

FROM TRANSLATION TO TRANSFORMATION: MULTILINGUAL
SCAFFOLDING FOR LOW-PROFICIENCY MEDICAL STUDENTS IN
UZBEKISTAN

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ANNOTATION: This article examines the role of multilingual scaffolding and translanguaging in supporting low-proficiency learners in medical English courses in Uzbekistan. Given the linguistic diversity among students—often balancing Uzbek, Russian, and English—the paper proposes classroom practices that value students’ full linguistic repertoire. Drawing on the theories of Cummins, García, and Swain, it argues for practical, inclusive strategies like dual-language glossaries, bilingual summaries, and translanguaging journals. Such practices can enhance comprehension, confidence, and competence in medical communication.

Keywords: Multilingual scaffolding, translanguaging, medical English, low proficiency, Uzbekistan, ESP

АННОТАЦИЯ: В статье рассматривается роль многоязыковой поддержки и транслянговирования в поддержке учащихся с низким уровнем знаний в курсах медицинского английского в Узбекистане. Учитывая лингвистическое разнообразие среди студентов, которые часто используют узбекский, русский и английский языки, в статье предлагаются практики в классе, которые учитывают полный языковой репертуар студентов. Опираясь на теории Камминса, Гарсии и Суэйна, автор утверждает, что практичные, инклюзивные стратегии, такие как двуязычные глоссарии, двуязычные резюме и журналы транслянговирования, могут способствовать улучшению понимания, уверенности и компетентности в медицинской коммуникации.

Ключевые слова: Многоязычная поддержка, транслянговирование, медицинский английский, низкий уровень знаний, Узбекистан, ESP

ANNOTATSIYA: Ushbu maqola O‘zbekistondagi tibbiy ingliz tili kurslarida past darajadagi o‘quvchilarni qo‘llab-quvvatlashda ko‘p tilli tayanch (multilingual scaffolding) va translanguaging (tillararo o‘zaro foydalanish)ning rolini o‘rganadi.

Talabalar ko‘pincha o‘zbek, rus va ingliz tillarini muvozanatlashga to‘g‘ri keladigan tilshunoslik xilma-xilligiga ega bo‘lganliklari sababli, maqola ularning to‘liq til salohiyatini qadrdlovchi sinf amaliyotlarini taklif qiladi. Cummins, García va Swain nazariyalariga tayangan holda, maqola ikki tilli lug‘atlar, bilingval (ikki tilli) xulosalar va translanguaging kundaliklari kabi amaliy, inklyuziv strategiyalarni ilgari suradi. Bunday yondashuvlar tibbiy muloqotda tushunishni, ishonchni va malakani oshirishi mumkin.

Kalit so‘zlar: Ko‘p tilli tayanch, translanguaging, tibbiy ingliz tili, past daraja, O‘zbekiston, ESP

Introduction: English for medical purposes is increasingly vital in Uzbekistan’s health education, yet many first-year students struggle due to low English proficiency. While grammar-translation remains dominant, it often fails to prepare students for real-life clinical communication. Multilingual scaffolding—using students’ home languages (Uzbek, Russian) alongside English—offers a transformative alternative. This article explores how translanguaging and structured support can improve learner outcomes in medical English instruction.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Cummins (1979) differentiates between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), the latter being essential for mastering medical discourse. García (2009) defines translanguaging as the process by which multilingual speakers use their full linguistic repertoires to learn and communicate. Swain’s (1985) Output Hypothesis supports the idea that structured speaking and writing tasks promote deeper processing. Together, these theories justify classroom strategies that validate and incorporate multiple languages.

CHALLENGES IN UZBEKISTAN’S MEDICAL ENGLISH CLASSROOMS

Students in Uzbekistan often enter medical universities with uneven proficiency levels. Many rely on translation apps, memorize isolated terms, or avoid speaking in English altogether. Teachers report difficulty in engaging lower-level learners or balancing English use with students’ native languages. Most materials are monolingual and do not reflect the multilingual reality of students’ linguistic environments.

PROPOSED PEDAGOGICAL SOLUTIONS

Multilingual scaffolding is not a shortcut but a bridge to comprehension. Suggested strategies include:

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- Dual-language glossaries (English-Uzbek/Russian) posted in classrooms
- Reading tasks with Uzbek summaries and English keyword focus
- Translanguaging journals where students write reflections in Uzbek but include required English terms
- Subtitled video dialogues followed by shadowing exercises

These tasks encourage interaction between languages rather than separation.

EXAMPLE CLASSROOM TASK: MEDICAL INTAKE FORM SIMULATION

Objective: To help students build English fluency and accuracy in patient interviews using their native language as a scaffold.

Step 1: Students review a patient intake form in Uzbek or Russian.

Step 2: Using a glossary, they translate key sections into English.

Step 3: In pairs, they role-play a doctor-patient scenario in English using the form.

Step 4: Each student writes a patient summary using both Uzbek and English keywords.

This activity strengthens vocabulary, comprehension, and confidence.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Translanguaging and multilingual scaffolding are essential tools for equity in English medical education in Uzbekistan. Teachers must be encouraged to use all available linguistic resources in the classroom. Professional development programs should include training in multilingual pedagogies, and materials should be developed with local linguistic realities in mind. Such changes will foster a more inclusive, engaging, and effective language learning environment for future healthcare professionals.

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