

CASE STUDY:

SECHENOV USE SLC COURSES AS DIGITAL TEXTBOOKS

Joint Project

Sechenov University, Russia's leading Medical University, now use SLC's online Medical English courses as the core study materials for both their Medical Translation and their English for Pharmacy courses.

Background

Sechenov University's Institute of Linguistics and Intercultural Communication (headed by Prof. Irina Markovina) first used SLC's 100-hour online English for Doctors and English for Pharmacy courses to support medical lecturers working with international students and PhD students working on research papers. The team at the Institute then realised that the courses could be adapted and used for the Medical Translation programme offered to students studying at the university.

This innovative approach would give students access to tailored, up-to-date, multimedia materials as the core texts for their 1st and 2nd years of the training course.

Customising SLC's online courses to match the university syllabus

To start with, the English language teaching team at Sechenov mapped the contents of the 100-hour course to the syllabus they were working on with the medical translation students. Of the fourteen units, eight were clearly relevant to the course – four for semester one and a further four for semester two. Content ranged from discussing diagnoses to explaining treatment to interviewing patients to oncology and end of life care. Inputs and activities include a wide variety of clinical interactions, medical terminology and hospital-specific language.

SLC then took the guidelines from Sechenov and adapted the English for Doctors courses accordingly, taking the content identified by the Linguistics team and separating it into two separate courses, one for each semester. The courses were then published on a Sechenov-specific online portal – a branded institution area on the SLC Learning Management System – which contains only the courses used by the university students. Having an institution portal also allows student usage to be tracked and reported on to the Sechenov academic managers and teachers.

The shorter 20-hour English for Pharmacy course was added to the two English for Doctors courses on the Sechenov portal. In this case, the university used the course in its entirety and did not need customising.

How the courses are used in practice

The lecturers give access to the Medical Translation or Pharmacy students. Students are instructed to go through specific units prior to attending classes. Teachers then incorporate the language learnt in the lessons. As the teachers have access to the internet in the classes, they are able to use the content in a classroom setting to reinforce learning and work on specific areas or errors. This follows a classic flipped classroom approach. Student activity is tracked and reported on, so teachers know whether their students have done the work set and what their scores are.

What has the response been?

According to the teachers, the students' response has been very positive. They see how the content supports the course design, they enjoy doing the activities, and completion rates are strong. Being able to watch videos, listen to dialogues and pronunciation, and get immediate feedback on their answer submissions – with the option of trying again – have all been popular and a real step up from traditional printed course books.

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“Working with the platform was very interesting for Sechenov students. They approached tasks with enthusiasm and responsibility. In my opinion, this online course is useful not only for students, but also for teachers, as it logically complements face-to-face courses of the English language for medical students. During face-to-face classes there is a good opportunity for teachers to discuss some tasks from the online course and check students' progress.”

Marina Shirinyan, Senior Teacher,
Sechenov University

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And the teachers? After some initial 'getting used to', the teachers quickly saw how the content supports their classes and how increased student engagement has a positive effect on learning and in-class motivation. Being able to customise the courses meant that they knew the work done by the students on the course was always relevant.

What next?

Having seen how easy it was to customise the online courses, the Linguistics Institute are developing the English for Doctors course further by adding their own content and editing the material so it fits the specific needs of Russian students. As a result of the special training provided by SLC to a Sechenov team member, the Sechenov academic management can now create inputs and activities using Cyrillic and to add targeted practice for the courses they design and deliver. The first pilot unit will be ready by the end of 2018 and a full course is scheduled for release at the end of 2019.

SLC is working closely with Sechenov on this exciting project and will release more information on it as progress is made.

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“We always felt that SLC's online courses could be adapted to a wide range of needs. We are delighted to have had the opportunity to work with Sechenov, so both teachers and students can access relevant, up-to-date and updateable materials that map specifically to the courses they deliver at the university.”

Chris Moore, Managing Director, SLC

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Specialist Language Courses

About Sechenov University

Founded in 1758, Sechenov University is Russia's oldest and biggest medical university and is the country's standard bearer for medical training, research and clinical practice. The Institute of Linguistics and Intercultural Communication is a newly established department of Sechenov University, whose major objective is to contribute to the University's internationalization by developing an English-speaking environment for research, education and clinical activities.

About SLC

SLC is the UK's leading provider of Medical English training services.

SLC's digital Medical English and Exam Preparation services enable thousands of medical professionals and students around the world to work, travel, study, research, develop themselves, and communicate with each other in English, the lingua franca of medicine.



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