Breaking Bad News in Medical English

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Abstract. *Giving serious or bad news is one of the most challenging aspects of medical communication for which training never seems enough (Fallowfield 312). This paper provides a customizable model of CLIL-based (content and language integrated learning) and genre-based approach (exposure, deconstruction of configurations and "grammar," and reflection) to a module of giving bad news in Medical English (ME). The module underlines the importance of medical students' humanistic formation and the opportunity to consolidate it through ME communication classes, its goal being to raise the students' awareness about empathetic doctor-patient communication while helping them form their communication styles. The content included online resources by specialists in the form of candid diaries or "doctors as patients" (reading) and tutorials (listening) while the language learning part focused on genre deconstruction through three movie clips (Aftermath, Temple Grandin, and Wit) followed by asynchronous reflective speaking. Different variables related to breaking bad news together with their theoretical underpinnings were included in the learning process and are briefly presented here, such as linguistic and pragmatic aspects of politeness, euphemisms, the degree of disclosure, conveyor type, cultural aspects, and compassionate communication. The novelty of the design rests in blending asynchronous language-integrated content to breaking bad news and classroom ME practice, with evident positive outcomes.*

Keywords*: CLIL, doctor-patient communication, empathy, giving bad news, integrated Medical English learning, asynchronous speaking, positive semantics*