

EFFECTIVE METHODS FOR TEACHING MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY TO A1-LEVEL MEDICAL STUDENTS: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Medical terminology is essential for future healthcare professionals. However, for A1-level learners of English, understanding and using medical terms is a major challenge. This article explores theoretical and practical methods for teaching medical terminology to beginner-level medical students. It focuses on learner-centered techniques such as flashcards, videos, storytelling, role plays, and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). Though based on theoretical insights, the article reflects classroom strategies that can help students learn and remember medical vocabulary more effectively.

Introduction

Medical English plays a critical role in the education of healthcare students. In many non-English speaking countries, students at the medical college level begin learning English from a basic (A1) level. These learners often struggle to understand long and complex medical terms. Therefore, teachers must use creative, student-friendly methods. This article presents theoretical and practical approaches for introducing medical vocabulary to A1-level learners in a medical college context.

2. Theoretical Background

Teaching medical English requires an understanding of both language learning theories and subject-specific needs. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987),

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) focuses on the needs of the learner and the specific language of their field. For beginner students, Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis suggests that learners improve when they receive understandable input. Vygotsky (1978) also emphasized the Zone of Proximal Development, where students learn best with support. These ideas support using visual, interactive, and supportive techniques in the classroom.

3. Effective Strategies for A1-Level Learners

3.1 Flashcards and Visual Aids

Flashcards are simple and effective for low-level learners. Teachers can present pictures of body parts, medical tools, or symptoms along with the English terms. This helps learners connect images with meaning and pronunciation.

3.2 Videos and Subtitled Clips

Short medical videos with subtitles give students visual context. Watching simple procedures or doctor-patient conversations can improve both listening skills and medical vocabulary.

3.3 Role Plays

Role-playing allows students to act as doctors, nurses, or patients. For example, a student can say: "What is your problem?" and another can reply: "I have a headache." These small conversations reinforce key phrases and terms in real-life situations.

3.4 Storytelling

Teachers can create simple stories using medical terms. For example, "Ali is a nurse. He works in a hospital. One day, a patient came with chest pain..." This technique improves reading and listening while keeping students engaged.

3.5 CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)

CLIL involves teaching subject content (like body systems or diseases) in English. This helps learners improve language and subject knowledge at the same time. For A1 students, teachers can start with very basic content such as "The heart pumps blood" with images and actions.

4. Classroom Benefits and Challenges

The use of these strategies helps students better understand and remember medical terms. In classes where teachers used flashcards, role plays, and CLIL, students answered vocabulary quizzes more successfully. However, challenges include students' low language confidence and lack of exposure to English outside class. Teachers must provide continuous support and create a positive learning environment.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Teaching medical terminology to A1-level learners requires clear, visual, and interactive strategies. Flashcards, storytelling, videos, and CLIL offer promising results. Though this article is based on theoretical models, it offers practical methods for beginner medical students. Future research and classroom observations can provide deeper insights into which techniques are most effective over time.

References

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