

## The role of the content teachers on designing SIU medical laboratory sciences English text book

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### **Abstract:**

*In this paper the study is trying to investigate the role of the content teachers' on designing the English text book taught at SIU for the first year medical laboratory students. The book is designed on the bases of the standard characteristics of EFL/ESL textbooks and with the help of the key terms and texts provided by the content teachers.*

*The methodology of the study is a text book evaluation checklist which is designed for sixty English language teachers.*

*The results of the text book evaluation checklist reveal significantly that the role of the content teachers enriches the text book and makes it a good ESP text book and it hence enhances the students' English proficiency.*

**Key words:** evaluation checklist – textbook – content teachers

### **INTRODUCTION**

Esp. courses are taught at Sudanese university as a requirement. This situation is very challenging because some English language departments choose to teach general English. Others teach ESP text books.

In SIU English language department designed an ESP text book based on the data they collect from the content teachers.

The content teachers of medical laboratory college provide the department with the terms and texts the students are supposed to encounter during their basic medical classes. Then the researcher applies the characteristics of designing a text book to design an integration of ESP and general English into main stream English course by integrating linguistic elements around the medical corpora.

### **The statement of the problem**

The situation of English language education is very challenging in Sudan International University in terms of organizing the English education scheme to fit within the constraints of theoretical approaches of language teaching, the prescribed curriculum and syllabus, and the needs and interests of the students within the classroom. The low level of the student, necessitating the provision of English for Academic Purpose (EAP) courses to prepare such students to study in English-speaking institutions. Because of the variety of academic backgrounds of students take these courses, classes deliver English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP), which mostly comprise study-skills based approaches. It is often difficult to relate such EGAP content to students' academic disciplines or to address their academic needs in classes which contain students from a range of academic backgrounds because English as a Second Language (ESL) and EAP are two different modes of curricula in terms of student clientele, course content, objectives, and instruction (Larklau, 1994).

In order to address this problem, English department at Sudan International University has decided to design discipline-specific text book for the medical laboratory college that match their students' actual needs. So the objectives of the book were clearly drawn to help the students make use of the content based learning situation where the medium of instruction in the university is English. And this is why the content teachers are asked to provide the materials of the

students' basic courses because most language syllabus content is drawn from inventories or lists which may be word frequency lists, inventories of functions or lists of specific topics which deal with communicative functions, discourse skills, and study skills.

### **Content-Based instruction (CBI) approach**

CBI is "...the integration of particular content with language teaching aims...the concurrent teaching of academic subject matter and second language skills" (Brinton et al., 1989, p. 2).

CBI approaches "...view the target language largely as the vehicle through which subject matter content is learned rather than as the immediate object of study" (Brinton et al., 1989, p. 5).

So it refers to the substance or subject matter that we learn or communicate through language content rather than the language use to convey it.

It also aimed according to Wesche, (1993) to develop the learners' skills by leaning a specific content and related language use skills.

CBI is "...an approach to language instruction that integrates the presentation of topics or tasks from subject matter classes (e.g., math, social studies) within the context of teaching a second or foreign language" (Crandall & Tucker, 1990, p. 187).

From the above definitions, it is clearly that the CBI approach is teaching organized around the content or information that students will acquire, and not around the linguistic or other type of syllabus. More over it is built on the principles of Communicative Language Teaching. It helps the Classroom needs to be filled with real and meaningful communication where information is exchanged.

Genesee (1994) in his suggestion that content '...need not be academic; it can include any topic, theme, or non-

language issue of interest or importance to the learners' (p. 3).he clarifies What qualifies as 'content' in CBI.

This significantly support the notion that People learn a second language more successfully when they use the language as a means of acquiring information, rather than as an end in it. This principle reflects one of the motivations for CBI noted earlier that it leads to more effective language learning. Because what we teach in any kind of content-based course is not the content itself but some form of the discourse of that content. Thus, for teachers the problem is how to acculturate students to the relevant discourse communities, and for students the problem is how to become acculturated to those communities. Eskey, (1997).

Furthermore, it is not so much the content itself, in terms of factual knowledge, but some form of the discourse of that content.

Grabe, Stoller, (1997) argue that Many research are conducted in a variety of program models based on CBI. Those researches have shown that content-based instruction results in language learning, content learning, increased motivation and interest levels, and greater opportunities for employment (where language abilities are necessary.

Beside, CBI allows for greater flexibility to be built into the curriculum and activities; there are more opportunities to adjust to the needs and interests of students.

Consequently, the integration of language and content throughout a sequence of language levels has the potential to address the needs of the learners by bridging the gap between the language aspects and the students' university academic environment.

This view is supported by, Candlin (1984) who states that content is drawn upon from "some content~bank" which is based on some stated objectives which are in turn derived from the needs assessment of learners.

Consequently the selection of the content of the text book is concerned as Shaw (1976) recommends with the content we teach, the methodology, the suitability of what is taught.

The text book is organized on the bases that a syllabus should be to promote learning, and not just to provide a description of the language. Therefore, the content matter should be organized in such a way so as to facilitate teaching and learning. The unit of organization should also suit the particular purpose of learning.

In order to implement the text book the researcher consider a number of factors which suggested by Maley (1984). These factors are: Cultural, educational, organizational, the learner, the teacher, and finally the material or the content taught.

According to Cummins (1982) refers to as 'context-reduced' language which tends to be rather abstract and to rely less heavily for its coherence on an immediate context than does the 'context-embedded' language of everyday interaction, which is the focus of general ESL courses. Short & Spanos (1989) see this as the fundamental difference between EAP and ESL curricula. Furthermore, since EAP courses are usually for students who have embarked on a course of advanced study at university level (Grosse, 1988; McDonough, 1984; Schleppegrell & Bowman, 1986; Steinhausen, 1993), their academic curricula presuppose solid literacy abilities as well as a strong academic orientation (Blanton, 1990; Chamot & O'Malley, 1987; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Jordan, 1997).

The EAP curriculum usually builds on student awareness that there is a particular language of the academy, and certain ways of talking, reading and writing about ideas and texts. It aims at developing what Cummins (1979) calls Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). CALP builds on the students' acquisition of basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) - the verbal fluency needed in a target language for everyday informal situations. As such, it

can be seen that general English proficiency (BICS) is merely the basis for CALP and is not a promising indicator of success in academic study (Lewelling, 1991)

As Van Ek (1976) states "that language learning objectives must be geared towards learners' needs

### **The review of the medical laboratory English text book**

The text book is designed to guide lines the students of medical laboratory sciences and put them on their medical right track because the text book tend to make use of the medical laboratory corpora and transfer it into a pedagogical context.

The manuscript of the text book was reviewed by experts and teachers at this level. The manuscript of the text book is published after modifying the manuscript in the light of the suggestions made by the reviewers.

The objectives of the text book are to familiarize the students with their vocabulary and to provide them with the basic language and academic skills they need to cope with their study as well as to attain communicative competence in using English at various levels. Another objective is to introduce different language function within the medical laboratory sciences situation and the main focus is on the language skills.

The methodological frame of the textbook is a kind of integration of theme based, structure based and ESP of medical laboratory corpora. So it is a functional approach and the principals of communicative competence.

The lessons of the text book are introduces in the thematic units and with pre tasks, exercises and task activities.

The organization of the text book is as follow:

The book is divided into units. It consists of twenty units. Every unit begins with the vocabulary section where the all vocabulary is related to the medical laboratory context and within the theme of the unit e.g. unit one is about our body. So the whole vocabulary is about the parts of the body and the collocations of these terms.

The vocabulary activities are designed to help the students recycle and consolidate the key terms of their basic chosen discipline. eg matching exercises, completion, cross the odd word out, word formation and so forth.

The second section of each unit is grammar focus. Most of the grammar is based on the vocabulary (section one) for example how to help the students to construct sentences using the vocabulary they have come across in the first section.

So the grammar is presented in this section communicatively and within the frame of the theme of every unit. In unit one the grammar focus is on the verbs to be. So the students know how and where to use them to write a good descriptive and definition sentence.

The third section is listening. The students experienced daily life communication demonstrated by native speakers. The activities are designed to help the students use the listening activities communicatively e.g. open ended questions, guessing game, completion, and inferences.

The fourth section is speaking. The speaking topics and activities focus on different situations such as introducing yourself to your colleague in unit one, apology, invitation, showing direction and invitations.

So the speaking activities prepare the students towards practicing some of the academic skills the text book consider in its context such as presentations, summary and paraphrasing as well as group discussion.

The speaking activities are in the form of role playing and open discussions. Some of the speaking activities are drawn from the reading texts to train the students for the analytical reading e.g. the students are asked to study and explain what they read in the reading texts in order to help them interact and infer every time they consult or read something.

The fifth section is reading. Most of the reading texts are provided by the content teachers and comprehending questions are given at the end of the text. There are miscellaneous

reading activities; before reading activities after reading and while reading. Some reading activities recycled some language focus e.g. the word formation where the students are asked to change the classification of a chosen word from the reading passage and then reconstruct the whole sentence.

The sixth section is writing. The text book provides some writing basics leading the students from the phrases, clauses into different types of sentences as well as paragraph writing, punctuation and linking words and ideas.

The last section is called skills corner. This section presents the basic academic skills the students need in their study ;such as the art of the presentation, note taking , paraphrasing and summary, using the library, time management, lab safety and so forth.

### **Objectives of the study**

The objective of the study is to identify the role of the content teachers on designing the English text book of the medical laboratory college at Sudan international university.

### **The main hypothesis**

The researcher has two hypotheses:

The first is that content teachers can help in developing the ESP. text books taught at Sudanese universities.

The second is that content teachers can provide the English teachers with the basic terms and texts of the student chosen discipline to help them design or supplement the ESP. text books they plan to teach.

### **The Research Methodology**

The researcher uses the text book evaluation checklist for the English language teachers to collect the data of the study. The text book evaluation checklist was analyzed by using SPSS computer system.



## **The results and discussion**

**Table (1) the content of the book and the students, needs.**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	20	33.3
V.good	30	50.0
good	5	8.3
poor	5	8.3
Total	60	100.0

The table and the chart above show clearly that the text book is considerably addresses the medical students needs since the content is relevant to their basic chosen discipline

**Table(2) the content of the book and the students domain**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	20	33.3
V.good	20	33.3
poor	15	25.0
Not sure	5	8.3
Total	60	100.0

About 70% of the respondents agree that the content of the book is related to the students' specialty because it is based on the medical corpora analytical genre approach and the n it arouses their interests.

**Table (3) the objectives of the book**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	30	50.0
V.good	20	33.3
poor	5	8.3
Not sure	5	8.3
Total	60	100.0

It is clear from the table above that the text book has clear achievable objectives because it familiarizes the students with the medical lab terms in a very systematic linguistics format.

It also helps the students develop their linguistic competence as well as their critical thinking

**Table (4) the contents and the students' environment.**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	40	66.7
V.good	16	26.7
poor	2	3.3
Not sure	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

The respondents here see that the students enjoy the text book very much and they even interact with it because it is cohesively linked to their medical lab basic subjects

**Chart (5) grammar presentation**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	30	50.0
V.good	20	33.3
good	10	16.7
Total	60	100.0

It is obvious that the teachers have found the text book grammar section is communicatively engaged and designed around the ESP vocabulary in order to enable the students to build very good English sentences with the help of the vocabulary they recycled during both the English classes and their basic subjects.

**Table (6) the grammar activities.**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	25	41.7
V.good	26	43.3
poor	5	8.3
Not sure	4	6.7
Total	60	100.0

Here also the respondents simply see that the language activities are graded and constructed to reinforce the students'

grammar knowledge and therefore, help them to use it communicatively.

**Chart (7) the vocabulary of the book.**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	39	65.0
V.good	19	31.7
good	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

The teachers here undoubtedly agree that the vocabulary is taken from the students medical corpora as they asked the content teachers to provide them with a large collection of the medical laboratory sciences texts.

**Chart (8) the language components of the book**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	35	58.3
V.good	10	16.7
poor	5	8.3
Not sure	10	16.7
Total	60	100.0

75% of the teachers have found out that it is easily to indentify the role of grammar structures drawn with the medical constrains of the text book. So the students fluently interact during their basic classes.

**Table (9) the reading texts of the book.**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	30	50.0
V.good	15	25.0
good	5	8.3
poor	3	5.0
Not sure	2	3.3
Total	55	91.7
Missing System	5	8.3
Total	60	100.0

The table above depicts that 45 respondents with 75% have found out that the reading texts are addressing the medical **are around the ESP frame.**

They enhance the students adding skills.

**Table (10) the writing section of the book**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	40	66.7
V.good	20	33.3
Total	60	100.0

The whole teachers agree that the writing activities are basics and address the students basic writing problems.

**Table (11) the relation between the reading passages and the academic skills.**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	34	56.7
V.good	22	36.7
poor	4	6.7
Total	60	100.0

It is clear from table (11) that the reading passages of the text book can be used to enhance the academic skills like presentation, taking notes and paraphrasing. The students can make use of the reading passages for example and practice them as presentation topics.

**Table (12) the academic skills presentation**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	41	68.3
V.good	12	20.0
poor	7	11.7
Total	60	100.0

The majority of the evaluators in this table are quite satisfied with the academic skills presented in the text book and they see

that they help the students engaged actively in their classes as well as in many group discussions and seminars.

**Chart (13) the listening activities of the book.**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	28	46.7
V.good	20	33.3
good	4	6.7
poor	4	6.7
Not sure	4	6.7
Total	60	100.0

The listening activities are demonstrated by native speakers and they are the most common situations the respondents as well as the students encounter and benefit from. This is why 48 out of 60 of the respondents have found that the listening section is matching the students' needs.

**Table (14) listening activities encourages students to speak.**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	22	36.7
V.good	28	46.7
poor	2	3.3
Total	52	86.7
Missing System	8	13.3
Total	60	100.0

The students' speaking skill is improving and the teachers have attributed it to the integration of the listening section and speaking section so that the students can demonstrate the phrases and the expressions they encounter in the listening section and use them when they speak.

**Table (15) the speaking section presentation**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	23	38.3
V.good	17	28.3
poor	7	11.7
Not sure	3	5.0
Total	50	83.3
Missing System	10	16.7
Total	60	100.0

The table shows the respondents opinions that the speaking section tend to emerge the whole linguistic items the students came across because the speaking situations are related to the students daily life. And even more the speaking activities recycle the language components of the grammar section as the situations are significantly drawn and chosen to help reinforce the language elements presented in the text book.

**Table (16) the speaking activities presentation**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	33	55.0
V.good	27	45.0
Total	60	100.0

Most of the respondents see that the speaking activities are graded and progressively distributed in terms of the weight and presentation so forth they help the students practice effectively

**Chart (17) the book provides progression of different language items cohesively.**

	Frequency	Percent
excellent	26	43.3
V.good	14	23.3
good	10	16.7
poor	6	10.0
Not sure	4	6.7
Total	60	100.0

The text book as it is clear from the responses above help the students develop their language competences and the progression on their chosen discipline as they show great advancement in their basic classes results and they do not suffer to understand and interact with the main subject when they attend the classes or consult references.

### **Summary of the results and findings**

The study has come out with the following results and findings:

- The role of the content teachers provide the teachers with the considerable materials related to the students' medical laboratory field and it then helps them to deal with text book seriously yet it is a requirement course.
- The organization of the content of the book help the students interact with the content teachers during their basic classes.
- The text book has clear achievable objectives because it familiarizes the students with the medical lab terms in a very systematic linguistics form..
- The grammar section is communicatively engaged and designed around the ESP vocabulary in order to enable the students to build very good English sentences with the help of the vocabulary they recycled during both the English classes and their basic subjects.
- The language activities have reinforced the students' grammar knowledge and therefore, they use it communicatively.
- The text book helps the students to get familiarized and enrich their medical laboratory key vocabulary.
- The grammar structures drawn with the medical constrains of the text book help the students to interact fluently during their basic classes.
- The reading texts are addressing the medical context and they have enhanced the students reading skills.

- The writing activities are basics and have addressed the student's basic writing problems. So the students have showed a significant progress in their writing skill.
- The reading passages of the text book have enhanced the students' academic skills.
- The academic skills presented in the text book have helped the students engaged actively in their classes as well as in many group discussions and seminars.
- The listening activities have matched the students' needs and improve their listening and speaking skills respectively.
- The students break their speaking psychological fears and they have involved in the group discussion as it is one of the learning techniques in the college and they far better get in positive contact with the international students.
- The students' speaking skill is improving and the teachers have attributed it to the integration of the listening section and speaking section so that the students can demonstrate the phrases and the expressions they encounter in the listening section and use them when they speak.
- The text book has helped the students develop their language competences and the progression on their chosen discipline as they show great advancement in their basic classes results and they do not suffer to understand and interact with the main subjects when they attend the classes or consult references.

### **Conclusion and recommendations:**

The study has been conducted to identify the role of the medical laboratory teachers on designing an English text book for their students. The role is identified when the English language teaches are asked to evaluate the text book designed for the



study. it was very clear that the content of the book is considered to be comprehensive and helps the students to enhance their language proficiency as well as it familiarizes them with their basic terms they need .this is why the study recommends the English language teachers as well as English departments to consult the content teachers to provide them with the ESP materials of the students chosen discipline in order to design or supplement the text book they intend to teach for their students.

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