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CREATIVE AND INTERACTIVE TEACHING METHODS IN THE DISCIPLINE OF THERAPY: A COMPREHENSIVE INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

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Abstract. Modern healthcare requires physicians capable of critical thinking, effective clinical decision-making, and patient-centered communication. Traditional passive learning approaches are no longer adequate for preparing medical students for the dynamic clinical environment. Consequently, medical education in therapy has shifted toward creative and interactive teaching strategies that enhance engagement, deepen understanding, and support competency-based outcomes. This article provides a comprehensive international review of creative (gamification, arts-based learning, narrative medicine) and interactive (simulation, PBL, TBL, flipped classroom, VR/AR) teaching methods, analyzes their effectiveness, and identifies challenges in their implementation. Evidence from global studies confirms that active and participatory approaches significantly improve clinical reasoning, student motivation, and patient-care skills.

Keywords: creative teaching, interactive learning, therapy education, medical pedagogy, simulation, PBL, TBL, gamification, digital learning, VR/AR in medicine, competency-based education, narrative medicine

РЕАТИВНЫЕ И ИНТЕРАКТИВНЫЕ МЕТОДЫ ОБУЧЕНИЯ В ДИСЦИПЛИНЕ «ТЕРАПИЯ»: ВСЕОБЪЕМЛЮЩИЙ МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ ОБЗОР

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Аннотация. Современное здравоохранение требует врачей, способных к критическому мышлению, эффективному клиническому принятию решений и коммуникации, ориентированной на пациента. Традиционные пассивные методы обучения уже недостаточны для подготовки студентов-медиков к динамичной клинической среде. В результате медицинское образование по терапии переходит к креативным и интерактивным образовательным стратегиям, которые повышают вовлечённость, углубляют понимание и способствуют достижению компетентностных результатов. Данная статья представляет всесторонний международный обзор креативных (геймификация, обучение на основе искусства, нарративная медицина) и интерактивных (симуляция, PBL, TBL, перевёрнутый класс, VR/AR) методов обучения, анализирует их эффективность и выявляет сложности их внедрения. Данные глобальных исследований подтверждают, что активные и практико-ориентированные подходы значительно улучшают клиническое мышление, мотивацию студентов и навыки ухода за пациентами.

Ключевые слова: креативное обучение, интерактивное обучение, образование по терапии, медицинская педагогика, симуляция, PBL, TBL, геймификация, цифровое обучение, VR/AR в медицине, компетентностное образование, нарративная медицина.

Introduction

Therapy is one of the foundational clinical disciplines in medical education, addressing diagnostics, treatment planning, patient communication, and long-term management of internal diseases. As the healthcare system evolves, medical education must adapt accordingly. Traditional didactic lectures and teacher-centered formats, while historically important, often fail to foster deep learning or prepare students for real-life clinical complexities.

Globally, educational reforms emphasize critical thinking, interdisciplinary collaboration, and evidence-based practice. Therefore, creative and interactive methods are increasingly becoming core elements in therapy education. These approaches are aligned with modern pedagogical theories such as constructivism, experiential learning, and social learning theory, which prioritize student involvement, self-directed learning, and reflective practice.

This article analyzes major creative and interactive methodologies currently used around the world, with special attention to their applicability in therapy teaching.

Creative and interactive teaching methods rely on several pedagogical principles:

1. Active Learning Theory: Students learn best when actively involved in constructing knowledge.
2. Experiential Learning (Kolb): Real-life or simulated experience followed by reflection leads to deeper learning.
3. Social Constructivism (Vygotsky): Collaboration, peer interaction, and guided participation enhance learning outcomes.
4. Competency-Based Education (CBE): Focuses on measurable skills and competencies rather than time-based curricula.
5. Humanistic Learning Theory: Emphasizes empathy, communication, and patient-centered approaches—critical for therapy.

These frameworks justify replacing passive learning with dynamic, student-centered methods.

Creative Teaching Methods in Therapy

Gamification applies game mechanics—points, leaderboards, rewards, and clinical challenges—to medical learning. In therapy, it is used to teach diagnostic reasoning, treatment algorithms, ECG interpretation, and medication management.

Educational Benefits:

- Enhances motivation and competition
- Supports long-term retention
- Creates low-stress practice environments
- Improves teamwork and communication

International studies demonstrate that gamification significantly improves student engagement and clinical accuracy.

Arts-Based Medical Education (ABME): Arts-based learning includes visual arts, storytelling, poetry, role-playing, and reflective writing. These methods target emotional intelligence, empathy, and interpretive skills—central elements of therapeutic practice.

Outcomes:

- Improved patient-centered communication
- Better recognition of subtle clinical cues
- Stronger observational and interpretive abilities
- Enhanced empathy and professionalism

Narrative medicine—reading and writing patient stories—teaches students to understand the human dimensions of illness.

Unlike traditional linear cases, creative scenarios include:

- Multiple diagnostic pathways

- Ethical dilemmas
- Interdisciplinary collaboration
- Patient preference considerations

These stimulate advanced clinical thinking rather than rote memorization.

Interactive Teaching Methods in Therapy

Simulation-Based Learning (SBL). Simulation includes:

- High-fidelity mannequins (cardiac arrest, shock, respiratory failure)
- Standardized patients (communication, physical examination)
- Virtual simulation labs
- Hybrid scenarios combining technology and human actors

Advantages:

- Risk-free clinical practice
- Enhanced diagnostic and procedural skills
- Realistic exposure to rare clinical events
- Immediate feedback and debriefing sessions

SBL is considered one of the most evidence-supported interactive methods in therapy education.

Problem-Based Learning (PBL). PBL requires students to analyze real clinical problems, identify learning objectives, and collaboratively construct solutions. Benefits:

- Develops analytical reasoning
- Integrates basic and clinical sciences
- Increases autonomy and research skills
- Enhances teamwork

Studies show that PBL graduates demonstrate superior clinical reasoning in therapy settings.

Team-Based Learning (TBL). TBL includes individual preparation, readiness assurance tests, and team decision-making on complex clinical scenarios.

Impact: Reinforces communication and leadership

- Promotes group responsibility
- Strengthens decision-making under pressure

Flipped Classroom: Students learn theoretical content at home (videos, readings), while classroom time is dedicated to applying clinical concepts through discussion and simulation.

Advantages

- More time for hands-on learning
- Increased interaction with instructors
- Improved comprehension and retention

Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR): VR allows immersion in realistic clinical environments without patient risk. AR overlays digital information during clinical examination. Applications in Therapy:

- 3D cardiac anatomy visualization
- Virtual auscultation and palpation training
- Pulmonary function simulation
- Complex pathology modeling

VR/AR tools significantly enhance spatial and procedural understanding.

Telemedicine Training: As telehealth expands globally, therapy education must prepare students for remote consultations. Competencies Developed:

- Virtual communication skills
- Remote diagnostic reasoning
- Ethical and privacy protocols
- Technology proficiency

Integration of Creative and Interactive Methods

The most successful curricula combine multiple methods to support competency-based learning. Key principles include:

1. Student-centered design
2. Real clinical relevance
3. Technology-enhanced delivery
4. Interprofessional collaboration
5. Continuous feedback and reflection

Integrated programs produce graduates with stronger problem-solving skills and clinical confidence.

Challenges in Implementation:

- Resource Limitations Simulation centers, VR tools, and digital platforms require significant financial investment.
- Faculty Development Needs: Instructors must be trained to facilitate interactive learning effectively.
- Curriculum Time Constraints: Transitioning from lectures to active learning requires structural adjustments.
- Technological Barriers: In some regions, internet access and digital devices remain limited.
- Assessment Difficulties: Evaluating creativity, teamwork, and clinical reasoning requires advanced assessment tools such as OSCEs and workplace-based evaluations.

Conclusion. Creative and interactive teaching methods represent the future of therapy education. Gamification, simulation, ABME, PBL, TBL, VR/AR, and telemedicine training significantly enhance clinical reasoning, practical competence, and communication abilities. Evidence strongly supports the integration of these methods into modern medical curricula. While challenges exist—particularly in resources and faculty training—continued innovation will ensure that therapy education remains aligned with global healthcare needs. Ultimately, these approaches prepare students to become skilled, empathetic, and adaptable clinicians capable of delivering high-quality patient care.

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