



STRATEGIES FOR COMPREHENDING AND COMMUNICATING AUTHENTIC MEDICAL CASE REPORTS IN ENGLISH FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES

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Abstract

One of the key challenges in Medical English instruction is fostering students' ability to engage with authentic materials which closely mirror the texts they will encounter in their professional careers. Our research was motivated by the goal of optimizing the teaching and learning process of English for Medical Purposes through the use of authentic materials. We employed an exploratory research design, collecting data through a researcher-developed questionnaire that examined students' perceptions of authentic materials, the strategies they use to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words, and their self-assessment of mediation abilities. The study involved 50 first-year university students enrolled in a Medical English course. Participants first relayed specific information from medical case reports, then summarized and simplified it, and finally presented their findings to the class. Authentic materials were perceived as highly beneficial, offering realistic and context-rich learning experiences. However, for most students, they were difficult to comprehend. The findings indicate that students primarily relied on contextual clues and prior knowledge to infer the meanings of unfamiliar words. Additionally, while mediation tasks enhanced students' ability to transform complex medical language into clear, professional communication, respondents assessed their mediation abilities as average, indicating a need for further development in this area. The findings of this study support the integration of authentic medical case reports into English for Medical Purposes classes. While these texts offer undeniable benefits—such as real-world relevance, vocabulary expansion, and the development of essential reading strategies—they also present challenges, particularly in terms of lexical complexity. Therefore, their implementation must be carefully structured, incorporating scaffolding techniques and targeted instructional support to maximize student learning outcomes.

Keywords

English for Medical Purposes, authentic medical texts, mediation strategies, reading comprehension, unfamiliar words

Introduction

Medical English is a specialized and highly technical form of language used within specific professional contexts. Unlike general English learning, it extends beyond grammar and structure to focus on mastering the language necessary for clinical practice and professional communication (Hull, 2022).

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2020) highlights the importance of incorporating real-life tasks into language instruction, emphasizing the need to address practical communicative requirements. In line with this approach, one of the key challenges in Medical English instruction is fostering students' ability to engage with authentic materials, such as case reports, which closely mirror the texts they will encounter in their professional careers (García-Ostbye – Martínez-Sáez, 2023). Thus, our research focuses on optimizing the teaching and learning of English for Medical Purposes through authentic materials, particularly medical case reports. These reports expose learners to complex medical discourse, requiring them to infer meanings of unfamiliar terminology and mediate specialized information—both essential skills for comprehension and professional communication. Reading, comprehending and mediating scientific texts requires the application of diverse strategies, methods, and skills. Gavora (2012) defines text comprehension as a process of interpretation, involving searching for meaning, explaining content based on prior world knowledge, and employing various cognitive abilities.

Recognizing the cognitive processes involved in deciphering and comprehending unknown medical terms, exploring how learners transform complex medical language into accessible discourse are crucial for refining teaching methodologies and effectively integrating them into Medical English instruction. While traditional approaches remain dominant in Medical English instruction, there is growing interest in innovative educational trends that integrate authentic materials to enhance learning outcomes.



1 Authentic materials

Authentic materials are defined as resources derived from real-world contexts rather than materials created solely for pedagogical purposes (Benavent – Peñamaría, 2011). The integration of authentic materials in Medical English instruction aligns with modern educational priorities, offering significant advantages. By mirroring real-world professional environments, these materials support a learner-centered approach, as advocated by the CEFR Companion Volume (2020). This not only enhances student motivation but also ensures relevance to their future careers. While standard coursebooks and ready-made teaching materials may not always address students' specific needs, authentic materials provide exposure to real-life medical interactions, reinforce professional terminology, and foster adaptability in communication.

Beyond linguistic development, authentic materials contribute to essential 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking and problem-solving. Authenticity has long been recognized as a cornerstone of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) methodology, with research highlighting its effectiveness in improving language retention, comprehension, motivation, professional development, engagement, and learner confidence (Eimulienė – Janulienė – Medvedeva, 2019; García-Ostbye – Martínez-Sáez, 2023; Mitrulescu – Negoescu, 2024; Namaziandost et al., 2021; Padley, 2022). In English for Medical Purposes (EMP), authentic materials can be categorized by their relevance to medical settings. These include clinical documentation like case reports and medical records, educational materials such as research articles and clinical guidelines, and multimedia resources like medical videos and podcasts. Informational materials, such as brochures and instructional videos, help with patient communication, while communication materials, including emails and consent forms, focus on professional exchanges. Broadcast texts, like news articles and documentaries, present medical topics to the public, and web-based resources, including medical websites and forums, provide access to current medical knowledge. To maximize the effectiveness of authentic materials in the classroom, Widyastuti (2017) emphasizes two key considerations. First, the materials should be relevant to the topic and align with learners' interests. Second, tasks involving authentic materials should be engaging and designed to foster critical thinking skills.

Despite their numerous benefits, the use of authentic materials also presents challenges. Eimulienė et al. (2019) identify two primary difficulties. The first is language proficiency, as authentic texts can be particularly challenging for learners below the B2 level. However, this can be mitigated through carefully structured tasks that scaffold learning and support comprehension (Béřešová, 2015). The second challenge is the time-consuming nature of preparing authentic materials for classroom use. To address this, students can be encouraged to actively search for authentic materials from reliable online sources. This approach not only alleviates the burden on educators but also helps students develop essential research skills and promotes greater autonomy in learning.

By incorporating authentic materials thoughtfully, Medical English instruction can become more engaging, relevant, and effective, equipping students with the linguistic and cognitive skills necessary for professional success.

1.1 Inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words

Dania and Adha (2020) highlight that a high concentration of unfamiliar words presents significant challenges when working with authentic texts. This observation aligns closely with the objectives of my research, which includes analyzing the use of lexical inference strategies learners use to decode complex terminology, particularly in specialized domains like medical English. Understanding these processes sheds light on how students draw on linguistic and contextual knowledge to make sense of unfamiliar vocabulary, contributing to a deeper understanding of language acquisition and comprehension mechanisms. Psycholinguistics, which examines the cognitive aspects of language processing, provides a valuable framework for this study. A key concern in this field is how individuals recognize, access, and comprehend unfamiliar words, particularly in complex linguistic contexts (Horváthová – Pokrivčáková, 2023). As previously mentioned, authentic materials are not specifically designed for language learners and often contain advanced vocabulary and complex grammatical structures, which can hinder comprehension. Learners often face the task of decoding unfamiliar terminology that requires a combination of linguistic clues and contextual knowledge to interpret. Understanding how learners process such texts is crucial for enhancing their ability to comprehend specialized content. According to Alseweed (2005), readers employ different word-solving strategies, such as guessing or inferring, consulting external sources like dictionaries or glossaries, and ignoring or skipping unknown words. Inferring word meanings while reading is one of the most effective strategies for vocabulary acquisition (Jogulu, 2024). This process, commonly known as guessing from context, is a strategy to decipher unknown words by relying on contextual clues, prior knowledge, and overall text comprehension. It considers various factors, including text structure, surrounding words, and the reader's



familiarity with the subject. The success of this strategy is influenced by four key factors: the overall text, the unknown words, the contextual clues within the text, and the reader's prior knowledge, which includes their language proficiency and familiarity with the content.

Strategies that focus on inferring word meanings through context can improve reading efficiency. Juliana (2016) emphasizes that learners can strengthen this skill by analyzing word morphology, identifying contextual clues, and drawing on prior knowledge and experiences. By effectively utilizing these strategies, learners can infer the meanings of unfamiliar words with greater accuracy. Supporting this, Depalina (2019) found that non-native speakers can correctly deduce the meanings of 40-80% of challenging words using contextual clues. Research has shown that second language learners employ various strategies to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words. These strategies can be categorized in different ways by various authors. For example, Jogulu (2024) identifies techniques such as analyzing word parts (e.g. prefixes, roots), using sentence or passage context, and drawing on prior knowledge. Wesche and Paribakht (2010) distinguish between linguistic clues, like word morphology and sentence structure, and non-linguistic clues, such as topic knowledge and prior familiarity.

Prior knowledge and background knowledge significantly enhance the ability to infer meaning, particularly in Medical English. Research highlights the crucial role of these factors in comprehending specialized texts. Ashrafzadeh et al. (2015) found that medical students outperformed TEFL students in understanding medical texts, emphasizing the importance of background knowledge and topic familiarity in processing specialized content. In the context of medical education, successful comprehension of medical texts depends on both background knowledge and familiarity with the subject matter. While background knowledge provides a broad framework for understanding, subject matter familiarity offers deeper insights into specific content. The interaction between these two types of knowledge significantly enhances reading comprehension, making them essential components of effective learning in medical contexts.

1.2 Mediation activities and strategies

Effective communication and mediation are crucial skills in academic and professional settings, particularly in fields requiring the exchange of complex information. This process emphasizes the importance of simplifying and summarizing complex content to facilitate mutual understanding and enhance communication skills.

In the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2020), mediation was introduced as a fourth mode of communication, alongside reception, production, and interaction. As part of the CEFR's action-oriented approach, mediation emphasizes the conscious adaptation of speech to specific situations and audiences, ensuring that communication is clear and comprehensible. It involves a range of activities and strategies where learners act as social agents, helping to construct or convey meaning. This can occur within the same language (intralinguistic mediation) or between different languages (interlinguistic mediation). The CEFR outlines three primary groups of mediation activities: Mediating a text, which involves tasks such as relaying specific information, explaining data, processing or reformulating text, translating written content, and note-taking; Mediating concepts, which facilitates collaborative interaction; and Mediating communication, which helps bridge understanding and enables effective communication, especially when individuals have different sociocultural, sociolinguistic, or intellectual perspectives. Successful mediation requires cognitive skills, such as selecting, analyzing, predicting, problem-solving, and activating critical thinking. These skills enable the user to evaluate the source information, extract relevant content, and adapt it to meet the demands of the task. When processing the content of the source text for the recipient, the following strategies to 'clarify meaning and facilitate understanding' are employed (Council of Europe, 2020):

Strategies to explain a new concept

- linking new information to prior knowledge
- breaking down complex information (clarifying by creating a series of steps, bullet points or identifying the main points)
- adapting language (using synonyms, similes, simplification or paraphrasing)

Strategies to simplify a text:

- amplifying dense content (enabling understanding of a complex text by paraphrasing, modifying style or giving examples)
- streamlining the text (enabling understanding of a complex text by highlighting relevant points and excluding irrelevant points)

While learning to mediate is an ongoing and often challenging process, these strategies can be developed through pedagogical practices. According to Stathopoulou et al. (2023), an effective mediator is one who is trained to



activate a range of strategies to process, interpret, and convey information from the source language into the target language, ensuring successful communication. Implementing mediation activities and strategies in English for Medical Purposes is both relevant and beneficial. Most existing studies explore students' perspectives, confirming that mediation is perceived as useful and effective in English language learning and teaching (Liontou – Braidwood, 2021; Lehtonen et al., 2023). However, limited research exists on the implementation of mediation activities in language teaching, as well as the application of the new CEFR descriptors for mediation and the use of self- or peer-assessment.

2 Materials and methods

This study aims to explore the following research questions:

RQ1: How do students perceive the use of authentic texts in learning English for Medical Purposes?

RQ2: What factors influence the ability of a learner to infer and comprehend medical text?

RQ3: How confident are students in mediating information in speech, and what mediation strategies do they primarily use to clarify meaning and enhance understanding?

To address these questions, a two-phase data collection process was implemented. Conducted in December 2024, the study began with a task-based activity designed to engage students with authentic medical texts. In the second phase, a questionnaire was administered to gather insights into their experiences, challenges, and self-perceived competencies in comprehending and mediating medical content. The activity required students to independently search for a case report on gastrointestinal diseases from reputable online sources such as PubMed, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), or other medical databases. Once the case reports were selected, students carefully read and analyzed the texts. The analysis centered on relaying key elements, including the patient's personal data, medical history, family history, the symptoms, diagnosis, and the treatment protocols outlined in the case. Next, students simplified and summarized the information they had gathered. This involved creating structured notes that paraphrased and explained complex medical terminology, transforming the material into a concise and accessible format. The final part of this phase required students to present their findings to the class.

After completing the task, students were given a questionnaire, designed by the researcher, to explore their experiences with authentic medical texts, the strategies they use to tackle unfamiliar terminology, and their ability to mediate and simplify complex medical information for better comprehension and communication. Questionnaires are widely recognized as effective tools for investigating the relationship between language and psychological factors, as they elicit respondents' attitudes, experiences, and emotions (Horváthová – Pokrivčáková, 2023). The questionnaire's design was inspired by the Reading Self-Efficacy Scale developed and validated by Koşar et al. (2022). To align with the study's objectives, the researcher modified the scale by incorporating additional items specifically assessing students' perspectives on medical text comprehension and mediation, based on a thorough review of relevant literature.

An online questionnaire (in Google Forms) consisted of: Heading (included an explanation of the study's purpose and informed consent to ensure ethical compliance), Demographic Section (gathered information about respondents' age, gender, and English language proficiency) and 27 items, primarily structured on a 5-point Likert scale, but also included a variety of items with other types of response options, e.g. dichotomous questions, multiple choice questions, rating scale questions. The questionnaire consisted of 3 sections:

1. *Authentic Texts in Enhancing Comprehension and Communication in Medical English* (Items 4–11) which explored students' experiences and perceptions of authentic materials in learning Medical English.
2. *Inferring the Meaning of Unfamiliar Words* (Items 12–22) which investigated the cognitive strategies students employed to process unfamiliar medical terms in authentic texts.
3. *Mediating Medical Texts* (Items 23–30) which examined students' ability to mediate medical texts by relaying specific information, simplifying complex language, and effectively presenting the information.

To ensure the questionnaire's validity, usability, and technical functionality, the questionnaire was evaluated by two independent experts in educational research, and a pilot test was conducted with a small group of students. Their feedback was incorporated to refine the final version of the questionnaire.

The cross-sectional survey was conducted in January 2025. The sample population was selected using a convenience sampling technique, as the research was carried out at the Jessenius Faculty of Medicine, Comenius University, Martin. Invitations to participate, along with a link to the questionnaire, were sent via the university's email services to 60 first-year students enrolled in the General Medicine program.



Table 1 Student demographics

Gender	Count (N=50)	%
Male	18	36
Female	32	64
English language proficiency		
B2	38	74
C1	12	24

Responses were open from January 15, 2025 to January 30, 2025. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the study participants (N = 50). The sample consisted of 32 female students (64%) and 18 male students (36%). In terms of English language proficiency, the majority of students (74%) reported a B2 level, while 24% had a C1 level.

3 Results

The analysis of the data collected follows the internal logic of the research tool, which is divided into 3 areas:

3.1 Authentic Texts in Enhancing Comprehension and Communication

A majority of students (60%) reported that they had not been exposed to medicine-related authentic texts in English before. Despite this, 74% found such materials very useful for learning Medical English. Regarding the difficulty of comprehending the medical case report, responses varied. While 44% found it not difficult and 24% found it difficult, a notable 33% reported a moderate level of difficulty in comprehension. When asked about the practical benefits of authentic texts, an overwhelming 92% agreed and 5% strongly agreed that these materials help them prepare for real-life medical tasks in English. 72% agreed that authentic texts should be used more often in classes. Students were evenly split in their preference for non-adapted (50%) and adapted (50%) materials. However, a significant 82% agreed that non-adapted materials enhance their critical thinking and problem-solving skills when interpreting medical texts. Mean score of all items in this section is provided in Table 2.

Table 2 Mean score for students' responses related to authentic materials

Authentic texts	Mean±Standard Deviation
Authentic texts are useful for learning Medical English	3.92±0.78
The medical report used in this task was difficult to comprehend	3.42±1.13
Authentic texts help me prepare for real-life medical tasks	4.34±0.69
Authentic texts should be used more often in Medical English classes	3.88±0.77
Non-adapted texts improve my critical thinking and problem-solving skills	3.92±0.67

3.2 Inferring the Meaning of Unfamiliar Words

Table 3 Frequency (f) and percentage of clues used by the students to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words

Clues to infer the meaning of unfamiliar word	f	%
Surrounding words and sentences	42	20
Word structure (prefixes, suffixes, root words)	33	16
Word similarities in other languages you know	28	13



Familiar terms in the same field	25	12
Related words or phrases in the text	24	11
Examples provided in the text	21	10
Using cause-effect relationships	13	6
Visual aids (charts, diagrams, or images)	5	2
Sentence structure or grammatical clues	4	2

Table 3 describes the clues that students use to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words when reading medical case reports. The most frequently used clues were surrounding words and sentences (20%), followed by word structure (prefixes, suffixes, and root words) at 16%. Additionally, word similarities in other languages known to the students (13%) and familiar terms in the same field (12%) were commonly used as inference strategies. Other clues included related words or phrases in the text (11%), examples provided in the text (10%), and using cause-effect relationships (6%). Visual aids (charts, diagrams, or images) and sentence structure or grammatical clues were mentioned less frequently, with 2% of students indicating these strategies as helpful.

Table 4 Frequency (f) and percentage of factors influencing students' comprehension

Factors influencing comprehension	f	%
My general understanding of the topic or content	38	21
The overall structure and coherence of the text	33	18
My knowledge of related medical terminology	32	18
Contextual clues within the surrounding sentences or paragraphs	27	15
My prior experience with similar medical texts	22	12
My language proficiency (e.g. vocabulary, grammar knowledge)	20	11
The presence of visual aids (e.g. charts, diagrams)	10	5

Table 4 presents the factors that influence students' comprehension of medical case reports. The most frequently cited factor was general understanding of the topic or content (21%), followed by the overall structure and coherence of the text (18%) and knowledge of related medical terminology (18%). Students also reported that contextual clues within surrounding sentences or paragraphs (15%) played a role in comprehension. Other factors included prior experience with similar medical texts (12%) and language proficiency (11%). The least influential factor was the presence of visual aids (5%).

Table 5 Mean score for students' responses on prior knowledge and topic familiarity

Prior knowledge and Topic familiarity	Mean±Standard Deviation
I find it difficult to understand texts when I am unfamiliar with the broader subject matter or context	3.56±0.76
Even with high English proficiency, a lack of background knowledge about specific medical topics makes it harder for me to understand complex texts	3.80±0.76



Having prior knowledge of specialized medical terms and concepts significantly enhances my ability to comprehend medical texts	4.12±0.66
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Table 5 presents students' responses regarding the role of prior knowledge, language proficiency, and topic familiarity in medical text comprehension. The results indicate that students agree that unfamiliar subject matter or context makes texts harder to understand (mean = 3.56). Higher agreement was found for the statement that lacking background knowledge about specific medical topics affects comprehension (mean = 3.80). The strongest agreement was for the importance of prior knowledge of medical terms and concepts in enhancing comprehension (mean = 4.12).

3.3 Mediating and Simplifying Medical Texts

Table 6 Frequency (f) and percentage of mediation strategies used by students

Mediation strategies	f	%
Adapting language	35	31
Linking new information to prior knowledge	34	30
Breaking down complex information	17	15
Streamlining the text	15	13
Amplifying dense content	12	11

Table 6 describes mediation strategies. The most frequently used technique, reported by 31% of students, is adapting language. Similarly, 29% of students stated that they compare new concepts to their prior knowledge. Additionally, 15% of students focused on breaking down complex information. 9% employed strategies to navigate dense texts.

Table 7 Mean score for students' self-reported mediation abilities

Can do statements	Mean±Standard Deviation
I can relay specific information from the text	3.44±0.84
I can simplify complex medical terms and concepts	3.42±0.86
I can present key points clearly in speech	3.42±1.18

Table 7 presents students' self-assessment using 'Can Do' statements for mediation (CEFR, 2020). The results reveal mixed confidence levels among students regarding their ability to mediate medical information. While 48% of students (40% agree, 8% strongly agree) expressed confidence in relaying specific information from case reports, a significant portion (42%) remained unsure. Similarly, when it comes to simplifying or paraphrasing complex medical terms and concepts, 44% of students felt confident (34% agree, 10% strongly agree), whereas nearly half (46%) were uncertain about their ability to do so. Confidence in presenting information varied, as 56% admitted to struggle with delivering information in front of classmates.

4 Discussion

RQ1: How do students perceive the use of authentic texts in learning English for Medical Purposes?

The results of this study provide insight into how students perceive the use of authentic materials in learning Medical English. A majority of students (60%) reported that they had not previously encountered authentic, medicine-related texts in English. However, despite this lack of exposure, a substantial 74% (mean = 3.92) found such materials very useful for their language learning. This aligns with previous research, which consistently



highlights the effectiveness of authentic materials in enhancing language retention, comprehension, and professional engagement (Eimulienė et al., 2019; García-Ostbye – Martínez-Sáez, 2023). These materials are seen as crucial, contributing significantly to the development of key competencies such as critical thinking and problem-solving, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.92 (Padley, 2022; Namaziandost et al., 2021). Regarding the difficulty of comprehending medical case reports, student responses varied, with a mean score of 3.42. This reflects the mixed experience of students when working with authentic texts, supporting the notion that while many students can manage comprehension without major challenges, there remains a significant proportion who face difficulties in processing complex medical language. This finding is consistent with previous studies, which show that while authentic texts provide exposure to real-world language, they also present challenges due to their complexity and specialized vocabulary (Mitulescu & Negoescu, 2024; García-Ostbye – Martínez-Sáez, 2023). Notably, the perceived practical benefits of authentic texts were overwhelmingly positive. A striking 97% of students agreed that authentic texts help them prepare for real-life medical tasks in English (mean = 4.32). Additionally, 72% of students expressed a preference for increasing the use of authentic materials in their classes (mean = 3.88). Although more challenging, these materials should be integrated into EMP classes with a thoughtful pedagogical approach to maximize their effectiveness.

RQ2: What factors influence the ability of a learner to infer and comprehend medical text?

When encountering an unfamiliar word, 74% of students attempt to infer its meaning using context clues, a widely recognized effective strategy (Jogulu, 2024). The most frequently used clues include surrounding words and sentences (19%), word structure (16%), and word similarities in other languages (13%). An analysis of factors influencing students' comprehension of medical case reports revealed that general understanding of the topic or content (21%) was the most frequently cited factor, suggesting that prior exposure significantly aids comprehension. Text structure and coherence (18%) and knowledge of related medical terminology (18%) were equally important, indicating that both well-organized texts and familiarity with medical terms contribute to successful interpretation. Contextual clues (15%) also played a key role, as students relied on sentence- and paragraph-level information to infer meaning. Prior experience (12%) and language proficiency (11%) were influential but slightly less dominant, highlighting that while linguistic skills and previous experience matter, they may not be as crucial as domain-specific knowledge. Visual aids (5%) were the least frequently mentioned. However, this does not necessarily indicate their lack of usefulness; rather, it suggests that they are underutilized and not systematically incorporated into reading and comprehension activities. Given their potential to enhance understanding, particularly in medical education where complex concepts often require visual representation, their integration into teaching strategies should be further explored.

Despite employing these strategies, 46% of students reported feeling frustrated when encountering many unfamiliar words in a text. This suggests that while guessing strategies are beneficial, they do not fully alleviate comprehension difficulties, emphasizing the need for additional support. However, 76% of students acknowledged that inferencing strategies are crucial for improving comprehension. This finding is consistent with outcomes of Jogulu (2024). Responses to items 20, 21, and 22 further emphasized the role of topic familiarity and background knowledge. A majority (60.8%) agreed that unfamiliarity with the subject matter hinders comprehension, although 30% remained unsure, suggesting that some students might compensate with other strategies.

A significant majority (60% agreed, 27.5% strongly agreed) that prior knowledge of medical terminology improves text comprehension, making it the most strongly supported factor, with a mean score of 4.12. Only 2% disagreed, reinforcing the importance of medical vocabulary in reading comprehension (Ashrafzadeh et al., 2015). Moreover, 71.7% of respondents agreed that even with high English proficiency, a lack of medical knowledge makes comprehension difficult. This effect was more pronounced among C1-level students, as reflected in mean scores of 3.71 for B2-level respondents and 4.08 for C1-level students. Only 5.9% disagreed, further supporting the notion that linguistic proficiency alone is insufficient and does not fully compensate for domain-specific knowledge gaps. These findings are highly valuable for shaping effective teaching strategies, as they help identify which strategies students naturally rely on and which ones require more emphasis in instruction.

RQ3: How confident are students in mediating information in speech, and what mediation strategies do they primary use to clarify meaning and enhance understanding?

The analysis of students' self-reported abilities to mediate medical texts reveals moderate proficiency across key mediation skills. The mean scores, ranging from 3.42 to 3.44, suggest that while students feel relatively confident in their ability to process and convey medical information, there is room for improvement, particularly in simplifying complex terminology and presenting information clearly in speech. Relaying specific information from the text received a mean score of 3.44, indicating that students are fairly confident in their ability to extract



and communicate relevant details from medical case reports. Simplifying complex medical terms and concepts was rated slightly lower (mean = 3.42), highlighting a potential challenge in transforming specialized language into more accessible discourse. Presenting key points clearly in speech received the same mean score (3.42) but had the highest standard deviation (1.18), indicating greater variation in students' self-perceived ability to verbally communicate medical information concisely and effectively. This suggests that while some students feel confident in this skill, others may struggle with organizing and articulating key information in a clear and structured manner. These findings align with previous research emphasizing the complexity of mediation skills in specialized domains such as medical English. Studies on linguistic mediation in ESP suggest that students often struggle with tasks requiring them to reformulate and adapt technical content for different audiences, particularly when dealing with specialized terminology.

The questions related to mediation strategies for clarifying meaning and facilitating understanding focused on how students process the source content. The results indicate that students employ several mediation strategies to comprehend and convey complex medical information, with language adaptation (using synonyms, similes, simplification, or paraphrasing) emerging as the most frequently used technique (31%). This suggests that students actively modify language to make specialized content more accessible, which is crucial for effective communication in professional settings. Similarly, conceptual linking (relating new medical terms to prior knowledge) was reported by 29% of students, highlighting the role of background knowledge in facilitating comprehension. This aligns with findings from inferencing strategies, reinforcing the idea that familiarity with medical concepts enhances students' ability to mediate information effectively. However, only a small percentage (9%) of students used strategies to navigate dense texts, indicating that such materials pose a challenge for comprehension and require further support in instruction.

Conclusion

The findings of this study support the integration of authentic medical case reports into English for Medical Purposes classes. Compared to traditional methods, students generally found this activity more engaging and effective, with 62% perceiving it as an improvement over traditional approaches.

While these texts offer benefits, they also present challenges. Our research confirms that reading and comprehending scientific texts requires diverse cognitive and linguistic strategies, highlighting the importance of structured guidance. To enhance students' ability to comprehend and communicate specialized medical information, instructors should prioritize vocabulary-building exercises, explanations of key concepts, and training in essential structures.

The study also highlights the need for further training in mediation skills aligning instruction with CEFR mediation descriptors. Students' responses regarding the usefulness of this task seem to highlight the benefit of mediation, which according to Dendrinos (2006), is "a purposeful social practice, aiming at the interpretation of meanings which are then to be communicated/ relayed to others".

Incorporating authentic case reports into EMP coursework bridges the gap between academic learning and real-world medical communication. By integrating well-structured pedagogical strategies, educators can better equip students to navigate complex texts, develop essential mediation skills, and engage effectively in professional medical discourse.

Limitations

A key limitation of this study is the small sample size, which, combined with the use of a convenience sample, significantly limits the generalizability of the findings.

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