
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Importance of Teaching English for Medical Students in Kurdistan: A Critical Review

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| ABSTRACT

The significance of English in Kurdistan medical education for gathering information, pursuing information, and presenting research efforts to international audiences necessitates that programmes for teaching and learning English pay particular attention to the significance of English. This is required because of the importance of English is essential for the accumulation of knowledge, the pursuit of information, and the presentation of research efforts to international audiences. This is necessary because the importance of English cannot be overstated when it comes to the accumulation of knowledge, the quest for information, and the presentation of research efforts to audiences from across the world. Students interested in learning English as a second language will benefit from this review article since it explains several fundamental topics associated with teaching English for medical reasons and is thus recommended reading for such students. Reading this post benefits students interested in learning English as a second language and will help them in their studies. Some of the academic variables that have an impact include the promotion of instructors' understanding, the periodic updating of the English medical curriculum, and the value of reviewing the material, analyzing the needs of students, and evaluating the relevance of assessing the requirements of students. Other relevant elements are as follows: The research is brought to a close by the presentation of several recommendations that instructors of English as a foreign language (EFL) and other members of the Kurdish educational system might put into action to improve the level of English as EFL instruction that is provided within medical degree programmes in the region.

| KEYWORDS

Medical students, medical lecturers, language obstacles, English as a foreign language, English curriculum

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

The significance of studying English has increased in the modern era of communication, where voicing one's opinions can result in global integration. This discipline has grown as a result of the demand for specificity. English is the primary language used to communicate medical fundamentals (Faraj, 2015). Milosavljevi (2008) asserts that medical professionals and researchers must learn English to teach in English, receive instruction in English, and publish their research. According to some assessments, the quality of English utilized in medical contexts, such as classroom instruction, scholarly publications, and courses, has been continuously improving (Hwang & Lin, 2010). English is essential in medicine since most scientific, academic, and technical information is conveyed in English (Creswell, 2013). It is consequently vital to find ways to encourage English language instruction for students of medicine and healthcare professions (Milosavljevi, 2008). As was said before, English is the language of choice in global healthcare; thus, having a solid English command is required to access vital scientific and medical information (Heming & Nandagopal, 2012).

In addition to doing research and amassing knowledge, other aspects show the value of the English language in medical education. A barrier caused by language might harm the quality of medical treatment (Ibrahim, 2010). There is the possibility of looking at the significance of the beginning of English instruction in residency programs from a different angle. According to the findings of

several studies, medical students' inadequate English language abilities may constitute a substantial barrier to their educational excellence of those students (Al- Rukban, Munshi, Abdulghani, & Al-Hoqail, 2010). There is a possibility that problems with English competence contribute to the challenges that medical students who are learning the language face with their schoolwork (Faraj, 2015). Students may benefit from developing their confidence via the study of the language English as well as English for those learning English as a second language (ESL) (Jane Koch MA, Yenna Salamonson PhD, Du BN, Sharon Andrew PhD, & Dunncliff, 2011).

The English language has attained a preeminent position globally, evolved a unique function that is widely acknowledged and has become an essential component of international society, culture, and the economy (Gatehouse, 2001). Today, success as an expert in any industry or subject of study increasingly depends on knowing English. By fostering communication across nations without a common language, English significantly contributes to sustainable global development (Robson, 2014). English has also taken over as the dominant language of choice for specialists from across the world in various fields, including business, education, and the scientific and social sciences, as well as for medical professionals (Hutchinson and Waters, 1992); as a result, language instruction for particular objectives has become a growing field in teaching languages. Since the 1960s, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has been a well-recognized trend in ELT (Lili, 2015). As more individuals use English in occupational, professional, and academic settings, ELT professionals and institutions must create and provide ESP courses to target particular activities and programs. Robinson (1991) defines such activities and initiatives using two criteria. They are goal-oriented and based on a requirements analysis that specifies what language learners must perform. Researchers stressed individual learners' requirements and professional knowledge of utilizing English for purposes above level or age constraints (Hutchinson & Waters, 1992). It is vital to compare To understand better the educational function of English for Health care Purposes of medical professionals by serving as an EAP to an ESP. EAP is a course that teaches students how to read and comprehend scientific writing, in contrast to ESP, which teaches students how to communicate in a target language within the context of a particular subject area. ESL situations employ ESP, whereas EFL contexts use EAP (Kazem & Fatemeh, 2014). Hutchinson and Waters (Ghalandari and Talebinejad, 2012) claim that ESP is a way of teaching a language that emphasizes the learner's desire to acquire the language. Therefore, the needs of the students should serve as the primary focus of education for both ESP and EMP.

1.1 Evaluation of the requirements for medical students

When English is taught to pupils as a foreign language, it becomes even more important to accommodate their educational requirements (Jane Koch MA et al., 2011). Sadly, most research on ESP education in the health sciences is undertaken for ESL students, whereas EFL students are neglected in this study (Molnar, 2011) (Heming & Nandagopal, 2012). In this regard, a shift in one's paradigm is required to continue research in this sector. Although it is common practice for "subject Unique vocabulary and associated modifiers" to serve as the primary emphasis of ESP lessons for medical students, it is well-known that these students also have difficulty with generic language (Heming & Nandagopal, 2012). For students to successfully fulfil this need, it would be advantageous for them to develop their awareness of a broad array of vocabulary. Because no research has been done on the level of English language ability held by medical students, an unsuitable curriculum has been developed for medical education. This has resulted in a shortage of qualified medical professionals. This is one of the primary reasons why teachers fail to recognize their pupils' varying degrees of potential (Faraj, 2015).

Consequently, it is essential to acknowledge the English language needs of medical students to assist them in managing the challenges they experience during their academic studies (Faraj, 2015). Since most medical students' textbooks and journal articles are published in English, the results suggest that reading is essential for medical students to develop. After that comes the act of speaking, listening, and writing (Lu & Corbett, 2012). Considering the cognitive processes that support the acquisition of a second language and the necessary English language abilities for medical education, a review of the Cummins model would help choose the best language teaching techniques for students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) (Doley, 2010).

2. English lecturers for medical purposes

Teachers of medical English should be familiar with the vocabulary and text structures used in the discipline. People could improve their talents and realize their EMP educational ambitions with training programs (Chang, 2007). For medical professionals, teachers of English as a second language should involve their students more in the language-learning process by providing them with more hands-on instruction and fostering an environment that encourages creative thinking. This will help students become proficient in every facet of the English language (Al-Qahtani, 2013).

A recent study demonstrates that providing pupils with a textbook is beneficial for quizzes to determine how well they grasp a topic and may help those students absorb the material more thoroughly (Doley, 2010). This created difficulties for the EMP instructors. One of their issues is that they lack adequate educational resources (Heming & Nandagopal, 2012). It is difficult to provide an equal education to all children because of the diverse student demographics (Starkey, 2015). The problem for EMP educators is more difficult because their students have restricted English competence and need instructional approaches (Rivera-

Goba & Campinha-Bacote, 2008). In light of this discussion, it is crucial to accurately assess an EMP instructor's command of the English language and the teaching techniques and university resources at their disposal.

3. English educational materials for medical use

Since ESP emerged as one of the most in-demand EFL teaching specializations in the early 1960s, a significant number of books geared toward specific goals have been written; nonetheless, the majority of these works do not have a robust research base or a well-defined theoretical stance (Kazem & Fatemeh, 2014). As a result, evaluating educational resources is crucial to effectively achieve educational objectives since it enables one to gain information about how such resources operate both in support of the hypothesis of learning and the art of teaching (Al Fraidan, 2012; McGrath, 2002; Tomlinson, 2005). Textbooks are vital in exposing pupils to learning opportunities for students studying English as a foreign language (EFL), in which the classroom is the only place English is spoken (Riazi, 2003). Consequently, the significance of making an informed decision on the content of the instructional material becomes even more apparent. It is rare to find a textbook that entirely satisfies all of these needs and goals, but an English instructor will always try to meet their students' requirements because of this endeavour's academic importance. According to the study by Kazem and Fatemeh (2014), one approach to solving this issue is to supplement the leading textbook with many supplementary reading materials.

4. Updating dated textbooks and instructional methods for teaching medical English

The globalization of health care was hampered by language barriers 15 years ago, and the same barriers still exist now (Sabbour et al., 2010). Students in medical schools often have a limited vocabulary and a slow reading speed, which might provide difficulties (Lu & Corbett, 2012). Students in medical school are expected to immediately become familiar with medical terminology and improve their reading, listening, and writing skills (Lu & Corbett, 2012). Many different institutes provide training to identify medical language issues. Language-learning courses are routinely included in medical education curricula to aid students in overcoming these hurdles (Tucker et al. (2012). Language issues make health centres difficult for students. Not being able to understand lectures, not being able to know what they read, not being able to connect what they read to what they hear, not being able to take notes, and not being able to (Starkey, 2015). A recent study (Starkey, 2015) put together a list of the most common language problems in speaking, reading, understanding, and writing. Students' English skills could be improved in several ways, such as by giving them more chances to use English, giving them reasons to learn English well, and talking with classmates who speak English (Heming & Nandagopal, 2012). Some scholars (Rogan & San Miguel, 2013) say that these kinds of opportunities could be made possible by using new technologies, such as podcasting, vodcasting, and web-based technologies. According to these research findings, it is possible to provide materials for digital training at a small price. Using resources already available at universities. However, little research has been done on how online technologies affect how well students learn (Rogan & San Miguel, 2013). According to recent studies, language learners might become more effective and autonomous learners if they are taught how to combine various learning styles (Al-Qahtani, 2013). Metacognitive, cognitive, and social techniques are included in language learning processes. Since they often use mental tactics, students should attend training on combining various strategies (Al-Qahtani, 2013).

Last, increasing medical students' motivation while studying English is critical. In order to learn, motivation is a crucial tool (Milosavljevi, 2008). Students might access cutting-edge medical knowledge by developing multifactorial programs that provide all-English education (Milosavljevi, 2008). Additionally, it boosts students' integrative drive, significantly affecting learning a second language Al-Qahtani (2013). Reviewing and upgrading existing programs would be advantageous, considering the complex language components that medical students must acquire, their prerequisites, and the addition to enabling that are useful to public health. Discovering different methodologies will facilitate student motivation, despite the barriers that change may provide (Vickers, 2008).

5. Recommendations

To better prepare students for careers in the medical field that heavily rely on the use of the English language, English language courses for medical majors at colleges and institutes should emphasize language-related skills such as fluency, understanding, accuracy, and structure. These skills will help students communicate more effectively in the English language. When dealing with people's health, having a solid command of the English language is essential to ensuring that employees can perform the necessary operations, deliver the appropriate instructions, and respond appropriately to various medical situations. Because English is the language most often used to communicate and distribute medical information in Kurdistan, more institutional training should focus on language-related topics. In addition, English language classes offered in colleges and universities should emphasize the development of conversational abilities to provide smooth cultural interaction with employees worldwide. When developing a course of study to prepare students for future employment, it is essential to give significant weight to the concept of cultural interaction. This is since working in Kurdistan health institutions frequently encounters situations with multilingual and multicultural coworkers.

6. Conclusion

According to this review research, educators, textbook authors, and educational authorities should improve learning and teaching by integrating aspects contributing to medical English language acquisition in their classroom materials. Conquering linguistic obstacles, assessing the English medical curriculum, providing extracurricular activities to improve both instructors' and students' ability to communicate in medical English, and using educational practices already in place should all be considered. In addition, it is essential to eliminate barriers posed by languages, enhance the content of the English medical curriculum, and expand the educational opportunities available to both students and teachers. Both Kayaolu and Akbaş believe that medical students should be required to attend English lessons (2016). These results provide credibility to prior studies that emphasized the importance of English as a lingua franca in science (Hui, 2007). A strong command of the English language is essential for professional advancement and taking on higher-level duties in the medical industry, particularly managerial roles. In today's increasingly linked culture, having a strong command of the English language is an absolute need. In medicine, a strong English language command is necessary for career progression and higher-level jobs, especially in management. Skill In this age of globalization, the ability to communicate in English is an absolute must. English and international labour markets are inextricably linked to one another (Alharby, 2005).

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