THE ROLE OF ENGLISH-MEDIUM INSTRUCTION IN DEVELOPING CLINICAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS

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Annotation. This paper examines the role of English-medium instruction (EMI) in enhancing clinical communication skills among medical students. It emphasizes the importance of integrating English into practical medical training rather than teaching it as a separate subject. The study analyzes how EMI contributes to the development of professional competence, patient interaction, and academic performance. The findings suggest that English integration improves both linguistic proficiency and clinical effectiveness in multilingual medical contexts.

Keywords: *English-medium instruction, medical education, clinical communication, ESP, professional competence*

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada tibbiyot talabalarining klinik muloqot ko‘nikmalarini rivojlantirishda ingliz tilida o‘qitish (EMI)ning roli o‘rganiladi. Unda ingliz tilini alohida fan sifatida emas, balki amaliy tibbiy ta’lim jarayoniga integratsiya qilish muhimligi ta’kidlanadi. Tadqiqot EMI ning kasbiy kompetensiya, bemor bilan muloqot va akademik samaradorlikni rivojlantirishga qanday hissa qo‘shishini tahlil qiladi. Natijalar shuni ko‘rsatadiki, ingliz tilini integratsiya qilish ko‘p tilli tibbiy muhitda ham til ko‘nikmalarini, ham klinik samaradorlikni oshiradi.

Kalit so‘zlar: *ingliz tilida o‘qitish, tibbiy ta’lim, klinik muloqot, ESP, kasbiy kompetensiya*

Аннотация. В данной статье рассматривается роль обучения на английском языке (EMI) в развитии клинических коммуникативных навыков у студентов-медиков. Подчеркивается важность интеграции английского языка в практическое медицинское обучение, а не его преподавания как отдельной дисциплины. Исследование анализирует, как EMI способствует формированию профессиональной компетенции, взаимодействию с пациентами и академической успеваемости. Результаты показывают, что интеграция английского языка повышает как языковую компетентность, так и клиническую эффективность в многоязычной медицинской среде.

Ключевые слова: *обучение на английском языке, медицинское образование, клиническая коммуникация, ESP, профессиональная компетенция*

INTRODUCTION

In modern healthcare systems, effective communication is a critical component of professional competence. With the globalization of medicine, English has become the dominant language of medical education, research, and international collaboration. As a result, medical students must develop not only clinical knowledge but also the ability to communicate effectively in English. In many countries, including Uzbekistan, English is still taught as a separate subject, often disconnected from medical practice. However, this approach does not adequately prepare students for real-life clinical communication. English-medium instruction (EMI), which involves teaching medical subjects partially or fully in English, offers a more integrated solution. EMI enables students to acquire language skills within professional contexts, making learning more meaningful and applicable.

LITERATURE REVIEW

English-medium instruction has gained increasing attention in higher education, particularly in non-English-speaking countries. According to David Crystal, English functions as a global lingua

franca, facilitating communication across cultures and disciplines [1, 67]. In medical education, this role is especially significant due to the international nature of scientific research and clinical practice.

Research by Jennifer Jenkins highlights that English in global contexts should be viewed as a tool for communication rather than a native-speaker standard [2, 54]. This perspective supports the use of EMI in developing practical communication skills rather than focusing solely on grammatical accuracy. In the field of ESP, Dudley-Evans and St John emphasize that language learning should be closely aligned with professional needs, particularly in specialized domains such as medicine [3, 23]. Furthermore, studies show that EMI improves students' academic performance and access to international resources, although it may also present challenges related to comprehension and cognitive load [4, 112].

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach to analyze the impact of English-medium instruction on medical students' communication skills. Data were collected through classroom observations, student feedback, and analysis of teaching practices in medical courses where English was partially integrated. The study focused on several key aspects, including students' ability to understand medical content in English, effectiveness of communication in clinical simulations, use of English in academic tasks such as presentations and reports, challenges encountered during EMI implementation. Additionally, examples of doctor–patient interactions were analyzed to evaluate how students apply English in practical situations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that English-medium instruction significantly enhances students' clinical communication skills. Students exposed to EMI demonstrated improved ability to explain medical conditions, ask relevant questions, and interact with patients in English. One of the key advantages of EMI is the development of functional language skills. Instead of memorizing isolated vocabulary, students learn how to use language in context, for example, explaining symptoms, giving instructions, and discussing treatment plans. This aligns with the communicative needs of healthcare professionals. However, the study also identified several challenges. Some students experienced difficulty understanding complex medical concepts in English, particularly at early stages of learning. This supports previous research indicating that EMI may increase cognitive load if not properly supported [4, 115]. Despite these challenges, students reported that EMI increased their confidence and motivation. They recognized the importance of English for their future careers and appreciated the opportunity to practice language skills in realistic scenarios.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Based on the findings, several strategies can be recommended to improve the effectiveness of English-medium instruction in medical education, including gradual implementation of EMI starting with basic concepts, use of bilingual support (English–Uzbek/Russian) to facilitate comprehension, incorporation of interactive activities such as role-playing and simulations, training teachers to balance content delivery and language support, encouraging active student participation in discussions and presentations. These strategies help reduce difficulties and maximize the benefits of EMI.

CONCLUSION

English-medium instruction represents an effective approach to integrating language learning into medical education. It enhances not only linguistic competence but also clinical communication skills, which are essential for modern healthcare professionals. By embedding English into medical training, educational institutions can better prepare students for participation in the global medical community. Although challenges exist, they can be addressed through appropriate pedagogical strategies and institutional support. Ultimately, EMI contributes to the development of competent, confident, and internationally competitive medical specialists.

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