

Attitudes of Medical Students towards English for Specific Purposes

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Abstract:

This study was conducted to evaluate ESP programme for students studying medicine at two Sudanese universities. It focused on the problem related to weakness of the Sudanese medical students in these universities in communication skills with a specific focus on Medicine students. The study was important because it gave a great deal to the problems and the solutions to medical students for studying English skills. It also aimed at identifying the students' needs for studying English language, investigating the language skills required by the ESP students at some Sudanese universities and linking students' needs to English courses objectives. The study adopted the descriptive analytical approach. The study came to many results thus: the majority of the students of medicine in both universities do not have communicative skills for non-academic real life situations, even if they were aware of their needs of learning English. The study recommended that ESP should be taught from communicative real life situational base, on- going needs assessment should be conducted constantly, and English teachers should be trained to use communicative situational approach, putting into account using technology and multimedia in ESP classes.

Key words: Attitudes; EFL; Language learning; Medical students

1.1 Introduction

English language is a global language. Today, it is used widely as a means of communication, from international academic

conferences, researches, contracts to news reports and everyday language. To meet such a pressing need, Sudanese Universities give a great deal of importance for this language, by creating special colleges, faculties and institutes to up hold the job. Moreover inside these faculties, there are some sections that do not offer English course as a discipline of specialization; they study English to meet the general academic needs as well as the future job needs. Teaching English for specific purposes (ESP) is one of the world wide teaching practices. For this reason, it is decided to do this research into ESP, a case of Sudanese university level.

1.2 Statement of the Problem:

Having a 4-year teaching experience at Ahfad University, it is found that, there are some questions raised concerning the students' needs for English language that do not reflects the objectives of the taught courses. It was observed that new recruited doctors do not have good commands in English; it is reflected in their conversations or through writing reports; generally communication skills were real a problem for these students. This situation made the investigation in this field which is the field of medicine something inevitable, to find the range of the matching between the students' target needs and the objectives of the taught English materials". To meet the very needs of the students, many medicine students from different universities were asked. When asking the students about the materials that they have for this course? As a result, it was found that all the studied courses were grammar ones. Furthermore, when they were asked about their needs of English for this semester? There were no answers found; that means the students neglected even the needs that they should struggle to get. On the other hand, when the other partner of this process, which are the instructors, when asked about the reason of declining of the students standards of communication skills? While some answered that, once the students are not

specialized it does not matter to practice all the skills, others confessed that their basic degrees are not in the teaching fields. Generally, the questions that need to be answered through this research can be generalized into these points:

Firstly, the lecturers for these courses, sometimes their base study of the field of teaching may not have special courses or practical activities in this field.

Secondly, there are no fixed curricula for these courses. It has been noted that there are not well designed or even fixed syllabuses for ESP courses.

1.3 Objectives of the Study:

1. To identify medicine students' needs for studying English language.
2. To investigate the language skills required by the ESP students at some Sudanese Universities.
3. To draw attentions to the value of the needs analyses as an essential stage in designing ESP course.

1.4 Questions of Study:

1. What are the most urgent English needs of the Sudanese ESP students?
2. Why do the ESP students need English for communicative nonacademic purposes?
3. To what extent do instructors encourage the students to study English for their future careers?

1.5 Hypotheses of the Study:

1. ESP is the most needed English subject for Sudanese medicine students.
2. The majority of the students who study medicine at different Sudanese universities have, the same English needs.

2.1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1.1 Historical Background of Teaching English Language in Sudan

English language in Sudan has been moved through different epochs:

2.1.2 Colonial Policy

The majority of the Sudanese believe that the western type of Education in Sudan has been started with the coming of the condominium rule in 1898. That thought is not true, really it began during the Turco-Egyptian rule which has been started in the year 1820 and ended in 1885. Bashir 1969 confirmed that.

The western-type of education laid during the Turco-Egyptian regime by both the government and Christian mission any societies. (Bashir, 1969, 3).

The development of this “Western type” of education developed. During that era of the condominium there have been many changes for educational policies. The first rules set by sir James Curries- who was appointed as a director of education in 1900- were according to Bashir:

1. The diffusion of education among the masses to make them understand the merest elements of machinery of the government.
2. The creation of native artisan class; and
3. The creation of small native administration class who would ultimately fill minor posts. (Bashir, 1969, 29).

He has limited the goals of education into those goals. He established few English languages schools to put those goals into practice. These schools were to prepare some of the Sudanese to work as low-ranking officials to help the colonialist governing the country.

In all these levels, English was a fundamental subject in the curriculum. But the role of English language was instrumental, for it is used to prepare Sudanese to hold junior posts in the service of the government. Thus English language was not taught for educational purposes

That reason proves that teaching English has started during the Anglo Egyptian condominium to create a class of young people meant to occupy the administration of the country. So the teaching of English in a limited way gradually become a crucial part of the Sudanese educational system. Abdul-Majid (1972) gives a cause for this when, he points that: "The inevitable use of English in administration had led to its introduction into the content of Education" (Abdulmajed, 1972, 63).

In the 1902 Report on the Soudan, Lord Cromer stated that ' I consider that at present only those boys should learn English who are subsequently going to make use of it in the Government service or in commercial pursuits in which such knowledge is necessary. (qtd. In Sandell, 1982: 6). When Gordon College was first established, the administration adopted the linguistic philosophy of Mr. Douglas Dunlop of 1907 concerning language policy in Egypt. Dunlop argued that it is necessary for students to have good command of the foreign language in order to pursue their education and after graduation they need to keep abreast of the times and follow the professional periodicals and publications. He claimed that any lowering of the standard of attainment in the foreign languages in the Secondary Schools would be fatal for the efficiency of Higher College. It was decided that the medium of instruction for the secondary level in Gordon College should be in English (Sandell, 1982:7). In 1929, the Commission which examined the situation of Gordon College suggested that: It would appear to be wise specifically to limit the first two years at least of the College course to an enlargement of the pupil's modern English ... It might be considered whether at the end of

the two final years some distinction ought not to be made in the kind of English taught, according to the kind of career which the pupil proposes. It seems reasonable to suppose that the intending engineer or doctor ought particularly to study scientific texts of recognized literary value; it is likely that the intending teacher ought to be specially practiced in the spoken and more idiomatic tongue. (qtd. in Sandell, 1982:21).

As a result of that, English was taught as a subject of intermediate levels and as a means of instructions at secondary schools. The teachers use the grammar translation method to present their lessons, although it was the only method at that time, students scored high levels in English. The syllabus which was used at that time was the Egyptian syllabus “Readers”.

The need of teaching Sudanese English language made this language introduced into the school system. Currie announced a new policy for education. The result of that policy was the application of a system of three levels, (4+4+4) i.e. four years were spent to each level.

To conclude, the writer agrees with the opinion: English should be the median of instructions to improve the standards and to encourage the students to develop their skills in English language.

2.1.3 Language Policy Post 2005

Three major developments in language planning and language policy took place after the signing of the Naivasha Peace Agreement known as the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005. These developments are:

1. The conclusion of the CPA which made reference to the issue of language in the Sudan.
2. The Interim Constitution which contained clear articles about language.
3. The setup of a Council for Language Planning.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement draws the outline of language policy as follows.

2.1.3 Language:

- 1- All the indigenous languages are national languages which shall be respected, developed and promoted.
- 2- Arabic language is the widely spoken national language in the Sudan.
- 3- Arabic, as a major language at the national level, and English shall be the official working languages of the National Government business and languages of instruction for higher education.
- 4- In addition to Arabic and English, the legislature of any sub-national level of government may adopt any other national language(s) as additional official working language(s) at its level.
- 5- The use of either language at any level of government or education shall not be discriminated against. On its part, the Interim Constitution incorporated the CPA into its main body and adopted the clauses therein as an Article. The Constitution states the following:
 - (1) All indigenous languages of the Sudan are national languages and shall be respected, developed and promoted.
 - (2) Arabic is a widely spoken national language in the Sudan.
 - (3) Arabic, as a major language at the national level and English shall be the official working languages of the national government and the languages of instruction for higher education.
 - (4) In addition to Arabic and English, the legislature of any subnational level of government may adopt any other national language as an additional official working language at its level.
 - (5) There shall be no discrimination against the use of either Arabic or English at any level of government or stage of education.

2.1.5 Conclusion

Language policy and language planning in the Sudan passed through four distinct stages:

1. In the colonial times there was a clear-cut language policy:
 - (a) Arabic was for elementary education.
 - (b) English was for secondary education and college level.
 - (c) English was taught very economically, for the small groups that are to take the junior posts in the public service.
 - (d) At College level special English was to be taught for the prospective careers of the graduates.

2. Towards independence some recognition was given to Arabic as a medium of instruction.

3. After Independence there was no or no clear language policy. Matters were left to chance.

4. After the conclusion of the CPA, the outline of language policy and language planning were drawn but they are yet to take shape and dimensions.

2.2.1 Definitions of ESP:

The development of English language teaching have encouraged the teachers/ instructors and other interested in English language teaching to fetch for better ways with which they can ease the process of teaching English language for their students. Thus some new concepts or methods appear to fulfill that goal. ESP or English for specific purposes is one of such concepts.

2.2.2 Taxonomy of ESP:

The appearance of ESP has led to a number of branches each one of these branches has special indicating that reflect the nature and the purpose it serves. There have been a

considerable attempts trying to classify the different branches of ESP.

Broadly defined the ESP courses according to Strevens as “are those in which the aims and the content are determined, principally or wholly, not by criteria of general education (as when ‘English’ is a foreign language subject in school), but by functional and practical English language requirements of the learner’ Strevens, 1978:90).

He distinguishes between two branches of ESP. the first one for those who are studying special language of English i.e. they know English but they need to study special type of English which can serve their needs of that dimension of language. The second branch is for those who are studying English as a subject in of their academic studies or these who are studying English as a part of their occupational training; they need it to serve jobs that they are engaged in. Generally we can say that he distinguishes between two purposes of English the first is “instrumental” and the second is “operational” (Strevens, 1980: 39-44).

The above provided classifications can be summarized through this figure.

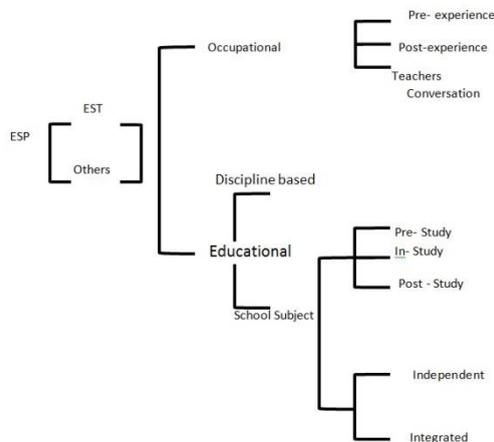


Figure (2.1): Taxonomy of ESP Courses (Strevens, 1978: 39-44).

Through this taxonomy English for science and Technology is totally separated out of all other courses of English. Strevens thinks that EST needs a greater content of “Scientific English” to be incorporated in them (Strevens, 1978:90).

Another Taxonomy of ESP which was provided by Robinson, he labeled “ESP in USA” as follows:

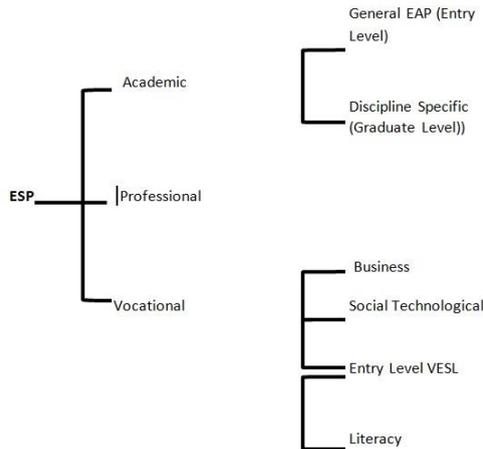


Figure (2.2): *ESP in the U.S.A.Z (Cited from Johns by Robinson, 1991:4)*

Robinson divides ESP into three major fields. Academic purposes professional and vocational branches. Every one of each has at least two sub branders which can the process of learning English.

Recently, Hutchinson and Waters made a tree shape to make the relationship between the branches of ESP; to differentiate between the source and the branches of it.

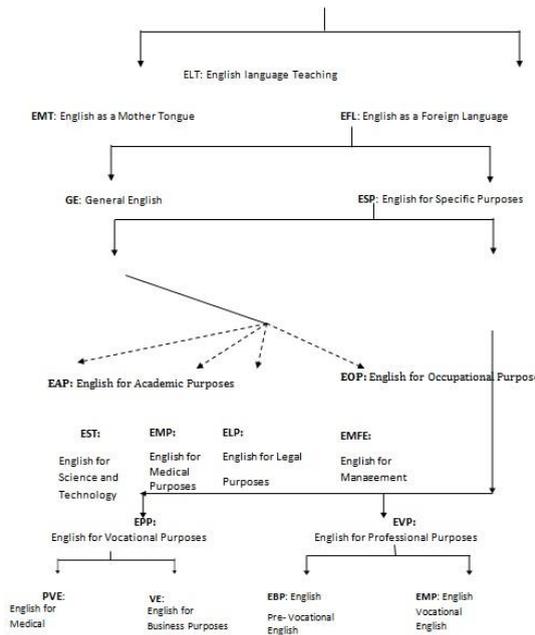


Figure 2.3: Hutchinson and Waters’ tree of ELT (1978, 16)

2.2.3 Kinds of ESP

There are some types of ESP. The study here presents (EAP), (EOP) and (EST) of their strong relation with the subject matter.

2.2.3.1 English for Academic Purposes

In the E.T.I.C preface (1975) EAP has been defined as being:

(... Concerned with those communicative skills in English which are required for study purposes in formal educational systems it is curriculum oriented). The needs of the students sometimes may be very high; in this case the roof of their needs of using of standard languages may not fulfill their cure of studying that language. Also they may be in need to economic and quick courses. EAP(English for academic purposes) may be either common core or subject specific, the former shades off into “language study skills “, and the later related to the discipline

where the most of the courses is according to subject area which may consider the following:

English for Electrical Engineering, English for Economics, English for Sociology, English for Educational Technology, English for Psychology, English for Medicine, English for Dentistry.....etc.

2.2.3.2 English for Occupational Purposes (EOP)

The majority of EST programs are made to fulfill the needs of its clients. That is to succeed and survive in their academic environment. The recent definition which has been given in the E.T.I.C preface states that:

'..... EOP is mainly concerned with the precise demands that specific Occupational (in commerce, technology, etc.) Place up on communication ability in English. It is activity oriented and more warranty focused than EAP' (1975). Strevens (1977a) states that EOP (English for Occupational purposes) courses may be required to satisfy either pre-, in- or post-service use. Besides, pre-service EOP is considered to proceed with job-training prospects whereas in service EOP is meant to help the learner make a better use of his job experience by learning the language in a context. These points can be summarized briefly; that the aim of an EOP course is to develop the learner's ability for using the required language in his job. We can say that EOP rates to a job, an occupation or profession. Consider the following:

English for secretaries English for waiters English for Air Hostesses English for Receptionists, English for hotel staff etc.....

2.2.3.3 English for Science and Technology (EST)

The usage of the term EST can lead some confusions .That because of the appearance of EST (English for Science and Technology) both side of EAP/EOP division ,and also there were some attempts to classing ,special , about the language of science it is either register or rhetorical feature. Some claim

that EST is the senior branch of ESP –senior in age, large in volume Publications and greater in number of practitioners employed (Swales 1985) consider courses of business and commerce as one of the English for Occupational or vocational purposes concern this make us treat ,EST, under the EAP. But this does not keep away the fact that at training level, teaching EST may seem to be EOP or EVP (English for vocational purposes). But still predominant position of EST is seen being a result of the following:

a) half of the world's scientific literature is written in English (And two- thirds of engineering literature appear in English but more than two- thirds of the world's professional engineers cannot read English .(Mackey and Munford 1978:6)

Widdowson (1979) describes EST as follows:

'.....EST is at one and the same time a variety of English usage and the particular linguistic realization of a mode of communicating which is neutral in respect to different languages '...EST does indeed manifest the system of English in a certain way but the significance of this is that it does so in the expression of concepts and procedures which characterize different technologies and scientific disciplines and which might be said to constitute the basic communication system' (1979, 42).

The role of teachers varies. One of the roles of EST teachers is to help science students; who are studying science in English in a country that speak English as their mother tongue. In this case the students should have the ability to express the role of EST instructors is also important. They provide science students with an appropriate and effect way of expressing the scientific knowledge that they have already acquired, whether they gained it in English or any other language through English language. That actually the students are not requiring how knowledge they have already acquired in English language while they were studying for their academic subjects in English universities as Mackay and Mountford (1978) put it:

'Students or professionals in the various branches of science and technology are already familiar with the procedures of their field and the manner in which communication in their specialisms are organized, the task of the English programme is, therefore, by looking advantage of this knowledge, to demonstrate, to them how these procedures and principles of communicate organization are realized in English'. (1978, 13)

On top of that, EST deserves its present form, for it offers teachers and learners alike, different ways of using science words in different terms for communication purposes. In this case as Widdowson thinks: ' ... It is not difficult to convince the students of the communicate reality of the language'. (1979, 44-45)

Following from this, it is advisable for Sudanese teachers as well as their science students to follow the process that enables them to use the existing scientific knowledge to create a useful discourse. In other words they will have to use knowledge that they get, into their real life situations. In this case Coulthard (1977) remarks:

'learners need to become analyst s of discourse themselves, and in confronting a foreign language we should help then by encouraging a use of existing discourse awareness in their mother tongue while providing then with workable model of analysis for the organizing of the data ' (preface xiii)

From what mentioned before, the main aim in the EST is to develop the leaners communicating competence. That will be reached by the drawing their attention on the redaction ship between the usage, science and use.

2.3 ESP and Some Relationships

ESP in applied field has relations with some of other aspects of English. These are some.

2.3.1 ESP VS GPE

Through many decades, applied linguists tried to find a distinction between, General purpose English (GPE) and special purpose English (ESP). But they found it difficult to find different between these two branches of the English language. That would be clearly reflected through the admittance of Strevens (1977) when he states 'drawing alien between "general" and "special" purposes is not easy to overcome'. In the same year Ewer found the differences in the vocabulary. He claimed that the difference between GPE and ESP is that, in the latter the instructor is required to be able to teach a specialized English vocabulary. Not more than two years, he cancelled that assumption by stating that ESP should be taught as a completely independent system without having any obligation to GPE. Munby (1978) draws a distinction between ESP and GPE in term of their worldwide position when he states:

'the reason for the growing demand for ESP programmes is the obvious attraction to the client or learners of customer built courses in the English that will enable him to do his job or pursue his studies, rather than the ubiquitous course in general English or general literary English whose irrelevance becomes apparent sooner or later' (1978,3).

The needs of the students can make differences between (ESP) and (GPE). When designing courses of ESP all the aspects of the lambs use are to be considered. Strevens (1980) points out that:

' English for specific purposes contrasts with general English ...but the nature of ESP resets rather on the end which the English is put and the needs of the learner who experiences those needs . it always requires the appropriate selection of language content – including not solely lexical and grammatical items but also rhetorical and communicative capabilities – and it sometimes requires restrictions of the language skills to be learnt'.(1980 , 108)

Considering courses design, Widdowson states that there are no difference between these courses, but the GPE courses are simpler than ESP ones. The only difference is that the way of specifying aim. He states that: 'An ESP course is in one sense really no more specific in its purpose than is one designed for General Purpose English teaching'.

And that 'GPE is no less specific and purpose full than ESP what distinguishes them is the way a purpose is defined, and the manner of its implementation' (1983, 5)

But later on he confessed that GPE is to be developed according to the learners needs of the language use. These needs can be fulfilled through the tasks and exercises that they practice through their academic years. In her opinion of the distinction between ESP and GPE, Robinson maintains that:

'The students of ESP Is learning English en route to the acquisition of some quite different body of knowledge or sets of skills?' She added that the purpose of GPE should be considered as: 'Education - for - life, cultures and literature oriented language course, in which language is the subject matter and the purpose of the course' (1980, 6)

The conclusion is that the general principles and practices of GPE with slight modification can be changed to produce ESP. In this regard, the writer agrees that, both of them have been introduced for different purposes which might be changed according to the target needs of the learners. In addition to that the writer also believes that the distinction lies in the way that the purposes are defined and the way of implementation.

2.3.2 Authenticity in ESP:

Recently the course designer gives a great deal of attention to the authentic material when designing courses. Robison (1980, 5) states that: 'for many people the starting point for materials production is the gathering of authentic data since the use of authentic data is seen an essential component of any ESP course'. But Robinson goes on to say that there are many

objections against those who use text to ease the process of learning. He adds that:

'the objection is that since the passage do not derive from the 'real' world outside the language teaching classroom or the text book writer's today, they will not help (or will even hinder) the student who wishes to use language in the real world'. (1980, 35-6)

Any ESP programme aims to give a strategy of language that can help learners to perform roles in real life situations. This would become more effective if it matches the target needs of learning that language and it accordingly increases the learners' motivation.

In contrast if that programme does not fulfill the students' needs because the real situations do not match their needs, in this case the student is more frustrated. Thus the learning process would be negatively affected. This will be reflected clearly through the neat definition of authentic texts when she states: 'An authentic text is stretch of real language produced by a real speaker or writer for real audience and designed to convey a real message'. Through their participation, Hutchinson and Waters (1987, 109) point out. That: The aim of ESP courses should be to provide the learner with the capacity to handle communication in the target situation'. They agree with the opinion of that the presented material should help in the communication process. Widowson (1979a, 1965) defines authenticity as:

'A function of interaction between the readers/listener and the text which incorporates the intentions of the writer/speaker. They do not realize it as something there waiting to be noticed, instead they recognize it in the act of interaction'.

That means; communicative authenticity is a fundamental part when designing ESP materials. Taking the process of simplification under focusing, there are some arguments about this matter; while some are against, others with. Kennedy and

Bolitho (1984, 48) criticizes the use of such simplified materials, when they state that:

'they present the learner with something artificially constructed, that is different from the real text he will be faced with in his subject area text simplified from original sources often lose some meaning with the simplification of meaning. Such specially written text, design within structural guidelines, as they are written only with the learner of English in mind'.

That means that simplifying materials can deviate from the real text that student will be faced in their subject area. Also it may lose its meanings when giving them in another simple way. On the other hand, Widdowson (1979a, 88-90) defended two different types of simplification: 'the simplified version' and 'the simple account'. The former tries to handle the passage to suit the linguistic competence of the learners. Widdowson in this affects states:

'Essentially, then, it is a kind of translation from usage available to the author of the extract to that which is available to the learner. One of the problems of this procedure is that the simplification of usage can after result in a distortion of use' (Widdowson, (1979), 88).

But Widdowson was unpleasant with the distortion mentioned before, so he tries until he solves it in the year (1979) when he defines it as: 'A genuine instance of discourse, designed to meet a communicative purpose, directed at people playing their roles in a normal social context'. (1979, 80). Through this definition he tries to concentrate up on use rather than usage. He argues that simple account can be a selection of passage from popular journalistic accounts or scientific discoveries or from school text books. To make a conclusion, the writer defended the usage of authentic passages which are not full of syntax and rhetorical figures. Instead ESP teacher can use complex messages that matches students target purposes.

2.3.3 Intensiveness in ESP

The general English courses designers make it last not less than two years. The purpose of learning the language is to develop a general competence that comprises the traditional skill of the English language. The essence of ESP, however, is to consider the needs of particular groups of students, taking into account the different steps that come through. In this regard, Fitz John quoted by Robinson 1980, 8-9) points out that: 'the concept of 'special purposes' implies that foreign language study is a subsidiary contribution to another main interest and they will normally be pressure to achieve the required level of linguistic competence in the minimum of time'.

Also quoted by Robinson (1980, 9) Perren, refers to the allotted time when he notes that: ' In 1968 it was assumed that teaching a language to adults for special purposes often implies an intensive course. This still applies'. McDonough (1984, 1) declares that: 'ESP programmes are typically imbued with a sense of urgency stemming from the time constraints frequently imposed by learner and their sponsors'. The amount of time devoted to ESP programmes is usually defined by the instructors and the needs of the learners. The learning time is limited and the remaining process is intensive. McDonough (1984,26) maintains this when she state:

'The predominant view of 'time' as a major variable in ESP context is bound up with the notion of short intensive courses, where time is premium , and where programmes must optionally be tailored to fit in to a limited number of months or weeks'.

Those who write for the higher levels of ESP vary about the allotted time for the materials taught to the learners. Two of them however, one- year courses, but others refer the time to the nature of the courses that the learners are going to take as well the skill to be taught. In this case ESP instructors should not waste the all-too-short time on points of language familiar

from general ELT, but largely irrelevant for EST'. (Ewer, 1983, 9- 10)

The teacher's role is to be restricted to what has been a carefully selected material which has been prepared to meet the specific learners concerns. Unlike general language teachers who benefit from limitless time allocated to their materials, ESP teacher face the problem of the time limits. They work under the pressure to face this difficulty. According to Willis (1979, 107) point out that these teachers 'must be quick thinking and adaptable, sense time to students, rapidly changing needs and able to assess a teaching problem and apply a wide range of techniques to its solution'.

In this case, what should the teacher do to complete courses in its allotted time perfectly? The writer here agrees with Strevens when he suggested these points (1977 b, 150) to be put in teacher's mind:

- 1) restriction: only those basic skills (understanding, speaking, reading and writing) that are required by the learner's purposes,
- 2) selection: only those items of vocabulary, grammar and language function needed by the learner's purposes
- 3) theme and topics: only those that serve the learner's purposes
- 4) communicative need: only those that enhance the learner's purposes

2.3.4 Teachers and Tasks in ESP

The teachers' and students' role have changed from time to time. At one time it was believed that:

...teachers would be expected as a minimum part of their role to have adequate knowledge of their subject matter, to know something of how children learn and develop and to be able to devise appropriate learning/teaching experiences in the light of these two considerations. Pupils would be expected as a minimum part of their role to be interested in being learner's exposition of a topic and to acquire the skills of reading about

and understanding subjects matter as well as developing some skills. (Cortis, 1977, 20)

That reflects the important role played by the teacher. He gives knowledge and full control and power in the class. On the other hand the students are to listen to the teachers. Recently, the role of both has been changed. Littlewood thinks “the concept of the teacher as “instructor” is... inadequate to describe his overall function. In a board sense, he is a facilitator of learning”; he may need to perform in a variety of specific roles, separately or simultaneously.” (1981, 92). He says on to say:

As a general overseer of his students learning, he must aim to coordinate the activities so that they form a coherent progression, teaching towards greater communicative abilities.

As a classroom manager, he is responsible for grouping activities into ‘lesson’ and for ensuring that these are satisfactorily organized at the practical level.

In many activities, he may perform the familiar role of language instructor: he will present new language instructor: he will present new language exercise dir control over the learners’ performance, evaluate and correct it, and so on.

In others, he will not intervene after initiating the proceedings, but will let learning take place through independent activity.

While such independent activity is in progress, he may act as consultant or advisor, helping where necessary.

He will sometimes wish to participate in an activity as ‘co-communicator’ with the learner. (Littlewood, 1981, 92-93)

This makes the teacher an initiator, a guide, an assistant to learners” participation in a variety of language activities. A part from these general roles for teachers of communicative language teaching, ESP teachers have additional responsibilities. Early quoting Strevens writes:

Certain recent pedagogical developments ... have had the effect of placing on teachers, new responsibilities which they did not previously bear... In particular, the analysis of learner’s needs, the design (or at least, the adaption or modification) of

syllabuses, the writing of teaching material, even the development of tests, now often fall upon the teachers with little experience ... (Strevens quoted in Early, 1981, 44)

Blue is also of the opinion that: The ESP teacher will need an intelligent approach to subject matter of all kinds, although he obviously cannot be an expert in all the different subject areas, and need not understand all the interactions in a text. (Blue, 1981, 63). An ESP teacher is to be viewed more as a facilitator of learning than as a source of information. ESP teacher's professional knowledge must therefore all be within the framework of methodology.

In order to cope with these tasks and do better jobs:

1. ESP teachers cannot turn to linguistics and psychology in the hope of finding ready-made, straight forwards answers to the problems that they will meet. Rather they need to distil and syntheses, those which best suit the particular circumstances.
2. ESP teachers may have to struggle to master language and subject matter beyond the bounds of their previous experience.
3. ESP teachers do not need to learn specialist subject knowledge. They require:
 - (i) a positive attitude toward the ESP content;
 - (ii) a knowledge of the fundamental principles of the subject area;
 - (iii) an awareness of how much they [student] already know.(Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, 160-163)

It is suggested that these changes can be solved and new experience can be gained if ESP instructors take place, for instance, in:

- 1-Team teaching-cooperation between subject teacher and language teacher.
- 2-“On-site” learning where the language teacher is permanently attached to, and integrated in, the learners’ subject department and that is where language takes place.
- 3-Self- access programmes where the availability of the means of learning (materials, technology. teachers) is left for the student to decide and select as he/she wishes, usually then to work on his

or her own in a variety of location – library, resources room , laboratory, at home and so on.(McDonough, 1984, 102-105)

It seems that in general the ESP teacher needs to be inquisitive, well informed, tactful and helpful. As to the management of a classroom situation the tendency is towards mutual cooperation and understanding, less control and less intervention. But the extent and nature of classroom management has been a sensitive area. Brumfit, for one thinks:

The teacher should not control his class in the sense of prearranging everything that is uttered, but he should control it to the extent to knowing ... why he has organized it in the way he has and by permitting freedom only within the framework of what is known of the language-learning process ... Ultimately, the classroom can only be a 'free class within a definition which the teacher understands what the purpose is of that freedom...It is the teacher who operates; he cannot avoid being central and however freely the pupil may appear to be operating, it will always be within a tacit framework of what the teacher has allowed ... Teacher intervention cannot be withdrawn, but it can be modified. (1980, 124)

ESP as a branch of ELT has now become more prominent and fashionable; many of the teachers try to be members of ESP programme as a social status only. But-despite of the expansion-there are many fundamental problems that face this field; Firstly, the teachers. Secondly, the ESP materials; Nowadays most of the teachers who teach ESP students are derived from EFL/ESL back ground. Those teachers have a general knowledge, aims and objectives, this indicate that they have the” generality” notion. Where the process of having specific language by which they can achieve specific goals in specific situations, they are having “Specificity”. In spite of that the teacher of the former can be a prominent one of the later if he adjusted himself to the new position.

It would be more difficult for teachers who come to this field without training. The content of the subject becomes more alien for those who have trained themselves upon general English courses. McDonough (1984,131) maintains that the teachers of ELF/ESL 'found working with learners whose professional interests were non-linguistic and with subject-matter such as science and technology, alien an even threatening to their professional state'

Through these conditions Swales describes the EFL/ESL teachers, when he states that:

'They immediately feel that they will never be able to deal with this kind of material, and the more truly like the science textbook the language materials becomeThe greater the dismay. This is not because the teachers are resistant to any innovation ... it is presumably because and technology as a new teaching role quite outside their expectations, and one for which their initial training has given them no preparation'. (Swales, 1973, 9)

That clearly reflects the role of trained teachers in the field of ESP. Training teachers has become a central concern in ESP nowadays. But still there are some difficulties. As Ewer (1983) assumes the types of difficulties as follows

„Firstly: attitudinal which refers to the teacher's attitudes towards science and technology. The teacher's previous encounter with science may have been a failure; consequently, he may feel allergic to everything that is related to science. At stage his anti-science behavior has a negative impact on the learner and hence, hinders success in teaching ESP. So, teacher's mode of teaching science students is very important factor for encouraging them to get materials in English.

Secondly: conceptual, that is, if an ESP teacher does not possesses a basic knowledge of science and his willingness to aquire some is very weak, the language he is supposed to teach can seem remote from his interests and knowledge. This

reflects clearly the teacher's information of science or any related material that should be taught for the clients.

Thirdly: linguistic difficulties constitute another area for the teachers. Specialized text can affect the teacher's linguistic performance in that teacher with little or no scientific background may fail to understand it fully and will inevitably feel insecure and thus commit errors. Fourthly, Ewer (ibid) suggests organizational: he states that in addition to his teaching profession, the teacher engages in administrative work such as curriculum development, job sampling, time tabling, etc. Lastly, also suggest by Ewer which is methodological: he (1983) assumes that in successful teaching, the teacher has to have a reasonable group of the ESP/EST system. Also he has to be flexible, enthusiastic and persistent. Further, much would depend on the teacher's willingness to experiment, and his/her ability to implement change effectively.

However, Widdowson (1975a) defended teacher by suggesting that teacher's job is not to indulge himself in scientific modes of thinking. Once the learners have knowledge of science, they should know what is hidden behind ESP courses. Teachers are only to help them ease the linguistic matters. He states that:

'Students will have already acquired some knowledge of the communication systems of science which appear, pedagogically processed in scientific subjects This knowledge may hitherto have been acquired only through their own language. The English teacher's task is not to develop this knowledge but to demonstrate how it is realized through the medium of a different language'

2.3.5 Conclusion

Finally, the teachers' task in ESP is different from that of ESL teachers. While in the first the role is predominately informative it is a didactic in the second. The writer agrees with MC Donough (1984) who says: the teacher is a catalyst, organizer, adviser, co-operator and friend.

METHOD

3.1 Respondents

The subjects targeted in this research are two groups. The first group is the students who study medicine at university level. The universities chosen were: Ahfad University for Women and University of and Al zaiem Al-azhari University respectively. The purpose behind this choice is to a general survey of this problem in Khartoum State. The respondents chosen from Ahfad School of medicine were 51, and those who were chosen from Al Zaiem Alazhari faculty of medicine were 51. The selection was random in order to guarantee the involvement of students of different achievement standards.

Table (3.1) Number and distribution of the students

No.	University		
1	Ahfad University For Girls.	51	-
2	Al Zaiem Al azhari University	51	-
	Total	102	-

The second group of the subjects is some teachers of the English language at the university level. The posts included were associate professors, assistant professors, lecturers and teaching assistant respectively.

Table (3.2) Number of teachers responded and posts held

Associate Professor	Assistant Professor	Lecturers	Teaching Assistant	Total
2	3	4	1	10

3.2 Instruments

The tools used for gathering information are of two types. The respondents were of two categories: teachers and students, interviews and a questionnaire were used in this research. The interview was designed for the teachers.

3.3 Reliability

The reliability of a measure refers to the stability of the measure and its consistency. That means; the gathering data procedure gives the same result on repeated trials. Selinger and Shohamy (1989: 185) maintain that it is information on whether the instrument is collecting data in a consistent and accurate way. In other words, will the instruments give the same or similar results when they are used by different researchers under the same assumptions and different conditions?

Concerning the reliability of the present procedure (the questionnaire) the researcher has done the following: after the questionnaire revised and modified by the supervisor, the final version of the test was made. Then it was per-tested.

3.4 Validity:

Validity refers to the degree to which a study accurately refers or assesses the specific concept that the researcher is attempting to measure. It is concerned with the study's success at measuring what the researchers set out to measure. The validity of the statements used in collecting the data is verified by calculating the square root of the coefficient of the Cronbach's alpha as shown in the fourth chapter. The table shows that the value of the Cronbach's alpha ranges between 0.83 and 0.97 which are very high values and that implies the validity of the questionnaire in measuring what is supposed to mea

4 Data Analysis and Disc

Hypothesis One (H1)

The first hypothesis is formulated as follows:

ESP is the most needed English subject for Sudanese medicine students.

First, the Chi-square Test for the first hypothesis

Is used to check whether there are statistically significant differences between the respondents who agree with the measures (statements) of the first hypothesis and the respondents who disagree with the measures of the first hypothesis, a chi-square test is used and the results are shown in:

Table (4.13) Chi-square Test for first Hypothesis

Asymp Sig	Chi-Square	statement
.000	67.706	English in medium of instructions.
.001	18.098	I study medical English to pass exams.
.000	43.588	I speak English in classes.
.000	103.392	Studying medical makes me well-qualified.

- 1- The calculated chi-square statistic for the first statement of the first hypothesis is 67.706 with a significance level 0.000 which is less than the significance level chosen prior using the test which is 5%. Therefore, there exist statistically significant differences between the respondents who agree with “English is a medium of instruction” and the respondents who disagree with that statement and these differences favor the respondents who agree with the statement.
- 2- The calculated chi-square statistic for the second statement of the first hypothesis is 18.098 with a significance level 0.001 which is less than the significance level chosen prior using the test which is 5%. Therefore, there exist statistically significant differences between the respondents who agree with “I study medical English to pass exams” and the respondents who disagree with that statement and these differences favor the respondents who agree with the statement.
- 3- The calculated chi-square statistics for the third statement of the first hypothesis is 43.588 with a significance level 0.000 which is less than the significance level chosen prior using the test which is 5%. Therefore, there exist statistically

significant differences between the respondents who agree with “I speak English in classes” and the respondents who disagree with that statement and these differences favor the respondents who agree with the statement.

- 4- The calculated chi-square statistics for the fourth statement of the first hypothesis is 103.392 with a significance level 0.000 which is less than the significance level chosen prior using the test which is 5%. Therefore, there exist statistically significant differences between the respondents who agree with „Studying medicine makes me well qualified“ and the respondents who disagree with that statement and these differences favor the respondents who agree with the statement.

Table (4.14) T-Test for the Statements of the First Hypothesis:

Test Value = 1						
95% Confidence Interval of the Mean Difference	Upper	Lower	Mean Difference	Sig. (2-tailed)	Df	T
1.041075		0.606	0.82353	0.00525	101	8.28275

As a confirmation for statistical results produced by the chi-square test, a t-test is used where the calculated t-statistics is 8.28275 with a degree of freedom and significance level equal 101 and 0.00525 respectively. The comparison between the calculated significance level and the chosen significance level prior using the test (5%), leads to the conclusion that there exist statistically significant differences and consequently we accept the hypothesis “ESP is the most needed English subject for Sudanese students” and that proves the correctness of the hypothesis based on the collected data.

Hypothesis Two (H2)

The second hypothesis is formulated as follows:

The majority of the students regardless of their academic levels have the same English needs.

First, Chi-square Test for the Second Hypothesis:

The majority of the students regardless of their academic levels have the same English needs.

To check whether there are statistically significant differences between the respondents who agree with the measures (statements) of the second hypothesis and the respondents who disagree with the measures of the first hypothesis, a chi-square test is used and the results are shown in Table (4- 15).

Asymp Sig	Chi-Square	statement
.000	49.471	I study English to meet professional needs (Future works).
.000	61.725	I need other materials in English.
.000	103.392	Studying medical makes me well qualified.

The above table shows:

- (1) The calculated chi-square statistics for the first statement of the second hypothesis is 49.471 with a significance level 0.000 which is less than the significance level chosen prior using the test which is 5%. Therefore, there exist statistically significant differences between the respondents who agree with 'I study English to meet professional needs (future work)' and the respondents who disagree with that statement and these differences favor the respondents who agree with the statement.
- (2) The calculated chi-square statistics for the second statement of the second hypothesis is 61.725 with a significance level 0.001 which is less than the significance level chosen prior using the test which is 5%. Therefore, there exist statistically significant differences between the respondents who agree with "I need other English materials in English" and the respondents who disagree with that statement and these differences favor the respondents who agree with the statement.
- (3) The calculated chi-square statistics for the third statement of the second hypothesis is 103.392 with a

significance level 0.00 which is less than the significance level chosen prior using the test which is 5%. Therefore, there exist statistically significant differences between the respondents who agree with “Studying medicine makes me well qualified” and the respondents who disagree with that statement and these differences favor the respondents who agree with the statement.

**Table (4.16) Hypothesis Two Test
Second, T-Test for the Statements of the Second Hypothesis**

T-test is used to confirm the statistical results of the chi-square test regarding the second hypothesis.

95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		Mean Difference	Sig. (2-tailed)	Df	T
Upper	Lower				
1.3065	0.876533	1.091503	.000	101	10.41333

As a confirmation for statistical results produced by the chi-square test, a t-test is used where the calculated t-statistics is 10.41333 with a degree of freedom and significance level equal 101 and 0.000 respectively. The comparison between the calculated significance level and the chosen significance level prior using the test (5%), leads to the conclusion that there exist statistically significant differences and consequently we accept the hypothesis “The majority of the students regardless of their academic levels have the same English needs” and that proves the correctness of the hypothesis based on the collected data.

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

This study has attempted to investigate and pinpoint the real causes of oral communication problems that most of the Sudanese medicine students are suffering from. To do so, a

questionnaire was adopted for the students whereby relate to the problem data were collected. Besides; an interview was made for the teachers in order to report their experiences, opinions and forward their advice. Therefore, the chapter concludes the results obtained in the light of the research questions and hypotheses, sets recommendations and forwards suggestions for further study.

5 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

In investigating the research problems, the following questions were forwarded:

What are the most urgent English needs of the Sudanese ESP students?

What are the shared students -regardless of their academic levels- English needs?

In answering these above questions, the following hypotheses were formulated:

ESP is the most needed English subject for Sudanese medicine students.

The majority of the students who study medicine at different Sudanese universities have, almost, the same English needs.

To see whether these hypotheses could be confirmed, the researcher constructed a questionnaire for the students and held an interview with the teachers. The questions included in the questionnaire were of two types: scale questions (strongly agree, disagree, some extent, disagree and strongly disagree).

The findings reached in this study indicate that the research hypotheses have been confirmed as shown below:

All the students share the same needs of studying. The study reveals that clearly when the research proves that most of the students study the English language for getting marks through the exams only.

The students sometimes need to use English language in some social occasions.

This hypothesis has proved the study, when it shows that most of the students need to use English in some social occasions and also they like to read and watch some materials English more practice speaking it inside classes.

The majority of the students do not have further base English needs. The study shows that less than half of students practice to meet nonacademic purposes.

The students often know their needs.

The study proved that a lot of students feel relax to receive commands and to be given advice in English. More often they ask to be taught some materials in English. That shows clearly that they know the benefit of studying materials through English. Moreover the materials were regarded as lacking their suitability towards meeting the syllabus needs to cope with.

The students practice all the study skills. The study revealed that this is a true assumption. But the students practice these skills not for the sake of their future career but they practice it for the sake of luxuries. The subjects and methods of teaching as concerned by students were not up-to-date to match their needs and the study requirements. As such, most of them chose the modern technology such as videos, audios, TV, and over-head projector to study with.

5.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings reached, the researcher strongly recommends the following:

A considerable attention should be paid to the teaching of language skills in general and oral communication in particular.

The study calls for a curriculum that introduces the students' needs as well as oral communication skills at the early stages of language learning and teaching. This is what

lacks here in most of the Sudanese schools, despite the fact that listening skill is an indispensable receptive skill that should be introduced at the embryonic stages of language learning. The sole source that the learners can listen to is the teachers' voice. Teachers on their parts do not articulate some sounds in the same mode. This is as the result of the fact that, teachers themselves come from different linguistic backgrounds: monolingual, as the cases of the teachers descending from Arabic roots, bilingual, as the case of those who have non-Arab reference. This linguistic diversity is reflected in language teaching.

Concerning the fact that academic needs of students generally vary across time and instructional contexts, the requirement of an ongoing needs assessment for any educational institution becomes crucial in order to assess the effectiveness of the system. Dudley Evans and St. John (1998) stress the need for an ESP teacher as a researcher to be in constant touch with the students. That makes them know well the needs, thus ESP teacher should try to perceive the real needs of the students and evaluate the effectiveness of the program based on the analysis of students' changing needs. A continuous assessment of learners' needs by administering questionnaires as one of data collection techniques can provide reliable and objective data for the teachers, course designers, and material writers. It can help teachers working in ESP programs to be sensitive to discrepancies between the current curriculum and the needs of the students. Such coordination and ongoing assessment can ensure that the institution is always informed, as regards the changing academic needs of learners, to make its plans accordingly.

5.3 Suggestions

Based on the findings reached, the researcher suggests the following areas for further investigation:

1- The study advice those are responsible of the medical fields in Sudan to: design syllabuses at least for the first two semesters. That can fulfill the objectives of the institutions, meet the students" needs and suit the families prejudice. In addition to that, it can address the needs and alleviates the English language problems of medicine students. make placement tests for the nominees; who are supposed to study medicine, to dominate at least preferable standards in English. train the instructors whether they are specialized in (ELT) or not; that can be by making special training courses, seminars or making special institutions for this purpose if there is a need for that.

2- As it was mentioned in (1-1), this study is not a panacea for solving the problem of oral communication altogether; rather it is an attempt to forward some solutions that, if they are honestly and professionally adopted, hopefully they will contribute in solving the problem.

It will be of great use if further studies are conducted in the implementation of the communicative approach for language teaching in Sudan. For so many decades, the grammar translation method was and still in some parts of Sudan dominating the scene of English language teaching. It became a habit, hardly to change. The teachers are expected to indigenize such an approach which leads to the teaching of language as communication on its own right.

The linguistic future in Sudan will witness a dramatic change; this is as a result of the (CPA) comprehensive peace agreement which brought about:

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