

Medical English Learning Motivation and Attitude of Clinical Students In one Chinese University

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Abstract: Medical English is a specialized elective course for clinical undergraduates with a total of 32 hours. The students should complete the study of college English before they begin to learn medical English. The goal of this course is to cultivate students' ability to read medical English materials independently and to grasp the trends of research both at home and abroad, in order to train the clinical students engaged in basic medicine and related disciplines of scientific research ability and literacy. As significant factors affecting clinical students' English for Specific Purposes learning, medical English learning motivation and attitude have been increasingly emphasized in the field of foreign language acquisition. An increasing number of studies indicate that medical English becomes crucial to the clinical major students in terms of the acquisition of the ESP and the application of medical English in both global and domestic academic and daily contexts. However, there are few researchers who investigate the correlation among medical English learning motivation and attitude. In addition, there are few studies involving the difference of responses on medical English learning motivation and attitude when grouped according to sex, rating in English and year level. Therefore, the study aimed to investigate the relationship among the two important factors and the difference of responses employing the clinical students in one Chinese university as research objects.

Keywords: Medical English Learning Motivation; Medical English Learning Attitude; Clinical Students

1. Introduction

With the increase of international communication, English, as the common language for international communication, plays an increasingly important role. With China's accession to the WTO, there is an increasing demand for English talents, among which the compound and applied talents with solid professional knowledge and high English level are particularly popular. In recent years, China's medical profession has developed rapidly, with increasingly frequent exchanges with other countries, and medical and health practitioners are facing higher requirements. The goal of medical English courses in medical colleges and universities is to cultivate compound talents with both professional medical knowledge and proficient communication ability in English, so as to meet the needs of social development.

2. Objectives

The aim of the study was to contribute to the improvement of the clinical students' medical English learning ability in a Chinese university, their medical English learning motivation, attitude and strategies, in order to improve the students' learning performance, their interest and proficiency in medical English learning, and made medical English teaching in the medical university more efficient and effective.

3. Review Of Literature

3.1 Learning Motivation

Different schools of thought hold different views about the term motivation: the behaviouristic approach considers motivation as the expectation of reward. However, the cognitivist perspective thinks that motivation is the options people make concerning what kind of experiences or goals they intend to approach or avoid, and the extent of efforts they make in that facet which has more connection with the learner's decisions. In the constructivist definition of motivation, it mainly stresses the motivation in the social

contexts and from the perspective of the individual's decisions. However, the concept of "needs" and the claim that satisfying needs demands particular choices and in many cases must be interpreted from a social perspective are at the heart of the debate over the definitions of motivation offered by the aforementioned three schools.

3.2 Learning Attitude

Learning attitude is formed in the process of learning, which mainly points to learning objects and affects the learner's response readiness to choose appropriate learning activities. Learning attitude includes three major aspects: cognitive aspect, emotional aspect and behavioral aspect. Cognitive aspect refers to the learners' value judgment to the learning object. The emotional aspect refers to the learners' emotional responses to the objects of learning, such as love, hatred and so on. The behavioral aspect refers to the learner's explicit behavior towards the learning object cognition emotion. It involves the tendency of language learners to the object of learning or avoidance, pursuit or indifference and so on. The interior structure of attitude is a medium between stimulus (attitude object) and response (physiological, psychological, intentional response). Stimuli and responses are measurable independent variables and dependent variables (a continuous state from positive to negative). Attitude change is along this chain from positive to negative, which is continuous, observable and measurable. The theory of the attitude's three factors puts forth three measurable variables and their correlations, which plays an important role in the research field of attitude measurement and attitude control.

4. Method

4.1 Research Design

As a popular precursor to quantitative study, descriptive research is also practiced in language and culture. It can include quantitative data such as the use of empirical information. Descriptive research requires collecting data that will describe an event and presenting the information in an organized, and often visual manner. Description is used to explain the answer to "what is" and to depict patterns that emerge during a study through a variety of research techniques. Survey is one of the most flexible means for descriptive research. It comprises written questionnaires or interviews. It highlights common responses from interviewees and may help to establish a relationship between various factors. This design allows the researcher to investigate a large quantity of variables in one study and to examine the relationships among the variables. In the study, the researcher explored into the expected association among medical English learning motivation and attitude.

4.2 Participants

Using the Raosoft calculator, from 5000 target population, 400 medical students were established. Random sampling was employed by the researcher. The present study was conducted with the 1st year to 5th year clinical students and their instructor (one) in the Clinical Medical College at one university of Zibo city. The student participants of this research are clinical undergraduates with bachelor degree in the Clinical Medical College and they all give consent to join this thesis study.

4.3 Instruments

The study adopted quantitative research mainly including questionnaires which aim to obtain the reliable and valid results to the difference of responses in medical English learning motivation, attitude, and the relationship between and among medical English learning motivation and attitude. The questionnaires employed in the study are standardized ones validated by experts. The Likert's four-point scale will be adopted here. The answers of each question are composed of four choices, which range from 4 (strongly agree), 3 (agree), 2 (disagree), 1 (strongly disagree).

4.4 Procedures

The aim of this study was to investigate the interrelationships between medical English learning motivation and attitude. A survey was conducted to rapidly gather data from a great many of participants and to successfully analyze data utilizing statistical programs. All questionnaires were processed using English and Chinese version to avoid misunderstandings resulted from language comprehension ability. Previous to the formal research, a pilot study (N=25) was conducted to evaluate the quality and flow of the survey's questions and to identify any issues that the respondents encountered.

4.5 Data Analysis

The demographics of the student responses were described using frequency and percentage distribution in terms of sex, English proficiency rating, and year level. Weighted mean and rank were used to identify the different motivation held by the clinical students in the medical university towards learning medical English with regards to extrinsic, competition and intrinsic aspects; to determine the clinical students' learning attitudes on medical English with regards to behavioral, cognitive and emotional aspects. Consequently, Spearman rho was used to establish the significance of the link. Utilizing SPSS version 28, all analyses were performed.

5. Results And Discussion

The respondents were all clinical majors in the medical university. The survey selected the clinical major students randomly in the university for the research. The study stratified sampling 400 students from five grades. The number of the respondents who thought their English was very good was 128 accounting for 32 percent and the samples who rating their English as good were 125 which accounted for 31.3. Besides, those who considered their English as satisfactory made up 24.5, while the students thinking their English as poor accounted for the least proportion of 12.3 percent. About 37.5 percent of the respondents consisted of first-year students, which took the largest proportion; whereas just 14.5 percent consisted of sophomores. In addition, there were only 41 juniors, which accounted for 10.3 percent of the total participants. The seniors were 124 accounting for the second largest percentage, that was 31 percent ; whereas in contrast, only 27 fifth year students accounting for 6.8 percent participated in the sample, which was the least.

The result of descriptive statistics for Medical English Learning Motivation of clinical students. The highest weighted mean score for clinical students is 3.24, while the lowest weighted mean score is 3.09. It demonstrates a relatively significant disparity in the Chinese medical university clinical students' medical English learning motivation. Extrinsic Motivation is the second highest ranked attribute (3.14). Among the three Medical English Learning Motivation, competition gets the highest mean value (3.24). It indicates that competition can stimulate clinical students' interest and motivation in learning medical English. In a highly competitive environment, students often actively participate in the classroom activities and learn actively. Competition can also promote communication and cooperation among clinical students. In the process of competing with others, students need to constantly learn and improve, learn to cooperate with others and make progress together.

A comparison of responses to medical English learning motivation when grouped by profile. Significant differences were observed when grouping by sex and rating because the P value obtained was less than the alpha level. This implies a significant difference in response and, based on post hoc tests performed, found that men with very high scores were more motivated than others. It means that the male students in the Chinese medical university learn medical English well, pay more attention to their motivation such as intrinsic interest and individual development. The findings reveal that male students are easy to evoke their interest in medical English learning because of the solid English foundation that they have laid in the early stage of university. Most of them are interested in the foreign culture, and they are eager to know the cultural differences between the east and the west. They want to speak medical English fluently and make more friends through medical English learning. Learning medical English is a pleasant process. Learning medical English well can broaden their horizons and make them feel self-confident. What's more, the may-be reason for those with a very good rating are more motivated than others is that their interest is associated with the pragmatic and utilitarian benefits of language proficiency, such as a better job, passing a required examination like CET-4 or just for academic requirement. The higher the English level, the stronger the English learning motivation, which is similar to the results of Li Jiongying, skeroglul and so on. High-level English learners have more specific goals, work harder overall, are more eager to achieve their goals, and have a more positive attitude toward language learning.

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