Teaching Medical English
An Overview of Requirements, Training, & Application
Professionals

- Health care professionals include clinicians as well as researchers
  - doctors
  - nurses
  - pharmacists
  - technicians
Fields

- Public/community health
- Family medicine
- Emergency medicine
- Radiology/diagnostic medicine
- Medical sciences
Language Requirements

- Teachers should be fluent in English and proficient in health care field
- Students need basic foundation in English
  - Medical language is highly technical
Career Specific

- Adult learner already has skill set and knowledge base in medical field
- What is needed is English language instruction
Classes

- Students need to use language in meaningful ways
- Students encouraged to develop critical thinking skills in target language
- Students learn language in context
In order to be successful, training should:

- Be relevant to job
- Employ authentic speech
- Instruct verbal as well as non verbal communication
- Include social skills to develop rapport with patients
Authentic Language

- Recreate realities professionals may encounter:
  - Learn how to talk to patients using role plays
  - Study real-life cases
  - Read textbooks and scholarly journals
  - Report research
Application

- Apply language to real-life situations
- “Think on your feet” problem solving
Language

- Depending on needs, language may include:
  - Medical concepts
  - Technical language
  - Medical terms and procedures
  - Abbreviations and acronyms
  - Slang
Language Continued

- Case studies
- Interactions
- Medical practices
- Treatment
- Pharmacology
Course of study

- Prepare health care professional to provide safe medical care
  - Errors can be life-threatening
- Build on existing skill set and knowledge base in field
Activities in the classroom may include:

- Role play between doctor and patient, admitting procedures, emergency care, etc.
- Worksheets, word searches
- Listening
- Pronunciation practice
- DVDs of real life situations
Conclusion

- Medical English field is growing in global economy
- Need continues for skilled, dedicated teachers
Sources

- www.usingenglish.com