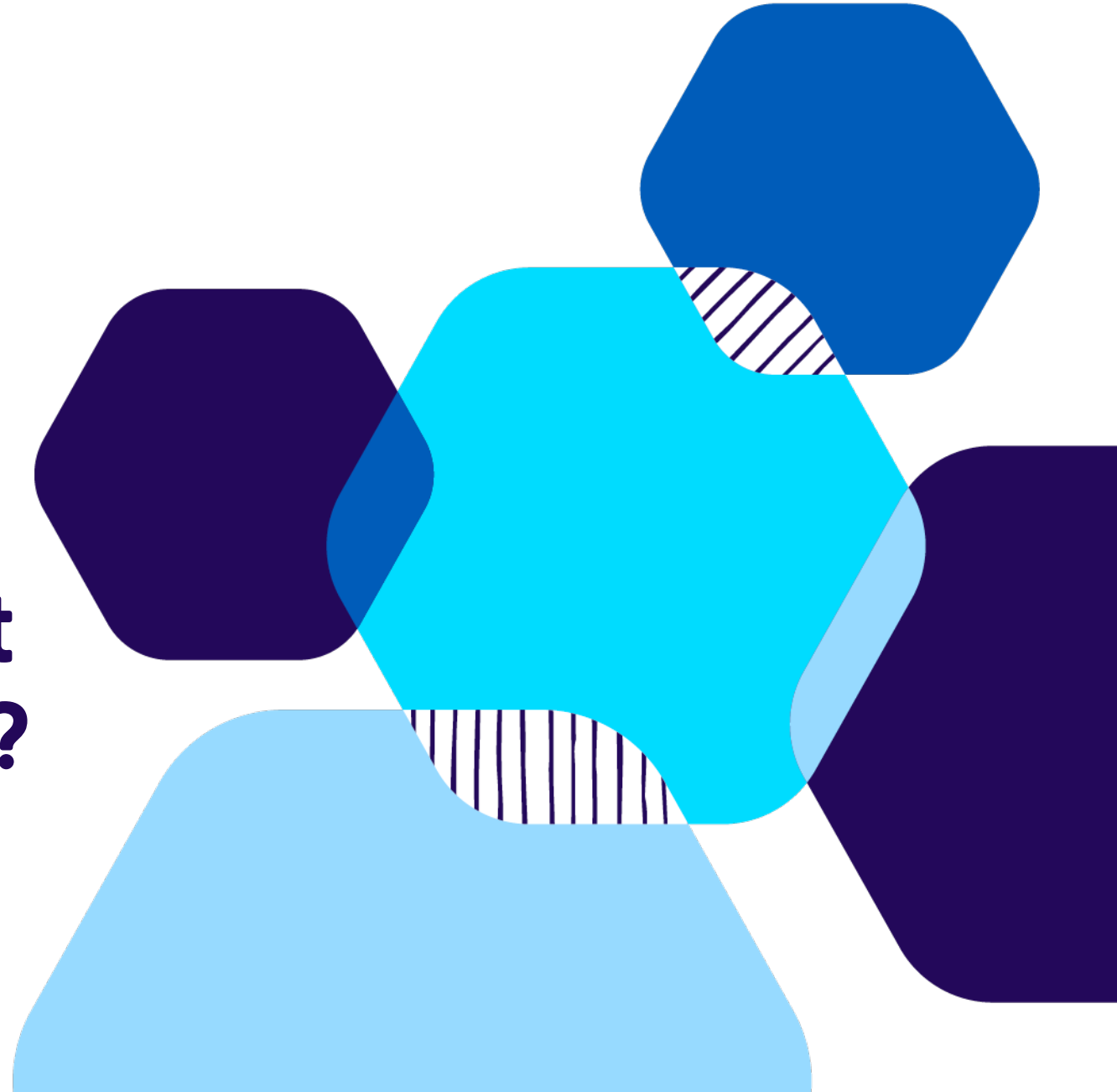


TeachingEnglish

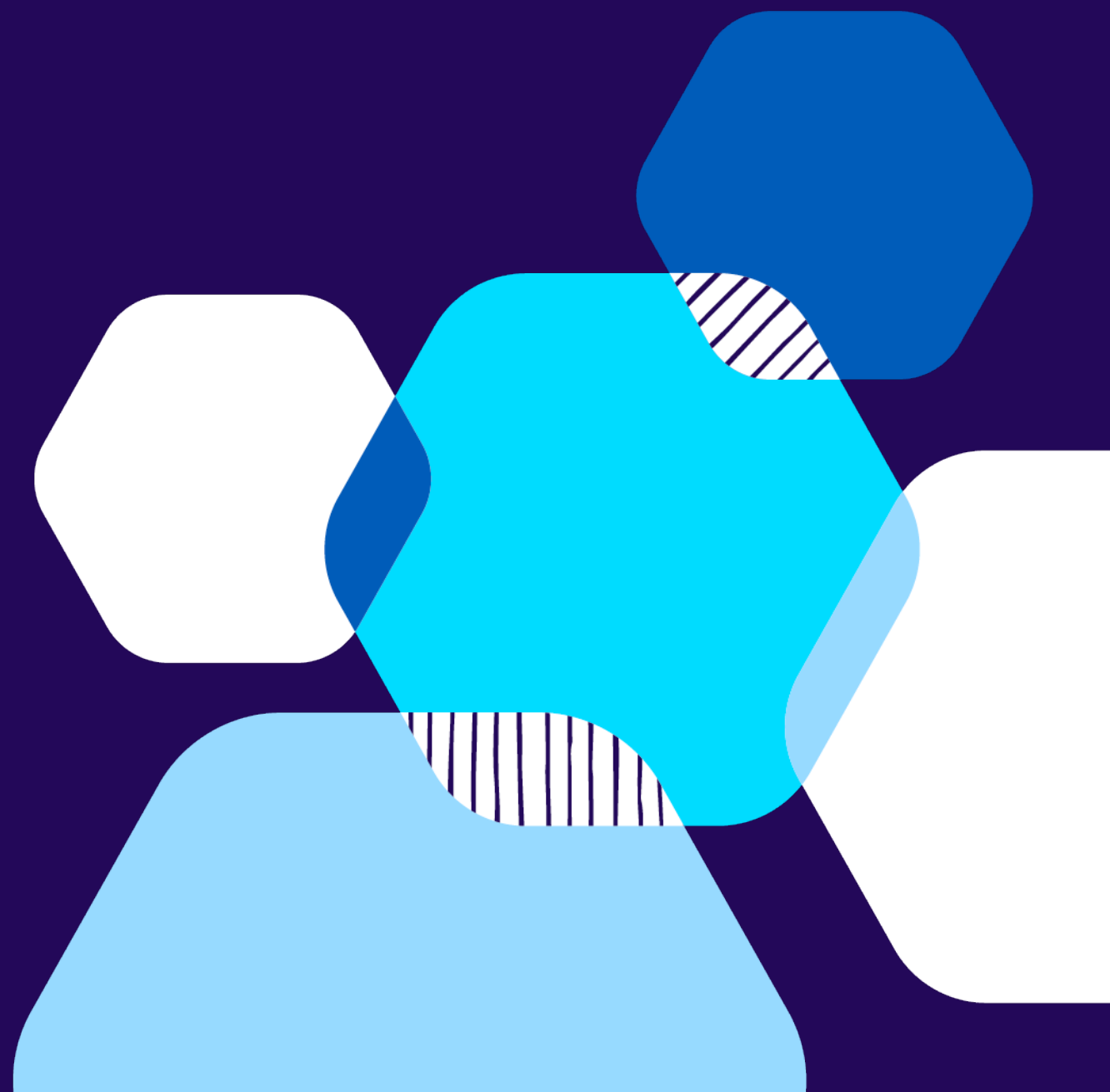
What is English for Specific Purposes, and how is it different from General English?

March 2023

www.britishcouncil.org



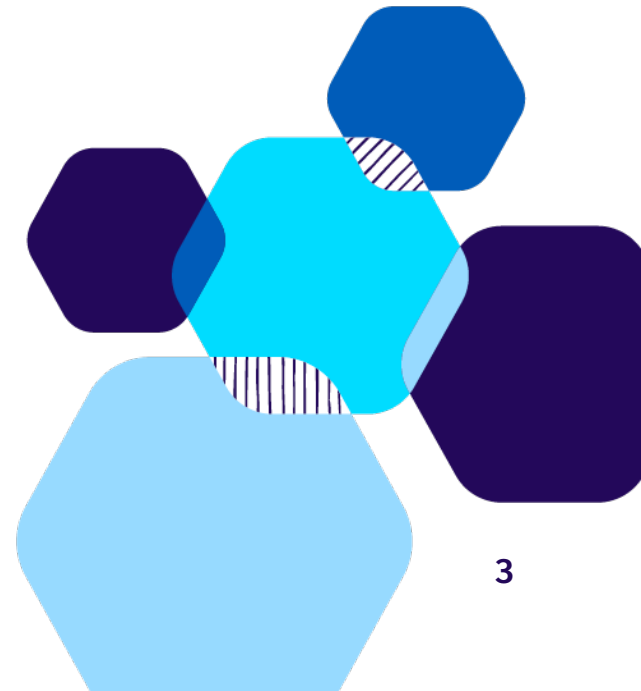
1. Speaking Task



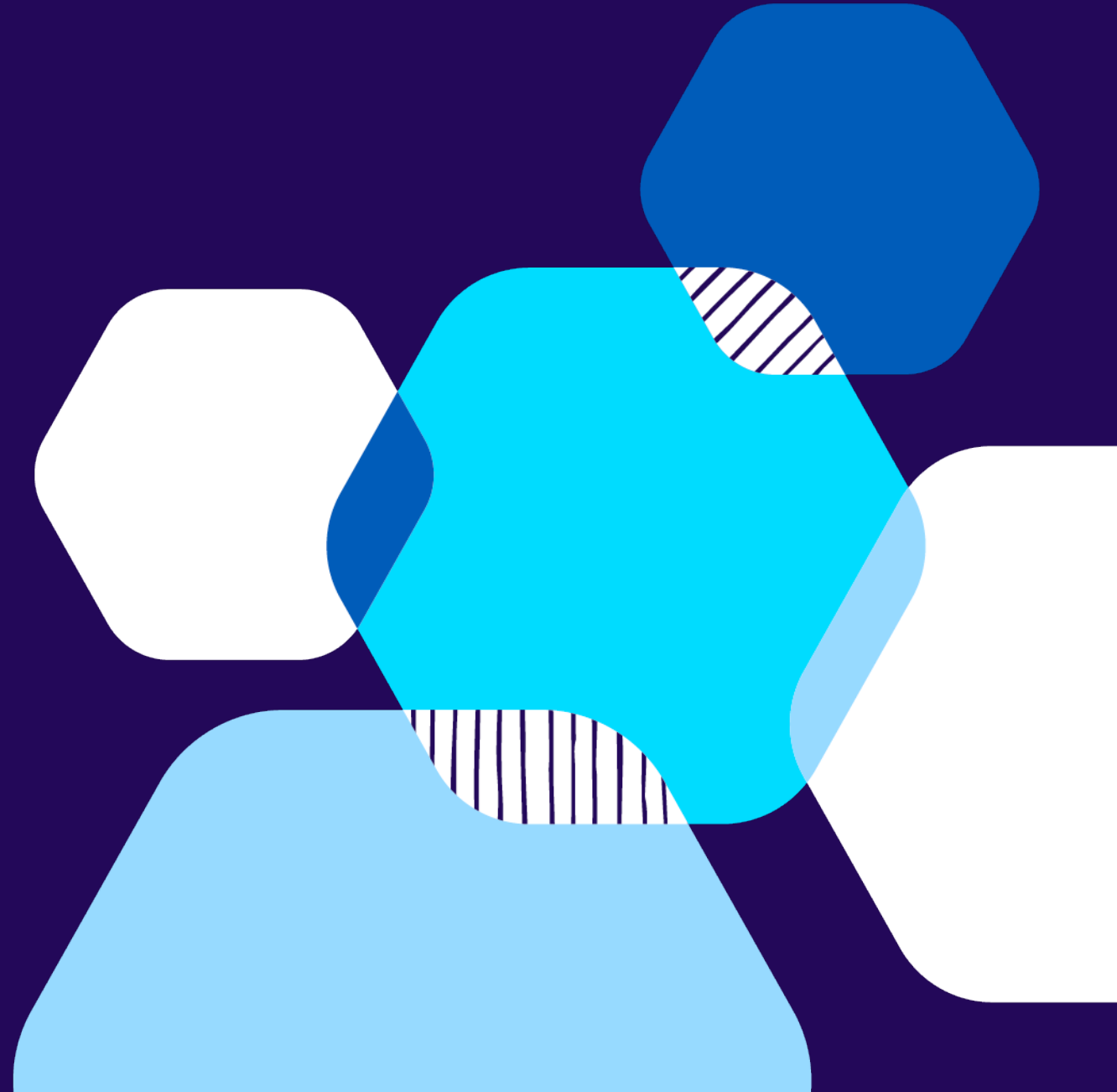
1. Speaking task

Discuss the following questions in small groups.

- What do you think is the difference between ‘English for Specific Purposes’ and General English?
- How easy or difficult do you think it would be to move between ‘specific English’ and ‘general English’?
- Have you ever studied English for Specific Purposes? If ‘yes’, what was the experience like? If ‘no’, what kind of ESP do you think you would like to study?
- What do you think would be the main features of (a) Medical English; (b) Aviation English; (c) English for Fashion; and (d) English for Islamic Studies?



2. Grammar task



2. Grammar task – Prefixes

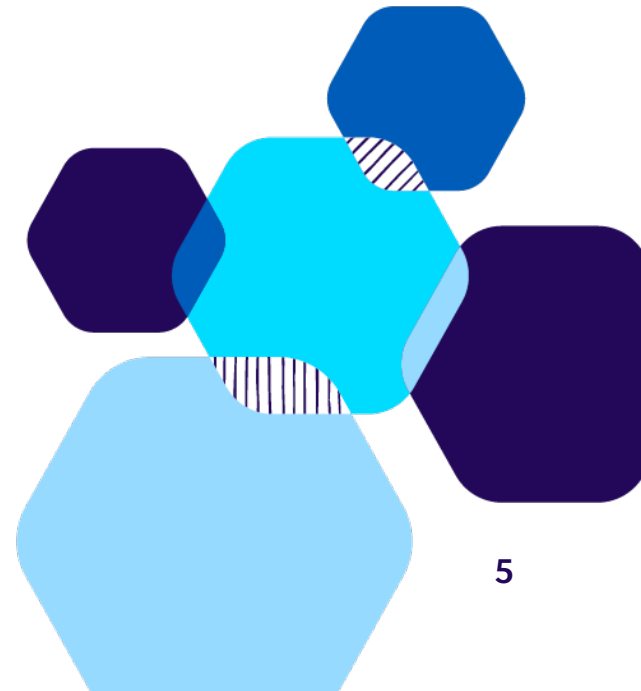
1. What does the prefix ‘trans’ refer to, as in the sentences below. What other words do you know which begin with this prefix?

- You indicate that you finish your **transmission** by giving basically your name
- To understand the different terms or how they **translate** differently
- So that can **transfer** into materials and teaching practices

Answers

The prefix ‘trans’ is connected to ideas like “across” and through”.

Other words beginning trans include: transportation; translucent; transparent; transform; transatlantic; trajectory; transsexual; and transverse.



2. Grammar task – Prefixes

2. What does the prefix ‘pre’ refer to, as in the sentences below. What other words do you know which begin with this prefix?

- There's a lot of interest in for example, oral presentations in academics to **prepare** for those
- ‘For 2000’ was interpreted as ‘42000’ rather than the **preposition** ‘for’

Answers

The prefix ‘pre’ is connected to things that happen ‘before’ something else

Other words beginning pre include: prefix (!), prevent; preview; predict; precaution; prefer; precipitate; precursor; preamble; predominant; and preliminary.

2. Grammar task – Prefixes

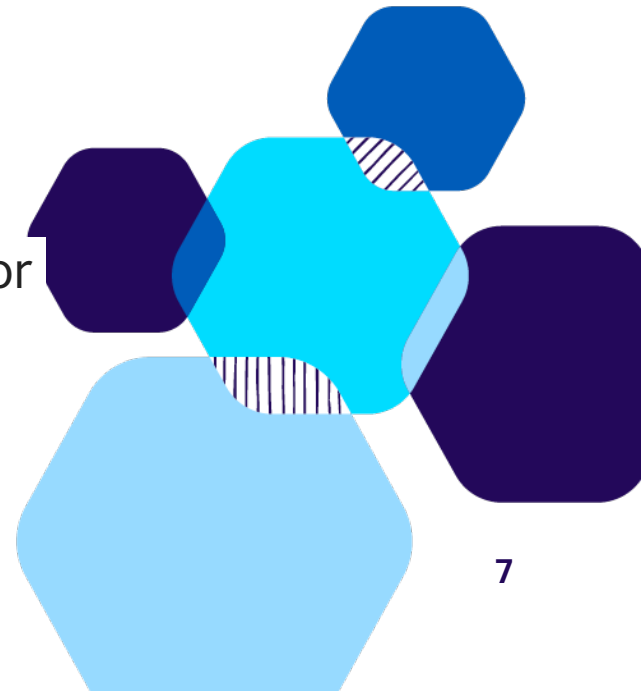
3. What does the prefix ‘inter’ refer to, as in the sentences below. What other words do you know which begin with this prefix?

- The **interaction** between those different languages
- **International** exams like TOEFL or IELTS
- **Interfaith** dialogue

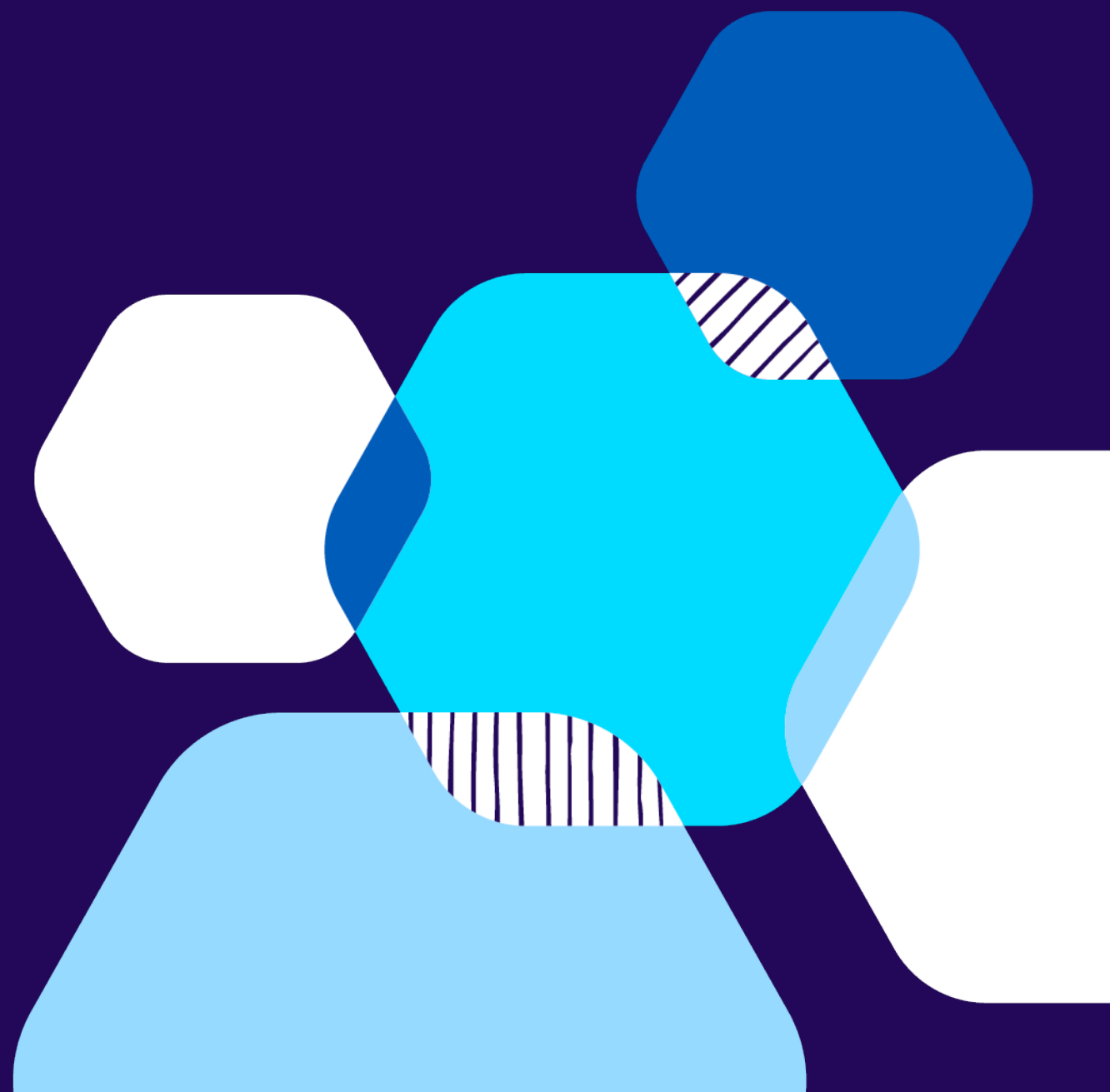
Answers

The prefix ‘inter’ is connected to things that happen ‘between’, ‘among’, ‘during’ or ‘together’

Other words beginning pre include: internet; intersect; intermission interact; interim; interjection; interrupt; internal; and interview.



3. Language task



Collocations

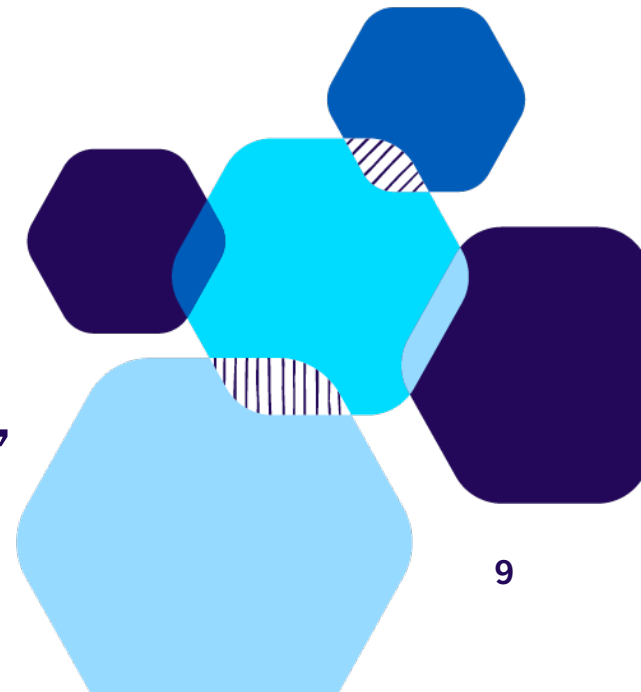
A collocation is a word which commonly appears with another word, at a high rate of frequency.

Some examples from the text:

1. There should be a needs analysis that considers the stakeholders and the needs of the students.
2. A group of learners, that need this particular skill or this particular purpose.
3. When you triangulate data from different sources you get better results.

Question: What other words can be used in the structure:

(1) “Noun + *analysis*”; (2) “*Particular* + noun”; (3) “Verb + *data*”

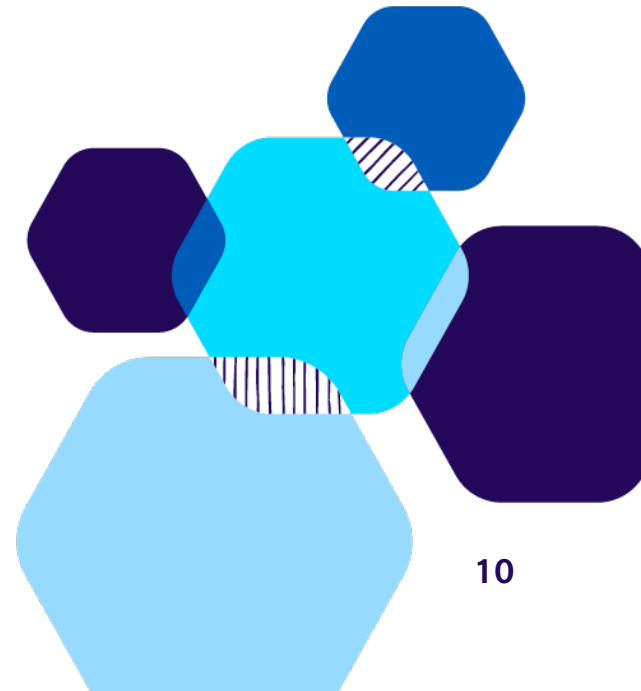


Collocations: “noun + *analysis*”

Nouns commonly used before analysis: content, cost-benefit, data, discourse, risk

e.g. We need to do a proper risk analysis before agreeing to the deal.

Source: <https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/analysis#>



Collocations: “*particular* + noun”

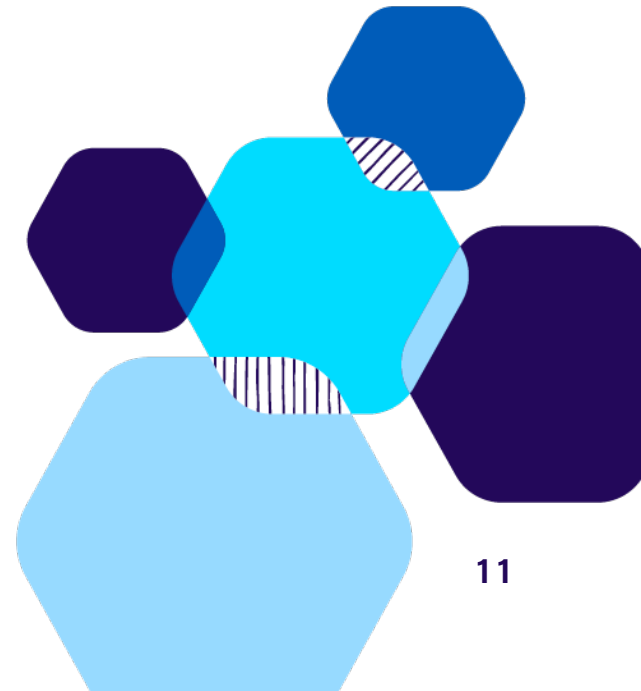
attention: attention, emphasis, focus, reference

e.g. *You need to pay particular attention to this information.*

interest or importance: concern, importance, interest, relevance, significance

e.g. *This issue is a particular concern for me.*

Source: https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/particular_1



Collocations: “verb + *data*”

collect or keep data: capture, collect, contain, gather, hold, obtain, retrieve, store

deal with or organize data: analyse, extract, handle, interpret, process, protect

look at or use data: access, use

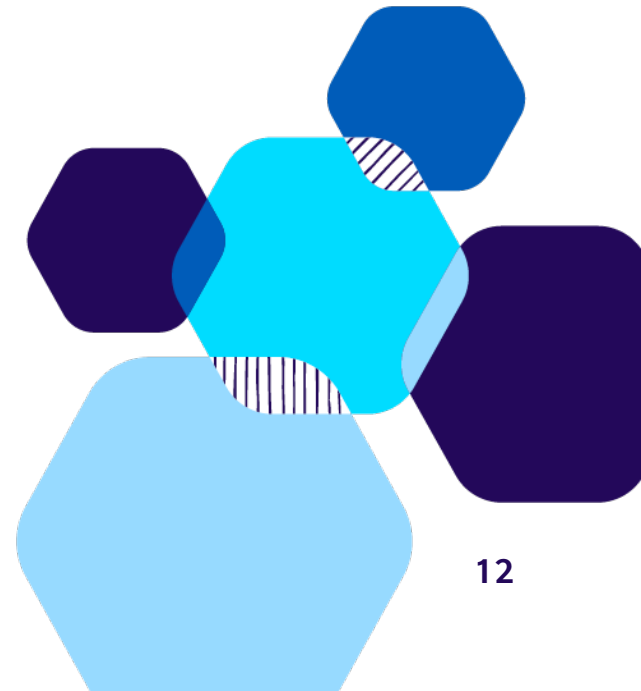
move data: download, send, transfer, transmit

give or show data: display, generate, present, provide, supply

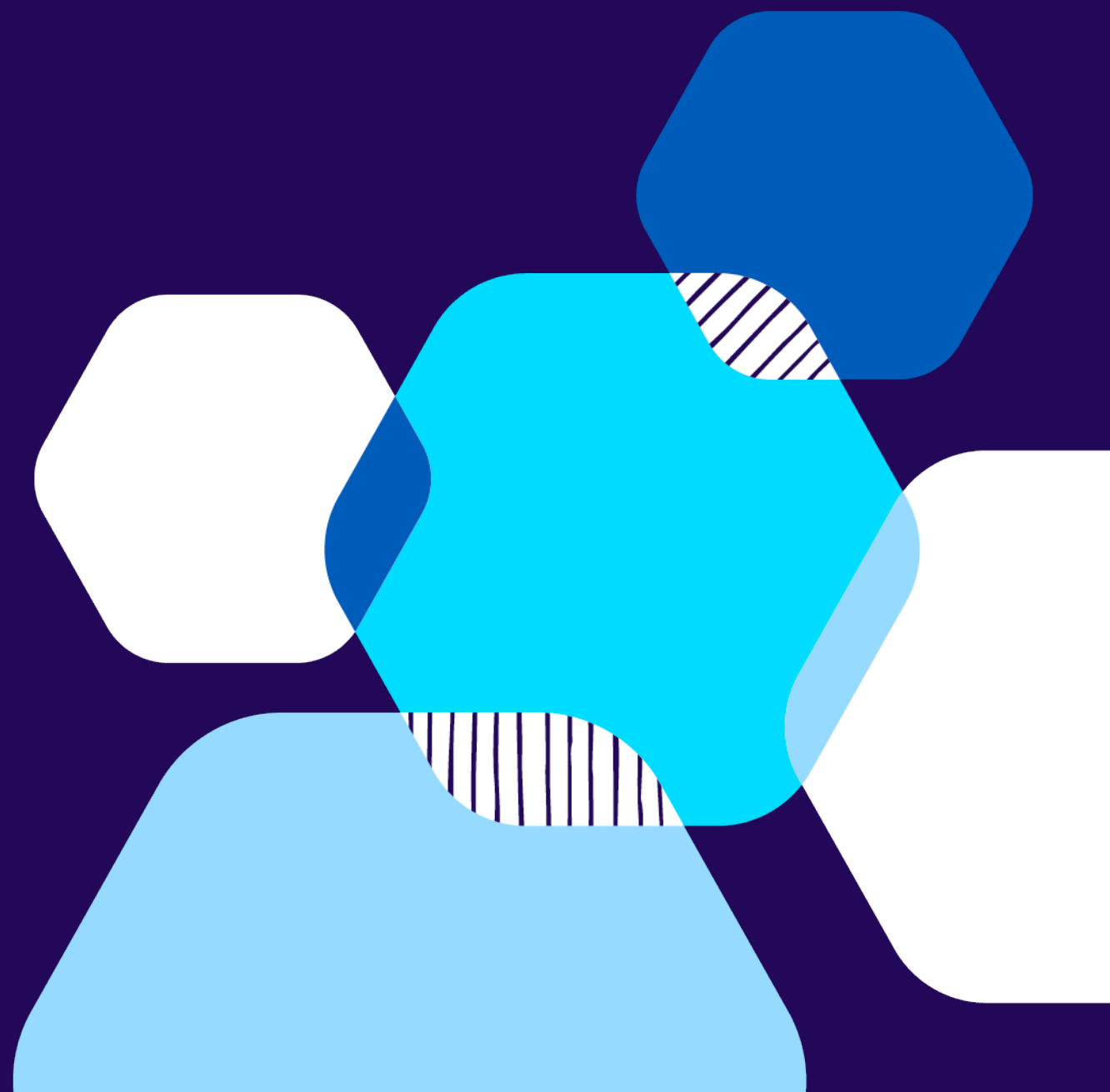
put data in: enter, input, key in, record

e.g. After we entered the data, we analysed it.

Source: <https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/data#>

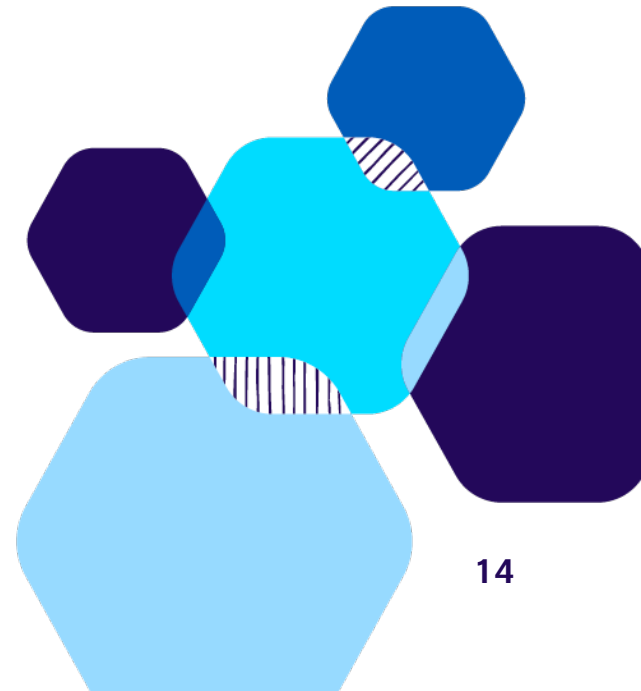


4. Listening task

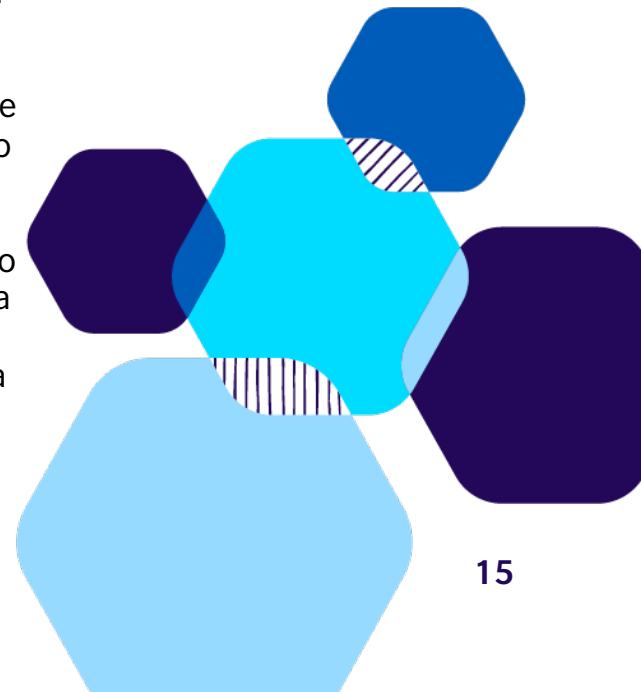


Listen to the following extract from the podcast, and answer these questions.

1. What is the focus of Specialist Language Courses?
2. Why is medical English a rapidly growing field?
3. Why is it important for language teachers to understand the medical field?
4. What are some challenges faced by healthcare professionals who need to communicate in English?
5. What are some of the subjects covered in Specialist Language Courses?

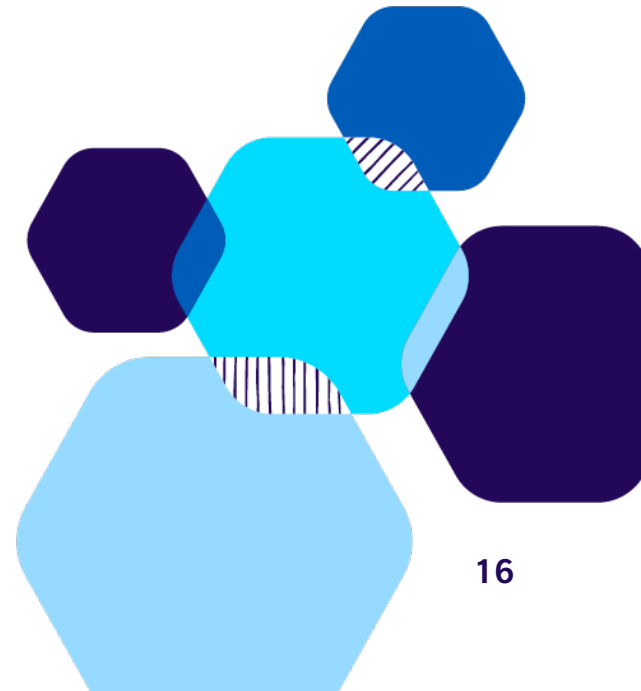


I'm Chris Moore founder and managing director of Specialist Language Courses, we work in medical English, in particular, working with education institutions, but also healthcare employers around the world. So medical English is a rapidly growing base in the sense that healthcare is a very internationalised world and in English is really the lingua franca. During the pandemic, that kind of internationalisation really accelerated because research news, drug therapies, everything was being done in English, the language itself reflects the technical society of the healthcare so in terms of symptoms, diagnoses, treatments, so the vocabulary is very much very common among healthcare professionals, but not so common among us as language teachers, so our teachers have to really get to understand the space quite quickly when they're working with healthcare, both students and professionals. So the world of medical terminology is a very big one. In terms of the way that language is used, clinical communication does have its own demands. So if you're a doctor or a nurse, and you're working with patients and their families, the kinds of stresses that you're under in order to deliver what can be very difficult news in a way that lands right is very difficult for a first language speaker let alone if you're doing it in another language. If we look at the kind of global healthcare workforce, you see how mobile it is. So you go to any hospital in London, for example, there are doctors, nurses, pharmacists, you name it from every corner of the world, and they're all working in English. And they're all communicating in English on quite complex subjects in quite a high-stress, high-stakes situations and therefore they need the language to do that. The language and the communication skills. So communication skills, in a sense of giving information or gathering information or eliciting information, whatever it happens to be, is also a fundamental part of medical English. So a lot of work that we do is around that kind of functional side of language, as well as teaching grammar, and the kind of building blocks of vocab and so on. I mean, grammar is an interesting one. I mean, there's a real need for accurate grammar when you're working in healthcare. So, you know, writing a piece of research, you've got to get it right, it's a very high-level piece of work and to do it in English, in your second language is hard. So we build in that kind of thing, so grammar, academic English, but very much within a healthcare context. And so you've got to look at what's happening in those spaces. And that's got to be then reflected into the lessons. So the teachers that we work with you most of them do not have a medical background. I mean, a small number do so x nurses, x doctors and that's great. But those that don't really have to kind of get under the skin of the subject and that has its challenges. And so we find that the English teachers who work with us stick with us, they really enjoy the work that they do, but it does take a while to get on top of the language and to understand the kind of, again, we come back to clinical communication to understand the scenarios that their students are working in. And if you're a pharmacist its going to be different to being a nurse, it's going to be different to being a doctor going to be different to being a GP or a consultant. So it is important to get under the skin of that and we spend quite a lot of time working with our teachers in order to support them to do so.



Answers

1. Specialist Language Courses focuses on medical English, particularly working with education institutions and healthcare employers worldwide.
2. Medical English is a rapidly growing field because healthcare is a very internationalized world, and English is the lingua franca. During the pandemic, internationalization accelerated because research news, drug therapies, and everything was being done in English.
3. It is important for language teachers to understand the medical field because the vocabulary used in the medical field is very common among healthcare professionals, but not so common among language teachers. Teachers need to understand medical terminology and clinical communication to effectively teach medical English.
4. Healthcare professionals who need to communicate in English face the challenge of accurately communicating technical information related to symptoms, diagnoses, and treatments, especially in high-stress, high-stakes situations. They also need to have strong communication skills to give and gather information effectively.
5. Specialist Language Courses cover grammar, academic English, and functional language skills such as communication, all within a healthcare context. The courses also take into consideration the different scenarios that healthcare professionals face depending on their role, such as pharmacists, nurses, doctors, GPs, or consultants.



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