

# Laypersons' views on doctors' use of Chinese medical terms, a qualitative study

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## Introduction

● Doctors' use of medical terms is generally considered to be a potential problem for patients. However, some researchers argued that patients might in fact prefer medical terms to lay language.

**Medical terms may lead to misunderstandings decrease satisfaction**

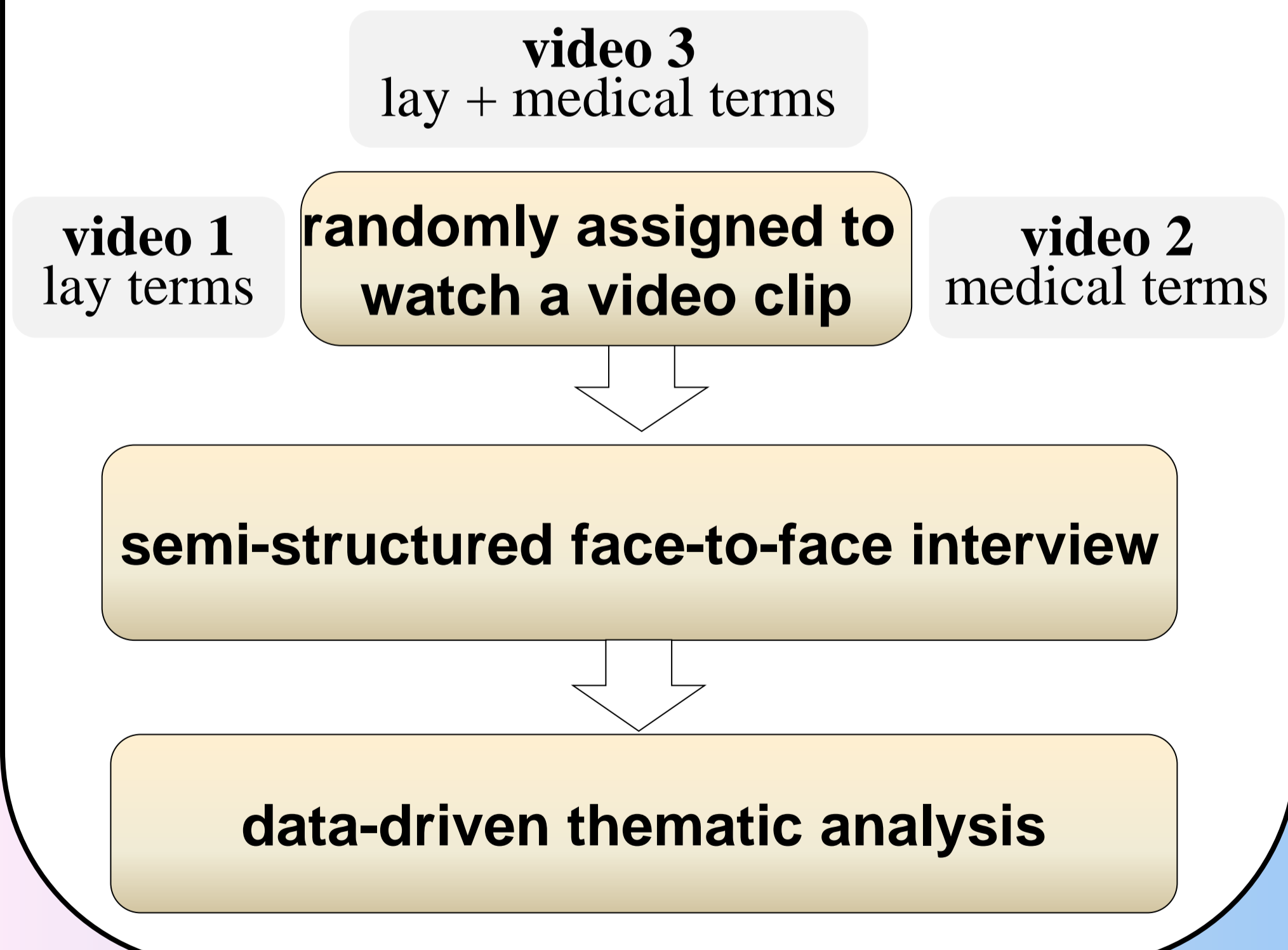
**VS.**

**Medical terms can increase patient confidence in the doctor result in a more satisfactory consultation**



## Methods

Forty four Hong Kong laypersons were interviewed after the exposure to one of three video clips which differed in the use of words explaining a case of prolapsed intervertebral disc.



## Results

● Hong Kong laypersons' views on doctors' use of Chinese medical terms.

### Theme 1

I would **prefer lay terms**.

It was **not necessary** to use so many technical terms when explaining to the patient.

Medical terms **cannot be understood** by ordinary citizens.

### Theme 2

Medical terms is more specific, the patient will **know more clearly** about their own conditions.

It will be easier for patients to **look for further information**.

The patient will feel that the doctor is **more professional**.

Preference of

Lay terms

Written materials  
visual aids  
repetitions  
guessing

### Theme 3

**Difficulty coping strategies**

There are some reasons for

the use of technical terms

## Conclusion

● Although doctors' use of Chinese medical terms may create comprehension difficulties for patients, it can be beneficial to patients in certain circumstances.

● It is important for medical students in Hong Kong to prepare themselves with adequate Chinese medical vocabularies.

## References

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