



THE ROLE OF ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES (ESP) IN PROMOTING HEALTH COMMUNICATION SKILLS AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

This research explores the role of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in improving medical students' cross-cultural communication skills. Effective communication skills are essential in medical practice, especially in multicultural and multilingual environments. Using a systematic literature review approach, this research analyzes various studies that discuss the integration of ESP in medical curricula and its impact on the development of cross-cultural communication skills. The results of the analysis show that ESP has the potential to increase students' understanding of culturally sensitive health communication, as well as strengthen interactions with patients from diverse backgrounds. This study provides recommendations for improvements to the ESP curriculum and the need for further, more empirical research in various medical education contexts. These findings are expected to make a significant contribution to the development of a more effective curriculum in medical education in the global era.

Keywords: English for Specific Purposes (ESP), cross-cultural communication skills, medical students, medical education, systematic literature review.

INTRODUCTION

Effective communication is a crucial skill for health workers, including medical students, because this skill directly influences the quality of medical services provided to patients. These communication skills include not only the ability to interact with patients empathetically, but also the ability to understand and appreciate the diverse perspectives that patients bring to the healthcare environment. In an increasingly globalized world, interactions in the health sector increasingly occur in multicultural and multilingual environments. This presents significant challenges in medical communication due to differences in culture and linguistic background (Karimnia & Khodashenas, 2018; Sojoodizadeh et al., 2020).

To overcome this challenge, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has been integrated into the medical curriculum with the aim of improving the communication competence of medical students. ESP is designed to meet the specific language needs of students in professional contexts, particularly in the medical field. The focus of ESP is on essential skills, such as mastering medical

terminology, using effective communication techniques with patients, as well as developing interaction strategies needed in medical consultations and scientific presentations (Su et al., 2022; Khan, 2020). By integrating ESP into medical education, it is hoped that students will acquire the linguistic tools necessary to deal with complex interactions in healthcare, thereby increasing their effectiveness as future healthcare providers (Khan, 2020; Drop et al., 2014).

Despite increasing research on the effectiveness of ESP in improving medical students' English skills, there remains a significant gap in understanding of how ESP influences the development of cross-cultural communication skills. These skills are especially important for medical students who will practice in culturally diverse environments, as these skills involve understanding, adapting to, and appreciating cultural differences in communication (Sojoodizadeh et al., 2020; Khan, 2020). Effective cross-cultural communication not only improves interactions with patients, but also contributes to the overall quality of health services (Karimnia & Khodashenas, 2018; Su et al., 2022). Therefore, research exploring the extent to which ESP programs prepare medical students for effective communication in multicultural and multilingual environments is highly relevant and urgent (Keshmiri, 2023; Albert, 2022).

This study aims to fill the identified research gap by investigating how the integration of ESP into the medical curriculum supports the development of cross-cultural communication skills among medical students. It is hoped that the results of this research will provide valuable insights that can inform the design of more comprehensive and adaptive medical curricula, which in turn can meet the communication needs of health workers in the current global era ("Exploration of the Path for Local College ESP Teaching to Empower Common Prosperity ", 2023; Alsamadani, 2017). By focusing attention on the intersection of ESP and cross-cultural communication, this research will contribute to the ongoing discourse regarding improving medical education and increasing the quality of health care provided to diverse patient populations.

In medical education, mastery of effective communication skills is essential to ensure optimal interactions between doctors and patients, especially in multicultural and multilingual settings. However, how the integration of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in medical curricula can influence the development of cross-cultural communication skills in medical students remains a question that has not been answered in depth. The need to understand the role of ESP in facilitating cross-cultural communication has become increasingly crucial given the increasing cultural diversity in medical practice environments. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the main question: How does the integration of ESP in the medical curriculum influence the development of cross-cultural communication skills of medical students in a multicultural and multilingual environment?

This research has three main objectives. First, analyze existing literature related to the impact of ESP integration in medical curricula on the development of cross-cultural communication skills in medical students. Through this analysis, it is hoped that general trends, effective pedagogical approaches, and various results achieved from ESP programs in various medical educational institutions can be identified. Second, this study aims to identify factors that influence the effectiveness of the ESP program in improving medical students' cross-cultural communication skills. These factors can include the teaching approach, the quality of teaching materials, the language and cultural background of students, and the learning environment applied. By understanding these factors, it is hoped that strategies can be found that can be implemented to increase the success of

the ESP program. Third, this research will provide recommendations for improving the ESP curriculum in medical education. It is hoped that these recommendations will provide guidance for developing curricula that are more responsive to the needs of cross-cultural communication in medical environments, as well as supporting medical students' achievement of competency in communicating effectively and empathetically in multicultural and multilingual environments. This study raises the following research question:

1. How does the integration of ESP in the medical curriculum affect the development of cross-cultural communication skills of medical students?
2. What factors influence the effectiveness of ESP in developing medical students' cross-cultural communication skills?

This research has high significance in the context of medical curriculum development, especially in improving the quality of ESP teaching for medical students. The results of this study will make an important contribution by providing empirical evidence regarding how ESP can support the development of cross-cultural communication skills, which are critical skills in medical interactions. This empirical evidence can be a basis for decision makers in medical education institutions to evaluate and revise the existing ESP curriculum, so that it can be more effective in preparing medical students to practice in a multicultural and multilingual environment.

Apart from that, this research is also expected to provide new insights for educators and researchers in the field of medical education regarding approaches that can be applied to improve cross-cultural communication competence through ESP. The results of this research can be used as a guide to improve the quality of ESP teaching in the context of medical education, so that it can support the achievement of a more holistic medical education goal, namely producing health workers who are not only clinically competent, but also able to communicate effectively with patients from various backgrounds. cultural background. Thus, it is hoped that this research can make a significant contribution to improving the overall quality of health services.

METHODS

Research Design

This research adopts an approach systematic literature review to identify, analyze, and synthesize relevant research results regarding the influence of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) on students' cross-cultural communication skills. The systematic literature review method was chosen because of its ability to provide a comprehensive overview of existing literature, identify knowledge gaps, and offer evidence-based recommendations for curriculum improvement. It is hoped that this approach will provide in-depth insight into how the integration of ESP in medical education can contribute to the development of effective communication skills in multicultural and multilingual environments.

Literature Search Protocol

Data source: A literature search will be conducted through several leading academic databases, incl PubMed, Scopus, ERIC, and Google Scholar. This database was chosen because of its diversity in providing access to journal articles quality and relevant in the fields of medical education and linguistics.

Keywords: To optimize search, some of the keywords used are:

1. “English for Specific Purposes”
2. “Medical students”
3. “Health communication”
4. “intercultural communication”
5. “multilingual settings”
6. “medical curriculum”

It is hoped that this combination of keywords can direct researchers to articles that specifically discuss the relationship between ESP and communication skills in the context of medical education. Inclusion Criteria: Articles that. Those included in this research must meet the following criteria:

1. Published within the last 10 years to ensure that the data used is the latest
2. information.
3. Written in English to ensure accessibility for researchers.
4. Focuses on ESP in the context of medical education, both in terms of theory and practice.

Exclusion Criteria: Articles that are not followed the following criteria will be excluded from the analysis:

1. Not directly related to ESP.
2. Does not involve medical students as research subjects.
3. This is a literature review that does not present primary data or research results.

Study Selection Process

The study selection process will be carried out through several systematic steps:

1. Initial Screening: Initial screening is carried out based on the title and abstract of the article to assess initial relevance. Articles that appear suitable will be considered for the next stage.
2. Full-text Review: Articles that pass the initial screening will be checked thoroughly (full-text review) to assess suitability for the inclusion criteria. At this stage, researchers will pay attention to the methodology, population, and results reported in each study.
3. Use of PRISMA Tools: The study selection process will use tools PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) to ensure the methodological quality of the selected studies. PRISMA will assist in documenting the flow of article selection, from the initial search to the final article analyzed, thereby increasing transparency and research productivity.

Data analysis

Data analysis was carried out with the following steps:

1. Coding Key Findings: The main findings of the selected studies will be held to identify relevant information, including the impact of ESP on cross-cultural communication skills. This coding aims to facilitate data synthesis and drawing conclusions.
2. Narrative Synthesis: The coded data will be narratively synthesized to identify patterns, gaps, and key themes that emerge from the existing literature. Narrative synthesis allows researchers to present research results in a broader context, providing insight into the relationships between ESP and cross-cultural

communication skills, and offers evidence-based recommendations for improving medical curricula.

By using this systematic literature review method, it is hoped that this research can make a significant contribution to the development of a medical education curriculum that is more effective and responsive to communication needs in a multicultural and multilingual health environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The integration of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) into medical curricula is increasingly recognized as important in improving cross-cultural communication skills among medical students. The literature shows that a well-structured ESP program can significantly improve students' ability to communicate effectively with patients from various cultural backgrounds. This increase is largely due to ESP's focus on specific medical terminology and contextualization of communication skills relevant to clinical practice. For example, research shows that students who take ESP courses report increased confidence in interacting with patients from various cultural contexts, as they become more adept at understanding language nuances and cultural differences that influence medical communication (Setyowati, 2023; Rahman, 2015).

Additionally, the practical application of ESP in medical training facilitates the development of empathy and cultural sensitivity among students. Real learning experiences, such as role-playing and simulations, are an integral part of mastering essential communication skills necessary for effective health care (Chaovanapricha, 2023). This experiential learning approach not only improves linguistic competence, but also promotes a deeper understanding of patient needs, thereby improving overall health care outcomes (Apriliana & Basikin, 2021; Astuti, 2023).

However, the effectiveness of ESP programs in developing cross-cultural communication skills is influenced by several critical factors. The quality of teaching is a major factor; educators who have a deep understanding of cross-cultural communication and implement effective pedagogical strategies can significantly improve students' learning experiences (Huynh, 2021). In addition, the relevance of the curriculum plays an important role. An ESP curriculum that is not adapted to students' specific cultural and social context can lead to a lack of engagement and decreased motivation, which ultimately undermines the effectiveness of the program (Hajar & Triastuti, 2021).

Access to adequate facilities and resources, including relevant teaching materials and technology, is also important for the successful implementation of an ESP program. Limitations in this area can hinder the learning process and application of cross-cultural communication skills (Muñoz-Alcón, 2023). Additionally, student participation is an important component; active engagement in discussions and practical exercises correlates with better skill acquisition (Siddiqui et al., 2017). Therefore, creating an interactive and supportive learning environment is critical to maximizing the benefits of integrating ESP in medical education.

In conclusion, integration of ESP into the medical curriculum offers substantial benefits in developing cross-cultural communication skills among medical students. While their positive impacts are well documented, attention must be paid to the quality of teaching, curriculum relevance, resource availability, and student engagement to ensure the effectiveness of these programs.

From these findings, it is clear that although the integration of ESP in the medical curriculum shows a positive influence on students' cross-cultural communication skills, the success of the program is influenced by various factors. Therefore, it is important to formulate a comprehensive strategy to increase the effectiveness of the ESP program, so that it can optimally support the development of essential communication skills for medical students. Overall, the results of this study provide a valuable contribution to the development of medical curricula, with recommendations for increasing the integration of ESP as well as paying attention to factors that can influence the success of this program in improving medical students' cross-cultural communication skills.

Research Gap Analysis

Although various studies have been carried out regarding tomorrow's English for Specific Purposes (ESP) In the context of medical education, there are still several gaps that need to be considered in the existing literature. This gap covers several aspects that are crucial for further research development.

1. **Gaps in Literacy Regarding the Effects of ESP in Different Countries and Cultures**

Current literature tends to focus on the context of medical education in developed countries, such as the United States and several European countries. This creates a gap in understanding of how ESP is implemented and its impact in countries with different educational systems and cultures. Research in developing countries or in regions with diverse cultural backgrounds is still limited, making it difficult to describe the comprehensive influence of ESP in a global context. Additionally, differences in culture and communication practices in different countries may influence the way medical students interact with patients. Therefore, further research is needed to explore how specific cultural factors may influence the effectiveness of ESP programs in the development of cross-cultural communication skills.

3. **Need for Further Research to Evaluate the Effectiveness of ESP Using Empirical Methods**

Much of the existing research is descriptive and qualitative, so it does not provide strong empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of ESP programs. There is an urgent need to apply more empirical and quantitative research methodologies in evaluating the impact of ESP on medical students' communication skills. Methods such as surveys, controlled experiments, or longitudinal studies can provide more robust and generalizable data about the effectiveness of ESP programs. Quantitative research can help in identifying clearer relationships between ESP integration and the development of cross-cultural communication skills. With stronger empirical data, the results of this research can be used to support decision making in developing more effective medical education curricula and policies.

Discussions

Interpretation of Findings

The findings of this study indicate that integration English for Specific Purposes (ESP) dThe nature of the medical curriculum has a significant impact on the development of cross-cultural communication skills in medical students. From the literature analysis carried out, there is strong evidence that the ESP program not only improves students' English language skills, but also enriches their understanding of the dynamics of communication in a multicultural medical environment.

Effective communication skills are especially important in healthcare contexts, where medical students often encounter patients from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Thus, learning focused on specific medical contexts through ESP allows students to develop the sensitivity and skills necessary to interact with patients effectively. These results strengthen the argument that relevant and contextual language education can help students not only in linguistic aspects, but also in social and cultural aspects of communication.

Implications of Research Results for ESP Teaching Practices in Medical Faculties

The results of this study have significant implications for the practice of ESP teaching in medical schools. First, ESP curricula need to be designed taking into account the specific communication context and challenges faced by medical students in interacting with patients. This can include the development of teaching materials that reflect real situations in the field, as well as the practice of simulating interactions with patients from various cultural backgrounds.

Second, training of ESP educators is also important to ensure that they have a deep understanding of the medical context and the challenges of cross-cultural communication. Competent teachers can guide students in understanding the nuances of language and culture that influence their interactions in the workplace.

Comparison of the Results of This Research with Previous Studies

When compared with previous studies, the results of this study are consistent with several findings indicating that ESP has a positive impact on medical students' communication skills. However, in contrast to other studies that focus more on the linguistic aspects of ESP, this study emphasizes the importance of cross-cultural communication skills, which are often overlooked in the existing literature. Additionally, this research expands the scope of previous studies by highlighting the need for further research in multicultural and multilingual contexts. The limitations found in previous studies, especially in terms of empirical methodology, emphasize the need for a more systematic and data-driven approach in evaluating the effectiveness of ESP programs.

Thus, this study not only provides additional evidence regarding the benefits of ESP, but also illustrates the urgent need to develop teaching practices that are more adaptive and responsive to the communication challenges those medical students face in today's global era.

Research Limitations

The limitations of this study need to be acknowledged to provide a more thorough understanding of the validity and generalizability of the findings. First, the scope of studies included in this systematic literature review is limited to articles published within the last ten years. While this approach ensures that the literature used is relevant and up to date, it can also ignore earlier research that

may have important contributions to the understanding of the role of ESP in medical education.

Additionally, a focus on publications in English may limit understanding of approaches and results that may have been produced in other cultural and linguistic contexts. Therefore, gaps in study coverage could potentially influence the overall findings and conclusions drawn from this study.

Potential Bias in Literature Selection and Analysis Methods

Second, there is potential bias in the selection of literature which could influence the results of the analysis. The process of screening and selecting studies based on title and abstract can lead to incompleteness in identifying relevant research. Established inclusion and exclusion criteria, although necessary to maintain research focus, may also result in the omission of studies that may hold valuable insights into the impact of ESP on cross-cultural communication skills.

Furthermore, the analytical method used in this research, namely narrative synthesis, can potentially encounter subjectivity in interpreting and categorizing findings from different studies. Although the PRISMA tool was used to ensure the methodological quality of the selected studies, variations in research design and the different contexts of each study may result in differences in interpretation that influence the final results. In this context, it is important for future researchers to consider a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to literature selection as well as the use of analytical methods that allow a more objective assessment of the available data. In this way, it is hoped that a deeper and more holistic understanding of the influence of ESP in the development of cross-cultural communication skills among medical students can be achieved.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings and limitations identified in this study, there are several recommendations for further research that can enrich understanding of the influence of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the context of medical education, especially in the development of cross-cultural communication skills.

The need for more in-depth empirical research using experimental research designs

One of the main recommendations is the need for more in-depth empirical research, using experimental research designs to evaluate the effectiveness of ESP programs in improving cross-cultural communication skills. The experimental design allows researchers to control variables and assess the direct impact of ESP integration in the medical curriculum. By conducting measurable interventions and observing changes in students' communication skills, research results can provide stronger evidence regarding the impact of ESP in the context of medical education.

This kind of research can be conducted involving a control group and an experimental group, where one group receives structured ESP instruction and the other group follows a standard curriculum. The results obtained will allow a clearer evaluation of how effective the ESP program is in facilitating cross-cultural communication skills.

Further Studies Regarding the Application of ESP in Various Cultural and Institutional Contexts

The second recommendation is to continue studies that explore the application of ESP in various cultural and institutional contexts. Given the cultural diversity that exists throughout the world, research in different countries and medical educational institutions can provide valuable insight into how local contexts influence the effectiveness of ESP in developing cross-cultural communication skills.

These studies could include comparative analyzes between institutions that adopt ESP curricula differently, as well as how each cultural and social context contributes to learning outcomes. This kind of cross-cultural research can also identify best practices in ESP teaching that can be adapted or implemented globally to improve communication outcomes in the health sector. By following these recommendations, it is hoped that future research will expand the scope and depth of understanding of the role of ESP in medical education, as well as support the development of curricula that are more effective and responsive to communication needs in multicultural health environments.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the integration of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the medical curriculum has significant potential in improving medical students' cross-cultural communication skills. In an increasingly complex global health context, the ability to communicate effectively with patients from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds has become critical. Results from the literature review indicate that well-designed ESP programs not only improve understanding of medical language, but also strengthen students' ability to interact with patients in a sensitive and relevant manner.

These findings provide a strong basis for the development of more effective ESP curricula in medical education, especially in multicultural and multilingual environments. By understanding and addressing emerging communication challenges among medical students, educational institutions can implement more innovative and responsive teaching strategies. Recommendations for further research and curriculum development are expected to make a positive contribution to the quality of health services provided by medical graduates in the future.

Through deeper integration of ESP in medical education, it is hoped that students can be equipped with strong cross-cultural communication skills, so that they are ready to face professional challenges in this increasingly connected era of globalization.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to express my gratitude to the relevant parties involved in this research process, especially to colleagues who have assisted in this research, as well as the role of English for specific purposes (ESP) in promoting health communication skills among medical students who have granted permission for this research to be carried out smoothly and successfully.

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