

Proposed Schemata of an English Course for the Learners of Pharmacy

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Abstract

The present paper is an attempt to study the materials of English Course in use at the Faculty of Pharmacy -Aden University and reveal whether they match the learners' needs either academically or professionally (i.e. in-study or post-study). Further, it attempts to elicit the harmonic elements between objectives of the prescribed curriculum and contents of the teaching materials. The results of this study have shown that the current materials only cover a segment of the students' needs, while the other pre-requisites are neglected to a great extent. Along these lines, a proposed schemata for a practical English Course is provided to approach the adequate requirements of such students. It comprises three visions: Part one contains sixteen units of medical and semi-medical topics, in more ways, it is an introductory part. Generally, it is designed to help the learners gain a good background about medicine and healthy sciences in order to establish a foundation in regards to interdisciplinary field. Part two (English Course for Pharmacy) involves twelve units shed light on registered English i.e. pure pharmaceutical English. This kind is presented to match the academic requirements. Part three (A Course of Grammar in Medical Context) consists of ten sections focusing on the grammatical structures which are used more commonly in medical setting.

Key words: ESP, Schemata, Pharmaceutical English.

Introduction:

Unquestionably, the importance of English is increased day by day as it is accepted internationally as the language of automation, technology and innovations in different branches of sciences. Indisputably, English has become a medium that can be used in the unlimited ways in the new revolutionary world of globalization (Abdullah, 2009:1 and 2013:225). There is no doubt that English like any other language serves the native speakers with a wide range of implementations in different disciplines, it strikes to note that it serves the non-natives of English with an equally wide range of use as it is international and can be used in various fields of commerce, trade and communication between the different states of the world (Talgeri, 2004:117). Therefore, English imposes itself as an instruction tool, because of its great importance on different branches of science, the discipline of pharmacy is not an exceptional condition. The five-year Bachelor of Science (B Sc.) provided by the Faculty of Pharmacy, in Aden University, uses English as the language of instruction in the teaching/ learning process of all the subjects, seminars, assignments, control tests, reports of experiments, end-semester examinations and final year research projects. The subjects of the present research are the first year students of the Pharmacy Faculty in Aden University. They are studying English course in the first year only alongside ten subjects (semester one: Botany I, Zoology I, General

Chemistry I, Physics and English I. Semester two: Botany II, Zoology II, General Chemistry II, Physics II, Pharmaceutical Calculation and English II). The credit hours for each subject ranged between 3/2 theoretically and 2 practically per week with the total of 14 hours and 12 hours respectively.

English is taught for two semesters 4 hours weekly, the faculty curriculum fixes nine objectives to be achieved by English Course at the end of the first year. It claims that the course aims to develop in the undergraduate, students specializing in pharmacy, the suitable language skills and sub-skills that students need in their field of specialty. By the end of this course, the students will be able to:

- Read his/ her subject materials purposefully;
- read and understand medical and pharmaceutical texts and take-note;
- have knowledge of note-taking techniques;
- have knowledge of medical terminology and abbreviations;
- listen to and understand lectures, discussions and take-note;
- communicate intelligibly in English;
- write various types of medical and pharmaceutical essays, reports, articles, etc.;
- participate in conferences, seminars and meetings effectively and
- understand and use basic grammatical structures related to his/ her field of specialty.

The above-mentioned objectives are quite excellent on papers, but in reality, most of them cannot be found. It is worth to mention that English Course presents purely pharmaceutical topics such as: A plant-based Drug Industry, A

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Pill for Every Ill, Injections, Drug Abuse, Pharmacology and Therapeutic, Future of Medicine etc. But there is a research question arises here: Does this kind of English meet the complete needs of the first year learners at the Pharmacy College? If negative, what do such learners entirely need in order to function effectively in different settings?

Hypothesis of the Research:

The current research hypothesizes the following: Pure pharmaceutical English is important, but it does not satisfy the adequate needs of the learners in the discipline of pharmacy in its own right, thence medical, semi-medical English and some topics of grammar in medical contexts are seriously required.

Limitation of the Study:

This study is limited to investigate the English language needs of the first year students at the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Aden.

Significance of the Study:

This study can be regarded as useful for the learners of medical sciences in general and pharmacy discipline in particular. It aims to expose the learners of pharmacy to use English effectively in different settings (academic, professional and even social). Further, it attempts to bridge the gap between the theoretical aspect i.e. what the students need in-study and practical aspect i.e. what the students need post-study.

Literature Review:

English for medical studies includes human medicine, pharmacy, dentistry etc., is a branch of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) which is a major breakthrough of English Language Teaching (ELT) that occurred in the beginning of 1960s. McDonough (1984:1) states that "ESP has become fashionable inevitable in the language teaching globe because of its great importance scientifically or economically. From time to time, new varieties of ESP are increasing in number over the entire competitive world".

Richards et al (1992:125) defines ESP as the role of English in a language course of instruction in which the content and aims of the course are fixed by the specific needs of a particular group of learners." Abdullah (2005:47) provides another practical definition of ESP." It is the language of speakers of English either as a foreign/ second language designed for definite purposes of a particular group of learners that meet their accurate needs. For instance, English

for medical studies, English for technicians, English for airlines employees etc."

Traditionally, English for medical studies is used to teach the learners of different disciplines of medical and health sciences such as human medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, nursing, public health, laboratories etc, but during the different developmental paces of ESP, each type of English is developed to meet the needs of a particular group of learners. The major focus of ESP was thrown on the profitable sectors as business, commerce, tourism, technology etc. Unfortunately, ESP in the field of medicine does not have a sufficient investigation. Despite, a little research work carried out in the area of English for medicine, though some exemplification will be covered in the next discussion.

Tawfiq (1984) conducted a study on the English language needs of the Iraqi undergraduate medical students during their preliminary year in Kufa Faculty of Medicine at Al-Mustansaria University of Iraq. The aim of this study was to bring out a needs profile that would help in designing a reading skill course. This work concluded that reading skill was the most important one, because it helps the students to be motivated to orient medical materials.

Khan (1986) administered a work on ESP and the teaching of medical vocabulary at Aligarh Muslim University in India. The study attempted to present the special vocabulary of medicine and provided a list of huge medical terms which could be applied to various contexts of medical discipline.

Adams-Smith (1979) draw up a needs profile paramedical students in Kuwait University. She used just one data collected questionnaire. The research revealed that the paramedical students' needs different from medical students, the goals of the former being occupational than academically oriented.

Abdullah (2005) conducted a work on needs of the first year students at the Medical College, University of Aden, the results of the study have already shown that the medical English materials in use at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Aden do not match the entire needs of the learners. Further, Medical English alone does not satisfy the needs of such learners. Semi-medical English and general English are also needed to express basic functions in the practical work, occupation and even the daily communication with colleagues as well as lecturers and the medical staff in the hospital. The study offered

an outline of a plan for a medical English course in the form of a dosage "Eighteen units of a course book" and a capsule form "Six units of supplementary grammar in the medical context". The previous discussion provides a fast survey on the research work in the field of medicine. Unfortunately, some vital scientific disciplines are ignored to a great extent in ESP research, the foremost being medicine, despite its critical importance to human life and health. The case of pharmacy is worse, the studies literature review can be counted on the fingers of two hands (Abdullah and Othman 2010:5). In the University of Aden, two research studies are administered to investigate the ESP in the discipline of pharmacy, it will be worthy to mention them below.

One study is conducted by Ziadah (2013) focusing on the difficulties encounter learners of pharmacy in translating medical terms, the subjects of the study are first year students of the Pharmacy Faculty, University of Aden, Yemen. The findings and conclusions of this work have shown that there are difficulties faced by students in translating medical terms pertaining to the course objectives, content, students' level, nature of the medical terminology which came from Latin and Greek and teaching methods.

Abdullah and Othman (2010) carried out another study concerning with English needs of students and the course materials in use at the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Aden, Yemen. This study aims at exploring what they require in English to function effectively in different situational settings: the current academic study and sociolinguistic needs and probable prerequisites of profession or further education. A data collection instrument (questionnaire schedule) was designed on the basis of the perceptions of learners. The results of the study show that specialized English (Pure Pharmaceutical English) in itself does not satisfy the overall needs of the learners. Other types of English such as disciplinary (Medical English) and ordinary (English for general purposes) need to supplement the main course.

Current Materials vs. Students' Needs:

As it has been pointed out previously, the English materials in use at the Faculty of Pharmacy emphasizes registered English i. e. pure pharmaceutical English. No doubt, specialized English is basic, but it does not match the entire needs of the learners, though it represents a part of the learners' needs. Thence, other types of English as disciplinary English

(medical and semi-medical English) have an equal importance, because medical sciences are interdisciplinary field i. e. interrelated to each other. Further, the contents of each unit focuses more on reading skill that means reading has the lion's share, the other skills (listening, speaking and writing) have been ignored to a great extent. It is a truism that reading is regarded as the most important skill in the academic setting. McDonough (1984:70) suggests: "... it will come as no surprise to most people to discover that in ESP terms by far the most significant skill is that of reading".

It is strongly recommended that the macro-skills of listening, speaking and writing should be given a logical consideration along with reading, instead of the undue emphasis on one skill. Hutchinson and Waters (2006: 75) grant the importance of reading for ESP learners; they add, however, that a balanced practice of listening, speaking, reading and writing would strengthen and enrich learners' English.

Furthermore, the subjects of the present work are learners of English as a foreign language, they were taught English for six years in basic and secondary education along with 8-10 subjects in the learners' mother-tongue (Arabic). It seems clear that English is used only in limited circles which negatively affects the learners' proficiency in general and writing skill in particular. Hence, such learners need to be exposed to some topics of grammar in medical domain in order to cope with the prerequisites of the university studies.

Accordingly and based on the previous research work in the field of medicine and pharmacy and the experience of the present researcher in teaching English Course for learners of pharmacy for more than thirteen years, the present study aims to provide proposed schemata of an English Course for the learners of pharmacy. Such practical course is devoted to help the students function effectively in the settings of in-study i.e. academic needs and post-study i.e. professional pre-requisites.

Proposed Schemata:

The proposed course is entitled *A Triple Course of English For Pharmacy*. As it can be seen clearly, the title started by the word "Triple" which means having or consisting of three parts. Therefore, this course consists of three parts as follows:

- Introductory Topics for Medical Sciences.
- English Course for Pharmacy.
- A Course of Grammar in Medical Context.

Some contents of the first two parts are compiled and collected legally from authorized sources and others are designed by the author of this research, while the last part is completely the own work of the present researcher. Generally, they are designed for the learners of English as a foreign / second language, particularly, the learners of pharmacy. Each part is designed to meet a particular and specific needs of the concerned learners, for instance, the first part "**Introductory Topics for Medical Sciences**" will help the students to build a good foundation about medical sciences in general via the language skills (Reading – writing – Listening), because medical and health sciences as human medicine, dentistry and pharmacy are interdisciplinary fields i.e. interrelated to each other. It is subdivided into Five divisions (Reading, Writing, Medical Terminology, Listening Comprehension and Supplementary Materials). The type of English which is included in this part is known as medical and semi-medical English.

The second part (**English for Pharmacy**) contains pure topics for pharmacy i.e. it is designed specifically to match the academic and professional requirements of the pharmaceutical discipline. Such kind of English is known as registered\ specialized or disciplinary English.

The third part (**A Course of Grammar in Medical Context**) is a combination of intermediate and above intermediate levels of grammar, it introduces grammatical topics within medical settings. Many new trends claim that grammar is very important for the learners of different medical disciplines as pharmacy, dentistry, human medicine, laboratories, nursing, public health etc, (Hutchinson and Waters, 2006:92, Kennedy and Bolitho, 1991:50 and Abdullah, 2005:183). Therefore, this course is prepared to meet the needs of such learners in an academic way, further it promotes the development of all the language skills in general and writing device in particular.

It is worth to mention that **A Triple Course of English for pharmacy** is an annual subject, it should be taught for two semesters in the first year of B. Sc. of pharmacy. In the first semester, the students have to study not less than ten units of the first part (**Introductory Topics for Medical Sciences**) plus sections one, two, three, four and five of the third part (**A Course of Grammar in Medical Context**). Then, the

students end this semester by a control test (I). In the second semester, the students have to study not less than ten units of the second part (**English Course for Pharmacy**) in addition to sections six, seven, eight, nine and ten of the grammar book. Eventually, the students have a control test (II) and conclude this course by a final examination at the end of their first year of the tertiary study.

Objectives of the Proposed Course:

The proposed materials aim to achieve the following objectives:

- To encourage and promote oral interaction and communication in English between the learners of the same discipline, particularly, in formal and informal contacts.
- To grasp the general theme of lectures presented in English either in the specialized subjects or faculty and university subjects.
- To develop the device of listening comprehension so that the students can follow the lectures, participate in scientific discussion and projects carried out in English.
- To encourage the students to speak effectively in seminars and summarize scientific notions orally.
- To encourage the students to describe orally the results of the practical work projects, experiments, etc.
- To interact with peers, workshops instructors, tutors, lecturers and administrative staff in the area of study.
- To gain knowledge of note-taking techniques and summaries.
- To write in a good academic style reports of practical work and experiments, answers of the control tests and end semester examinations etc.
- To understand and use basic grammatical structures related to his/her subject specialization.
- To have primary ideas about principles of a small-scale research project.
- To raise the overall performance level of the students so as to enable them to function successfully in their future careers.
- To expose the students to as many relevant learning opportunities as possible so that students get used to the language need on the job. (Abdullah, 2005:179-180).

Below is a list of the contents of each part matched with credit hours:

Part I : Introductory Topics for Medical Sciences.**Reading:**

Unit No.	Subject	Credit Hours
Unit One	Reading strategies in the Academic Setting	4 hrs
Unit Two	Preventive Medicine	2 hrs
Unit Three	Infectious Diseases	2 hrs
Unit Four	How the Body Fights Infection	2 hrs
Unit Five	Nutrition / Malnutrition	2 hrs
Unit Six	Immunity	• hrs

Writing:

Unit One	Definitions	2 hrs
Unit Two	Exemplifications	2 hrs
Unit Three	Classifications	2 hrs
Unit Four	Process of Descriptions	2 hrs

Terminology: Learning how to break down and understand the medical terms (4 hrs).

Listening Comprehension.

Unit One	Anemia	2 hrs
Unit Two	Losing Weight	2 hrs
Unit Three	Safe Food and Water	2 hrs
Unit Four	Harmful Effects of Sun on Skin	2 hrs

Supplementary Materials:

This section is concerned with the new innovations in the field of pharmacy, such

materials are adopted from internet and other recent recommended references (6 hrs).

Part II: English Course for Pharmacy:

Unit One	Drugs and Medicines	2 hrs
Unit Two	Drug Administration and Absorption	2 hrs
Unit Three	Plant – Based Drug Industry	2 hrs
Unit Four	Injections	2 hrs
Unit Five	Warnings about Drug Use	2 hrs
Unit Six	Drug Testing and the Placebo Effect	2 hrs
Unit Seven	HIV Infection and Drug Research	2 hrs
Unit Eight	The History of Drug Abuse	2 hrs
Unit Nine	The Blood – brain Barrier	2 hrs
Unit Ten	Alkaloids: Powerful Substances From Plants	2 hrs
Unit Eleven	Eastern Medicine	2 hrs
Unit Twelve	Medicine and Genetic Research	2 hrs

Part III: A Course of Grammar in Medical Context:

Section One	Present Simple and Progressive	4 hrs
Section Two	Past Simple and Present Perfect	4 hrs
Section Three	Past Progressive and Perfect	4 hrs
Section Four	Ways of Expressing Futurity	4 hrs
Section Five	English Verbs	4 hrs
Section Six	Impersonal Passive	4 hrs
Section Seven	Articles and Nouns	4 hrs
Section Eight	Adjectives and Adverbs	4 hrs
Section Nine	Adjuncts	2 hrs
Section Ten	Sentences: Simple, Compound and Complex	4 hrs

Conclusion:

As presented so far the results of this work have revealed that the current English course materials provided for the first year students at the Faculty of Pharmacy, Aden University do not achieve the objectives that claimed by the curriculum of the faculty. Further, it emphasizes only registered English (i.e. specialized or pure pharmaceutical topics). Definitely, this type of English is important for such learners, but it is not all what they totally need, it represents a small segment of their needs. Such result addresses a part of the research question that is: Does pure pharmaceutical English meet the complete needs of the first year learners at the Pharmacy College? And the first part of the research hypothesis that is: Pure pharmaceutical English is important, but it does not satisfy the adequate needs of the learners in the discipline of pharmacy.

The present work suggests a proposed schemata for a practical English course consisting of three

parts viz. a) Introductory topics for medical sciences; It is a type of medical and semi-medical English designed to help the students build a good foundation about medical sciences in general, because they are interdisciplinary streams i.e. interrelated to each other. b) English for pharmacy: This part belongs to registered or specialized English, it is provided specifically to meet the academic and professional prerequisites of the pharmaceutical discipline. c) A course of grammar in medical context offers grammatical topics cycle around medical settings. Finally, the proposed schemata addresses the last part of the research question i.e. what do such learners need in order to function effectively in different settings? And the last part of the research hypothesis i.e. in addition to pure pharmaceutical English, medical, semi-medical English and some topics of grammar in medical contexts are seriously required.

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Prescribed Books for the Proposed Course

13- Abdullah, G. M. A. (2013) A Course of Grammar in Medical Context (Under Publishing). Cooper, C. (1993) English Course for Pharmacy (Collection of Different Medical topics).

14- Introductory Topics for Medical Sciences. (Medical and Semi-medical topics designed and compiled by the present researcher).

Recommended References for the Proposed Course

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خطة مقترحة لمنهاج اللغة الانجليزية لتعلمي الصيدلة

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الملخص

يستهدف البحث دراسة مواضيع اللغة الانجليزية المستخدمة في كلية الصيدلة بجامعة عدن وكشف إلى أي مدى تلبي كافة متطلبات الطلاب أكاديميا أو وظيفيا " في أثناء الدراسة أو ما بعد الدراسة " وتحاول الدراسة استيضاح عناصر التناسق بين أهداف الخطة الدراسية ومحتوى المادة الدراسية. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن المنهاج الراهن يركز على جزء يسير من متطلبات الطلاب بينما هناك متطلبات أخرى أهملت إلى حد بعيد . وفي ضوء ذلك قدمت هذه الدراسة خطة مقترحة لمنهاج اللغة الإنجليزية يدنو من جميع متطلبات الطلاب الدراسية . تتكون الخطة من ثلاثة أجزاء : الأول يحتوي على ست عشرة وحدة دراسية لمواضيع طبية وشبه طبية تمكن الطلاب من تكوين خلفية جيدة حول الطب والعلوم الطبية المتداخلة . الجزء الثاني : يشتمل على اثنتي عشرة وحدة تركز على الإنجليزية الصيدلانية البحتة لتلبي المتطلبات الأكاديمية . في حين يحتوي الجزء الثالث " كتاب قواعد في الصياغ الطبي " على عشرة أجزاء ليركز على التراكيب النحوية الأكثر استخداما في المواضيع الطبية .