



Optimizing the Process of Teaching English for Medical Purposes with the Use of Mobile Applications: A Memrise-based Study.

Maria Chojnacka

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The title of the monograph by Maria Chojnacka, *Optimizing the Process of Teaching English for Medical Purposes with the Use of Mobile Applications: A Memrise-based Study*, speaks for itself and points to a timely contribution to the current literature on teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The author aims to improve the teaching of English for Medical Purposes (EMP) through an innovative pedagogical methodology, the use of a mobile application called Memrise, and touches upon three important topics in the fields of Applied Linguistics; namely, ESP pedagogy, learner autonomy, and technology-assisted language learning.

This is a pioneering study exploring the effect of innovative teaching methods within ESP pedagogy. According to Garcia Laborda and Litzler's (2015) review of the current literature, the main areas of ESP teaching research include needs analysis, specialist text and discourse analysis, and curriculum development (course planning, material development and instructional methods). With regard to the latter, the efficacy of certain methodologies is yet to be explored and in Chojnacka's research, one of the research questions is precisely the effectiveness of the use of mobile technology in learning EMP.

The author draws on motivational theories and autonomous learning as theoretical frameworks. According to Gollin-Kies, Hall and Moore (2015), one intersection of globalization and digital technologies for Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) research in the new century is independent or autonomous learning. Chojnacka has developed a mobile learning environment that allows for self-paced autonomous learning of EMP on the part of the medical students involved. She also explores the students' change of attitude towards such an autonomous learning model, their progress in EMP as a result of such a model and their evaluations.

The book also advances knowledge of the use of technology-assisted learning in the context of EMP teaching. The creation of innovative pedagogical models, such as combining new technologies with language learning, is an area to be explored further in LSP teaching (Gollin-Kies, Hall & Moore, 2015). This same opinion is also held by Arnó-Maciá (2012), who believes that new technologies can change LSP teaching and learning through the creation of online courses and enhancement in learner autonomy, and that the integration of new technologies into LSP for more efficient learning is one area that merits further analysis. Chojnacka's contribution is one of the pioneering efforts in integrating mobile technologies to create a virtual learning environment for EMP students.

The monograph is divided into six chapters. In chapter 1, the author gives a panoramic view of key concepts in teaching ESP, including its singular characteristics, its methodology and research history. Then chapter 2 moves on to focus upon the characteristics of EMP as a specialized language or register at lexical, grammatical and discourse levels. As the theoretical foundations of the whole research project, chapter 3 draws upon motivational theories and learning autonomy in language learning research and tailors them to the use of mobile technologies to create an omnipresent mobile learning environment. Based on chapter 3, chapter 4 defines mobile learning, reviews the current literature on the topic as well as on the use of technologies in ESP teaching, and thoroughly describes Memrise, the mobile application that helps create a mobile learning environment in the project. Chapter 5 is the most important part of the monograph because it reports on a case study of using the mobile learning model in a given context. To investigate the learners' change of attitude towards the mobile learning model, their progress in EMP as a result of its application, and their evaluations, forty first-year medical students contributed to data collection through two questionnaires and pre- and post-tests. Findings are discussed in chapter 6, together with the basic principles and design of a new educational solution to assist EMP learning (Mobile Medical English Companion).

Two limitations are notable in the study: firstly, the participants are first year medical students. The problem of recruiting novice students as informants is that they have very little knowledge about the subject they are going to learn and do not have enough abilities to judge their learning process. This may pose challenges to the credibility of the results. Secondly, the research was set in a specific university context and only forty students were involved.

The very nature of case studies does not allow generalizations and extrapolations of results into other contexts.

In spite of the above limitations, the current book is still worth reading, as it usefully explores the integration of mobile technologies into EMP teaching and provides a good starting point for further studies in the future. Therefore, I would like to recommend this monograph to scholars, teachers, advanced graduates and many others who are interested in LSP pedagogy, learner autonomy, and technology-assisted language learning.

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