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Reporting professional content in ESP: Problems and needs

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Reporting what other people said or wrote about is part and parcel of academic work, and, thus, appropriate use of reported speech is paramount to success in academic writing. Since reported speech is a dedicated syntactic domain (Spronck and Nikitina 2019), and creation of 'constructed discourse' (Tannen 2007) involves different kinds of deictic shift, the topic requires due attention when teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Furthemore, facilitating its acquisition, both grammar and meaning should be addressed.
The case study was conducted in the first study semester course "English for Medicine" at the University of Latvia and involved 70 students, with the goal of the study being to observe the impact of using comprehension-based communicative language teaching on learning reported speech. Introducing a professionally targeted listening comprehension activity and using grammar error and content analysis on the resulting student works, the attempt is to see the correlation of grammar mistakes and the level of communicative comprehension. The results allow for a number of methodological suggestions, including more attention to the communicative acts when instructing, reasonable detailing of written instructions, as well as there is a definite need for an additional intervention and further research.

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Recommendation (for student section)

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