

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO MEDICAL STUDENTS: A REVIEW OF RECENT RECENT RESEARCH

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Abstract: *In recent years, the communicative approach has gained popularity in teaching English as a foreign language, particularly in the medical field. This article provides a review of recent research on the effectiveness of the communicative approach in teaching English to medical students. The study highlights the advantages of this approach over traditional methods, such as grammar-translation and audio-lingual, in terms of language acquisition, communication skills, and cultural competence. The article concludes that the communicative approach is effective in teaching English to medical students, but further research is needed to explore its full potential and address any challenges encountered in its implementation.*

Keywords: *communicative approach, medical students, comprehension, challenges, methods.*

Introduction. The medical field is highly competitive, and proficiency in the English language is essential for international medical students to succeed in their careers. Traditional methods of teaching English, such as grammar-translation and audio-lingual, have been widely used in the past. However, these methods have been criticized for their focus on linguistic form rather than communicative function. In response, the communicative approach has been developed as an alternative teaching method, emphasizing the development of language skills through authentic communication. This article reviews recent research on the effectiveness of the communicative approach in teaching English to medical students. The review focuses on studies that have investigated the advantages and challenges of this approach in comparison to traditional methods. The following sections summarize the key findings of these studies.

Advantages of the Communicative Approach

Improved language acquisition. Research has shown that the communicative approach leads to improved language acquisition in medical students. [9; 92] By focusing on authentic communication, students are exposed to meaningful language

input, which facilitates the development of their linguistic skills. [8; 225] Additionally, the use of activities that simulate real-life medical situations helps students develop their language skills in a context that is relevant to their field.

Enhanced communication skills. The communicative approach has been shown to improve medical students' communication skills, both in spoken and written form. By engaging students in authentic communication tasks, they are better prepared to interact with patients, colleagues, and other healthcare professionals in an international setting. [3; 112] This is particularly important for medical students who will need to communicate with patients from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Increased cultural competence. The communicative approach also helps to develop students' cultural competence, a crucial aspect of medical practice in an increasingly globalized world. By exposing students to diverse perspectives and cultural contexts, the communicative approach fosters an understanding of the complexities of healthcare communication and promotes cultural sensitivity. [6; 67]

Contextual Learning. The communicative approach focuses on context-specific language instruction, which is particularly important for medical students. [2; 95] By engaging in role-plays, simulations, and case studies, medical students can learn to apply their language skills in real-world situations. [1; 45]

Challenges and Future Research

Despite the advantages of the communicative approach, there are challenges that need to be addressed in its implementation. These include:

Teacher training and support. Teachers may need additional training to effectively implement the communicative approach in their classrooms. Furthermore, there may be a lack of support from administrators and other stakeholders who are unfamiliar with this approach. According to this approach today's classroom teachers often organize group work activities, where each individual is not so starkly on public display, where reticent students suddenly can become vocal participants of the process. [7; 127]

Assessment and evaluation. The communicative approach requires different assessment and evaluation methods than traditional approaches. [8; 241]

Complexity of Medical Terminology. The communicative approach may face challenges when dealing with the complexity of medical terminology. Medical students need to master a vast array of technical terms, which can be difficult to teach using communicative methods. [4; 249]

Context-Specific Language Instruction. While the communicative approach emphasizes context-specific language instruction, it may not always be possible to

provide medical students with the necessary context for learning. [5; 81] For example, teaching a medical student how to communicate with a patient in a hospital setting may require access to a real hospital environment, which can be difficult to arrange.

Conclusion. The communicative approach has been shown to be an effective methodology for teaching English to medical students. By emphasizing the development of communicative competence and context-specific language instruction, the approach can help medical students improve their language proficiency and communication skills. However, challenges related to the complexity of medical terminology and the need for context-specific language instruction must be addressed in order to optimize the effectiveness of the communicative approach for medical students.

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