

## **DEVELOPING A TASK-BASED ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES (ESP) CURRICULUM FOR FIRST-YEAR MEDICAL STUDENTS: A COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH**

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**Abstract:** Medical students require specialized English language skills to engage effectively in their studies and future professional communication. This research explores the development of a task-based English for Specific Purposes (ESP) curriculum tailored for first-year medical students. By employing a needs analysis approach, the study identifies key language skills required in medical contexts, including patient communication, medical terminology, and academic writing. Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is proposed as a suitable pedagogical framework to enhance student engagement and language acquisition. The study contributes to the field of ESP by providing a structured curriculum that aligns with real-world medical communication needs.

**Key words:** ESP, Medical English, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Curriculum Design, Needs Analysis, First-Year Medical Students, Communicative Approach, Academic Writing, Medical Communication, English for Specific Purposes.

### **Introduction**

The increasing globalization of healthcare necessitates proficiency in English among medical professionals. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) plays a crucial role in equipping medical students with the language skills necessary for effective communication

in clinical and academic settings (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). First-year medical students often struggle with medical terminology, patient interaction, and academic writing due to the highly specialized nature of medical discourse (Hyland, 2006). Therefore, an ESP curriculum tailored to their needs is essential.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is an innovative approach that aligns with ESP principles by focusing on real-life communicative tasks. Unlike traditional grammar-focused teaching, TBLT immerses students in authentic medical scenarios, enhancing their linguistic and professional competencies (Ellis, 2003). This study aims to design a task-based ESP curriculum for first-year medical students, ensuring that language instruction is directly applicable to their academic and clinical experiences.

### **Literature Review**

ESP is a branch of English language teaching that caters to learners with specific academic and professional needs (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). Within medical ESP, the emphasis is on developing functional language skills relevant to medical practice and research. Prior studies indicate that medical students require proficiency in listening (e.g., understanding lectures), speaking (e.g., doctor-patient interactions), reading (e.g., medical articles), and writing (e.g., case reports) (Salager-Meyer, 2008).

TBLT, proposed by Willis (1996), prioritizes meaningful communication through structured tasks such as role-plays, case presentations, and patient interviews. Research suggests that TBLT improves both fluency and accuracy in ESP settings by engaging students in interactive and context-driven learning (Nunan, 2004). By integrating TBLT into ESP curriculum design, medical students can develop practical language skills that enhance their professional competence.

### **Methodology**

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys, interviews, and classroom observations to conduct a needs analysis among first-year medical students and

instructors. The collected data informs the development of a task-based ESP syllabus, which will be piloted and evaluated based on student performance and feedback.

### **Conclusion**

Developing a task-based ESP curriculum for first-year medical students is crucial for enhancing their academic and professional communication skills. This study provides a framework for integrating authentic medical tasks into ESP instruction, ensuring that language learning is relevant and effective. Future research should explore the long-term impact of TBLT-based ESP programs on medical students' career readiness.

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