

## INVESTIGATING THE NEEDS TO DEVELOP ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSE TEACHERS' PERCEPTION FOR ALLIED HEALTH NOVICE

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**Abstract:** Language proficiency is crucial for allied health students as they communicate with patients, peers, and other health care professionals. The study investigated and developed an English Communication Medical Allied Student's module for medical allied novices. A series of interviews were conducted to gain the essence of teacher's perceptions and insights in developing English for specific purpose courses. Based on the findings, these teachers discuss their perceptions and insights on the importance of the English language and the teaching method. The teachers were also questioned about their view on implementing English communication for medical allied students. The study recommends that an English for Medical Purposes course be offered to medical students and focus on language skills to help the students excel in the medical industry. The paper's final section highlights the implications for practice and suggestions for future research.

**Keywords:** English for Specific Purposes, Communication in English, English for Medical Purposes

### INTRODUCTION

In these advanced days, the world has become a worldwide town where individuals communicate in a common language, i.e., English. The English language is spoken globally, and it has accomplished the status of a worldwide language. English is broadly utilized for logical investigation, instruction, trade, the web, travel and tourism, media and daily papers, programs, pharmaceuticals, building, data and technology, excitement, and account management. English is the language that is utilized generally for trade correspondence and web purposes. It is the major language utilized in composing logical inquiries about articles, as more than 85% of the inquiries about distributions are in English. It is the worldwide language utilized for exchange and commerce. Indeed, in IT, most programs are composed in English, where they communicate with their colleagues or other program experts who work globally in English. Moreover, most books related to higher instruction are distributed in English. Due to their preferences for English, numerous individuals are learning the English language to accomplish productive tasks in their particular areas.

Planning an educational module which can coordinate the wants of learners and offer assistance to meet the objectives of a language course can be accomplished through a comprehensive needs analysis. Needs examination investigates what would propel learners to procure language productively. Needs examination is especially pivotal in English for Particular Purposes' educational module advancement. The reason is to distinguish the particular scholastic English language needs of Therapeutic Staff understudies in Malaysia. To plan an appropriate ESL educational module for these understudies, it is imperative to distinguish their needs by considering the instructor's focus. The outcome can be significant for planning educational modules and creating materials not only for the therapeutic understudies and educators in a Restorative Workforce in Malaysia but also for other English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course learners and teachers in ESL restorative settings around the world.

Watching the plans of the Malaysian government to extend the quality of the national workforce and to energize citizens to specialize in the well-being and pharmaceutical aspects, it is clear that there are extraordinary requirements for those expected to work in these areas to be competent, especially in terms of English, which is the language of therapeutic communication in Malaysia, including well being offices and clinics. Panikar et al. (2022) note that English is the foremost language in Malaysian healing centers and restorative centre, from patients' records to their determination and treatment, as well as for therapeutic conferences. To illustrate, when a patient is to have an operation under a multinational surgical group, whose individuals are examining the points of interest

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of the operation and its likelihood of victory or disappointment, they discover that it is simpler for this conversation to be in English, since most essential therapeutic terms are in English and have no direct national language counterparts. Subsequently, English is utilized by most if not all doctors and healthcare experts as an implication of communication, in spite of the fact that they live and work in Malaysia. This reflects the requirement for all healthcare experts to have a high level of capability in English since they bargain with a huge number of English-speaking workers in their working environments.

English language courses have shaped a required portion of the educational module of Malaysian therapeutic and well-being colleges and teachers since their foundation. Although these ESP courses make a point to prepare understudies with particular language skills needed for their scholarly requirements and target careers, the address emerges as to whether they do undoubtedly meet these needs. The significance of the need for ESP courses is no question. It may well be contended that ESP promotes learners' inspiration since it closely addresses their English language needs. Agreeing with this, NHU (2019) affirms that "the to begin with step in ESP is to distinguish the particular needs of the learner" when making a college course, planning a working environment or preparing a program. This may allow instructors to distinguish the genuine abilities that their learners will need for the activities they need to carry out in their scholarly or proficient areas (Nicoras et al., 2022).

This research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What do the academicians perceive as students' English language needs?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

For a long time, ESP has developed as a branch of English language education that also teaches speakers of other languages. ESP is seen as an approach that focuses on the needs of the learner and strives to provide the necessary language for academic and linguistic requirements. Jubhari (2022) found that ESP courses are activated by the question "Why should learners learn English?" and that 10 learners' specific learning reasons conditioned their ESP language instruction decisions. He points out that this leads to the answer. According to Yousafzai et al. (2022), ESP is "designed to meet the specific learning needs of a specific learner or group of learners, within a specific time frame, for which general English instruction is inadequate." English language instruction" (p. 207).

Wang (2022) defines ESP as the teaching of English for "practical purposes," alluding to word-related purposes and recognizing the tendency of ESP to address work-related English needs. For the same reason, Negova (2022) states: "...ESP courses are targeted at and aimed at the successful implementation of vocabulary-related or instructional parts." General English learners learn English for language proficiency itself and to pass exams. Remember that English plays a specific role for ESP learners.

Communication is the act of interaction, whether verbal or nonverbal, between two or more people. Communication is fundamental to every aspect of life and includes speech, pitch, composition, tone of voice, facial expressions, posture, eye contact, touch, and movement. Matthews et al. (2018) found that remedial students struggle to communicate effectively in English. Restorative students should be exposed to various aspects of communication in order to understand the need for good communication. The internal and external patient in healthcare (patients, families, and other professionals); Khuram et al. (2023) points out that it is important to create a student-friendly environment by removing language communication barriers.

Rao (2019) found in his research that the global community of diverse languages and cultures has accepted English as a universal language because it has almost universally identical characteristics. This statement states that English is the most universal language, or to use a more general term, that it is a global language that can be understood by any other country despite cultural and linguistic differences. Considering that this language is widely used around the world, it is no surprise that students are able to learn, understand, and master the language regardless of their academic performance.

The main focus of this paper is on teachers' perceptions in creating English communication courses. Learning to communicate English language provides a comprehensive opportunity to practice what has already been adopted from English classes for the specific purpose of gleaning content-based teaching. In this case, the teacher's job is

to act as a pioneer and companion, guiding students in understanding the topic and supporting them in their pursuit of further learning progress. "We learn by understanding language at a level slightly beyond our current ability. Linguistic aids are used for this purpose. Learn languages when you ask questions and memorize modern things. To be influenced by strategies, this goal, in conjunction with the movement towards communicative education in subsequent decades, meant that ESP professionals developed communicative competence to use ESP in specific target situations (Zelter, 2022)

The present study was therefore carried out in order to broaden the scope of studies undertaken so far in the area of teacher's perceptions of their language learning needs and to analyze the perception of ESP teachers from different though related academic backgrounds in relation to the problematic areas in ESP.

## METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative approach, employing a series of interviews with the five instructors with between fifteen to twenty-five years of experience teaching in the medical university picked by the researcher. The researcher and five instructors established an agreement on a schedule for interviewing them about the academicians perceive as these students' English language needs.

The researcher needed access to essential information that a questionnaire could not provide and decided to conduct an interview.

## FINDINGS

Based on the data, the researchers categorized the finding into five main categories:

- Academic and Professional Importance of English in Medical Field
- English Communication Skills
- Presentation skill/Seminars and Conference
- Problem Base Learning/Group Discussion
- English Course for Medical Learners

### *Academic and Professional Importance of English in Medical Field*

The preliminary analysed data on teachers' perception of the importance of English communication for medical allied students. When asked about the importance of English for their students' academic study and target careers, the statements of respondents of all categories showed that English play a vital role in their academics and professional life. The respondents from teachers of medicine perceived that high proficiency in English was greatly required for medical students to equip them to deal with the challenges of the modern age.

*English is most used languages nowadays. It is very important for teachers, students, and daily workers to improve their English language skills hance to make communication effective and strong with their fellows not only within the medical discourse community but also in their daily life. English being an international language should be taught to there's students as a linguistic tool from grassroot level in Medical College to a abridge their languages deficiencies keeping in view unending importance of English. ...” (T 1,24/10/23)*

*It is important to have a good English for medical student, this is because almost 98% off their courses overs in English, it is sad to see some off my student hardly can speak in English... umm...maybe we need to look into it. ...” (T 3,27/10/23)*

The medical teachers believed that English was essential for medical students to understand the materials available in their books. Students will usually cram medical literature to pass their examinations. This practice has created a barrier in their higher education and future professional fields. In their view, medical students largely need good English skills to meet international standards.

### **English Communication Skills**

In regard to English communication skills, the medical teachers believe that the teachers should follow only the English language in medical school. Therefore, English skills (i.e., listening, speaking, writing, and reading) should be practiced with great emphasis.

*A Specific English course should be tailor made for the medical student, this perhaps will improve their English language tremendously in term of reading, writing, speaking listening... umm... this is only my thought" (T 3,27/10/23)*

*"...some of the students that came to medical faculty sometimes they are not well prepared on the need of language as the courses are mainly in English, I have to always think how to help them to overcome the problem" (T 4,29/10/23)*

Issues on listening, speaking, reading and writing skills of medical students should be properly dealt with due to the international status of English. English could not be learnt in a short while. In this respect, the contents of English courses at the secondary school level are to be revised. The practice of English skills should be made necessary at all levels of education, especially at primary and secondary levels.

It was further pointed out that, in general, students in the Medical Faculty who had good core knowledge were underestimated due to their lack of proficiency in English. Using English strictly in lectures, oral discussions and exams would lower their self-confidence. Hence, a skill-based course in English before the actual medical studies should be declared compulsory for all medical students. Moreover, English writing and speaking skills should be emphasized in medical faculty.

### **Presentation skill/Seminars and Conference**

Moreover, it is agreed that compulsory presentations by students on a weekly or monthly basis should be held. Usage of English is very important for medical students, as the presentations on national and international forums in the future will require a good command of the English language.

*"It should be mandatory for the students to give presentation in English language especially in Project base learning classes in order to improve their skills of speaking English" (T 1,24/10/23)*

*The trends for conducting frequent seminars, conference and presentation in English language should be encourage. It will build up the confidence of writing, speaking and careful listening among students... perhaps they should be one of the requirements in the revamp English course..." (serious thought) (T 4,29/10/23)*

*"I suggest more standardized course should be done for medical students in order for them to face the current challenges in their job market to work internationally..." (smile) (T 5,30/10/23)*

According to the data gathered from the interview, Seminars and conferences should be arranged for maximum exposure of language skills, whenever medical students are exposed to seminars and presentations will see improvement. Moreover, a tailor-made English course for ESP should be offered to the students.

### **Problem Base Learning/Group Discussion**

However, teachers of medicine would like to suggest or recommend Problem Base Learning based on their experience, as one of the effective methods of learning English for medical purposes.

*"Most of the time problem-based learning encourage the student to speak and prepare their project work, and they generally need to communicate among their group member "is this sense the student get motivated indirectly..." (Smile) (T 2 25/10/23)*

*"Problem Base Learning can promote the development of critical thinking skill, problem solving abilities and communication skill to the students...In that sense student will be more confident" (T 4 29/10/23)*

*“I had a small set up for student to try out Problem Base Learning....it end up to be a positive. The student should be encouraged to develop their English skills by means of English language refresher process especially for the student coming from the para-perry as they lack confidence due to their inadequate proficiency in basic language positive feedback...but the syllabus does not cater for that.... hmm... I believe student will be more motivated in learning the language and will work with their team confidently later on...” (T 5 30/10/23)*

In accordance with the data, it should be compulsory for the student to attend seminars and Problem Base Learning classes. It would certainly help to improve their English language proficiency. Students will be communicating confidentially among colleagues, in presentations, in working environments and with their subordinates later.

### **English Course for Medical Learners**

Despite this, when asked for suggestions or improvements for the English course, the data shows that English courses for academic and occupational medical proposes should be added to the medical studies. The students should be encouraged to develop their English skills by means of English language refresher courses, especially for the students coming from the periphery, as they lack confidence due to their inadequate proficiency in basic language.

*I would say English course should be mandatory during the first two year of medical studies and followed by some refresher course throughout their studies as well... Moreover, medical English courses should be designated in such a way, ask the students can learn interactively within their medical environment. In a simple word, they need English language courses in which skills should be taught by means of medical activities and equipment. (T 3 27/10/23)*

*“...courses like English for specific purpose an advantage for the students because it tailor made for any medical student. for student like nursing, doctors, anesthetics and so on.” (T 5 30/10/23)*

*“Student of medicine had to compete at international platforms. They attend seminars of international level. Their medium of instruction is also in English. The students do not have a good command on English language skill. There is a ned to introduce an English language course especially ESP.” (T 5 30/10/23)*

Since English is the primary language of instruction and training in fields related to medicine, it was required that students enrolled in ESP courses possess adequate hearing, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Therefore, it would be appropriate to develop an ESP course for medically allied students.

## **DISCUSSION**

The results provide the instructors with intriguing new perspectives on how they interact with the students in their classes. The teachers believe that high English proficiency is crucial for medical students to perform their studies and jobs effectively. This includes class lectures, discussions, presentations, oral reports, and an understanding of medical terminology. Studies have been conducted to determine the English language needs of medical students in ESL contexts, as it is essential for conveying scientific, technological, and academic information globally. English is also essential for understanding lectures, reading medical textbooks and journal articles, and understanding graphs and charts.

The teacher suggests analyzing the current English course to identify and address learners' English language needs. Medical students have identified a weakness in interactive skills like listening and speaking, which should be prioritized and integrated into classroom activities. Reading and writing skills should also be addressed. Pre-reading activities can help students familiarize themselves with academic texts, while interactive tasks can help them present medical topics. Teaching clinical discourse, common vocabulary, and lexical phrases used by doctors, as well as role-play activities, can help students practice communicating with foreign patients in real-life situations.

Teachers believe that problem-based learning motivates students and increases their confidence. Maslow's theory suggests that growth and support increase self-actualization. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory emphasizes that learners in different sociocultural contexts advance cognitive development through social interactions. Authentic

engagement versus pseudo-problems allows for organic, cognitive, and interconnected thought. Facilitators play a vital role in engaging students' Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) through real-world problems and collaboration.

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