English as a second language. The major challenges in academic English vocabulary have already been discussed in our previous studies [2; 3; 4; 6; 8; 9]. The present paper focuses on the methods of mastering consecutive verbs by PhDs, academic and clinical teachers of English-speaking medical students. The ability to use catenative verbs correctly is an essential prerequisite of a high quality medical discourse, which renders the present research relevant.

The results of the research have been integrated into the 1st edition of Medical English for Academic Purposes by Yu. Lysanets, O. Bieliaieva, M. Melaschenko (2018) [7]. The sample tasks given below demonstrate this strategy.

Sample tasks:

**Ex. 1.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Infinitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
<td>Please stop taking this medicine and contact your doctor as soon as possible if you experience allergic reactions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish</td>
<td>I've finished translating the article.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy</td>
<td>I enjoy talking to patients while I'm in the ward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admit</td>
<td>The resident admitted forgetting to fill in the case history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggest</td>
<td>Dr. Knight suggested returning to the ward.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other verbs that follow this structure are: avoid, deny, involve, practise, miss, postpone, mind, dislike, imagine, regret, admit, report, consider and risk.

**NB!** The following expressions also require verb + -ing structures:

- **Give up** The glaucoma patient needs to give up smoking.
- **Keep on** The hyperthyroid patient keeps on losing weight despite having regular and proper meals.
- **Go on** The patient began improving after intubation. The patient began to improve after intubation.

- **When talking about finished actions, one can also use the verb “to have”:**

  - The resident admitted having forgotten to change Mr. Smith’s treatment (or: The resident admitted that he had forgotten to change Mr. Smith’s treatment).

  **NB!** There are two possible structures after the following verbs:

- **Advise** I wouldn’t advise staying at that hospital. I wouldn’t advise you to stay at that hospital.
- **Allow, permit** They don’t allow / permit smoking in the OT. They don’t allow / permit you to smoke in the OT.
- **Begin, start, continue** The patient began improving after intubation. The patient began to improve after intubation.

- **After the following expressions and verbs you can use either “-ing” or the infinitive: like, hate, love, can’t stand and can’t bear.**

  **NB!** With some verbs, such as forget, remember and try, the use of “-ing” and infinitive after them acquires a different meaning:

  - **Forget** I forgot to submit my report on time (i.e., I forgot to do something on time).
    I forgot reading this book as a student (i.e., I forgot that I have done something).
  - **Remember** He remembered to fix the tip of the catheter tightly before starting the procedure (i.e., I remembered that I needed to do it properly).
    I remember mentioning this news yesterday (i.e., I remember the fact that I did it).
  - **Try** The patient tried to keep her eyes open (but it was difficult).
    If your headache persists, try taking an aspirin (i.e., experimenting with different methods).

**Ex. 2.** Insert the appropriate verbs from the table. In each case, decide whether to use the “-ing” form or the infinitive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Infinitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
<td>To operate; to work; to use; to add; to take; to conduct; to be; to finish; to switch; to faint; to have; to put; to cheat; to apply</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I remember ______ allergy tests in this patient
2. She can’t stand ______ alone.
3. Don’t forget ______ on a white coat when you enter the laboratory area.
4. The student admitted having _______ in the exam.
5. You should try _______ less salt in your food.
6. I don’t mind _______ night shifts with you.
7. The patient denies _______ anticoagulant medications but reports _______ herbal supplements.
8. I enjoyed _______ with Professor Knight who really gave me some insightful ideas.
9. Shall we postpone _______ the dressing on the wound?
10. I can’t imagine you _______. The sight of blood makes you _______.

Ex. 4. Revise the “verb + infinitive” structures given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>The patient _______ treatment at once.</th>
<th>The patient _______ to change his dietary habits.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>(to) start</td>
<td>refused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refuse</td>
<td>(to) stop</td>
<td>to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise</td>
<td>(to) promise</td>
<td>to give up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer</td>
<td>(to) offer</td>
<td>to organise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decide</td>
<td>(to) decide</td>
<td>to leave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other verbs that follow this structure are: attempt, manage, fail, plan, threaten, arrange, afford, learn, dare, tend, appear, seem, pretend, need, and intend.

There are two possible structures after these verbs: want, ask, expect, help, would like (a polite way of saying “I want”) and would prefer.

There is only one possible structure after the following verbs: tell, order, remind, warn, force, invite, enable, teach, persuade, get.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb + object + infinitive</th>
<th>I _______ Dr. Knight, the Head of the department.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verb + object + infinitive</td>
<td>I _______ Dr. Knight _______ the draft of my report.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verb + infinitive
Verb + object + infinitive

Ex. 5. Insert the appropriate verbs from the table. In each case, decide whether to use particle “to” or not:

(to) be; (to) change; (to) talk; (to) decrease; (to) die; (to) prepare; (to) complete; (to) operate; (to) make; (to) follow; (to) increase; (to) discontinue; (to) enter;

1. Dr. Knight does not let me _______ on his patient.
2. I want the patient _______ the bed regimen.
3. I saw the doctor _______ the office.
4. The patient felt the pain _______.
5. The assistant watched the doctor _______ the filling material.
6. I would rather _______ my dietary habits than daily insulin injections.
7. He wanted me _______ an X-ray.
8. I heard him _______ about the planned procedure.
9. This treatment method enabled us _______ the rate of postoperative complications and mortality rate.
10. The doctor persuaded the patient _______ the use of this medication.
11. The patient refused _______ the treatment prescribed.
12. In passive euthanasia, the doctor lets the patient _______.
13. Would you like _______ the chairman of the congenital heart disease session?

Ex. 6. Describe a case from your teaching practice, using the “verb + infinitive” structures given above.

The didactic purposes of the tasks: a) control and assessment of the level of mastering the lexical meaning of the “verb + -ing” constructions; b) improving the skills of explaining the terms in one’s own words; c) practicing the use of the “verb + -ing” constructions in medical discourse.

Thus, the adequate use of catenative verbs is an essential prerequisite of effective communication and sharing one’s clinical findings with fellow researchers from all over the world. Therefore, it is highly important to draw attention to the analysis of these phenomena in medical discourse, which should be an integral part of curricula at medical universities.

References

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