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Towards Humanizing ELT: Revisiting the Need for English in the Medical Context in Yemen

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Research Article

Towards humanizing ELT: Revisiting the need for English in the medical context in Yemen

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Abstract

This paper delved into medical English in Yemen with intent to update the profile of needs of ESP (English for specific purposes). It departed from the humanistic approach to language teaching in the post-method era. 120 informants in the academic (present) and occupational (target) situations were sampled. Data were collected from this cohort via questionnaires and structured interviews and were analyzed quantitatively. The results showed a variety of needs for English in the present situation (PS) and target situation (TS). However, these needs were tackled inadequately in the local context. Besides suggesting another approach to teaching English instead of the traditional ESP, the study concludes with some insights into maximizing chances of humanism in ELT. It accounts for allowing learners to have a say in what they learn and empowering teachers to shape their teaching. This would compensate for the shortcomings of formal instruction which has failed to accommodate the individual needs satisfactorily.

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İngilizce öğretiminin hümanistleştirilmesi: Yemen'de tıbbi bağlamda İngilizce'ye olan ihtiyaç üzerine yeniden bir inceleme

Öz

Bu çalışma, Yemen'de tıbbi bağlamda özel amaçlı İngilizce ihtiyacı profilinin güncellenmesini amaçlamıştır. Araştırma, yöntem sonrası dönem dil öğretiminde hümanistik yaklaşıma dayanmaktadır. Akademik (mevcut) ve mesleki (hedef) ortamlardan 120 katılımcı çalışmada yer almıştır. Yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ve anketlerden toplanan veriler nicel olarak analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular, mevcut ve hedef durumlarda İngilizce'ye olan çeşitli ihtiyaçları ortaya koymuştur. Ancak bu ihtiyaçlar yerel bağlamda yetersiz biçimde ele alınmıştır. Geleneksel özel amaçlı İngilizce yerine farklı bir yaklaşım önermenin yanında, bu çalışma İngilizce öğretimini hümanistik bir şekle dönüştürme olasılığını yükseltmeye yönelik kavrayışlar sunmaktadır. Çalışma ayrıca öğrenme süreçlerinde öğrencilerin neden söz sahibi olması gerektiğine ve öğretim uygulamalarını şekillendirmeleri için öğretmenlerin güçlendirilmesi gerektiğine açıklama getirmiştir. Bu yapıldığı takdirde öğrencilerin bireysel ihtiyaçlarını tatmin edici bir şekilde gidermede yetersiz kalan formal eğitimin eksiklikleri tamamlanabilecektir.

Introduction

The status of English and the need for it have been on a constant change in the worldwide context. Teaching methods, approaches, syllabi, materials, and course design usually go hand in hand with the changes that take place from time to time. For instance, English language teaching (ELT) has undergone reforms so as to correspond to the current trends in language pedagogy which reduce teacher's dominance. The emphasis now is on learners and learning rather than teachers and teaching. This paradigm shift breathed life into aspects such as learner autonomy, personalized and informal learning. This pedagogical perspective enables learners to develop their self-concept and voice their needs, worries, and desires (Daoud, 2017; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Richards, 2013; Thornbury, 2011). Teaching has changed "from helping students learn the mechanics of linguistic expression to catering to students' needs and promoting learning as a lifelong process" (Theologidou, 2018, p. 2). As students in certain disciplines of knowledge have identifiable needs to learn English, they need a program that fulfills their needs adequately (Bhatia, Anthony & Noguchi, 2011; Çelik & Topkaya, 2018; Faraj, 2015; Kayaoğlu & Akbaş, 2016; Nurpahmi, 2017; Robinson, 1991). Needs analysis (NA) has been undertaken for decades under the umbrella of ESP which prepares learners for academia and the workplace. Nevertheless, the traditional ESP has been questioned and some other approaches have been suggested such as the 'integrated ESP' and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Hence, it is important to keep pace with the current trends which account for individualized learning by embracing learner's needs and preferences as well as accentuating the local identities.

Rationale

The continual faulty ESP design and implementation in faculties of medicine and health sciences in Yemen provided an impetus for undertaking this study. Students who join the medical institutions are required to have an advanced level of English competence. They have to perform well throughout their study and career (post-study). Albeit availability of ESP studies in the local context (e.g. Al-kadi, 2015; Alqasem, 2017; Bin-Tayeh, 1996; Laban, 2008), English for medical purposes (EMP) is taught with little or no reference to such studies. The courses are forced on learners. Students do not have a say in the EMP program, and their needs in reality are intuited rather than analyzed. Abdullah (2015), Al-Ahdal (2008), Al-kadi (2015), and Laban (2008) described ESP in Yemen as superficial and text-based. In fact, the existing ESP is based on general purposes but not specific needs. The focus is on grammar, vocabulary, reading, and rote learning. Arguably, designing an ESP course without considering learners' needs is doomed to failure; an ESP course which is imposed on learners ends up with poor academic and professional performances (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Jordan, 1997).

Actually, the current situation causes challenges for teachers and students at the present and target situations. At the present situation (PS), the subject-matter teachers find it difficult to deliver their lectures and instructions to students whose English proficiency is limited. Similarly, students find it difficult to comprehend lectures and specialized literature. As a result, the graduates in the target situation (TS) invariably fail to work up to the standards required by the discipline. Some work for international agencies such as the Red Cross and

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) which offer health services across the country. When the graduates join any of these organizations– or the workforce elsewhere– they find themselves floundering. They fall short to provide services satisfactorily, pursue higher studies, or take part in international medical conferences. That is to say, the improper ESP program largely affects the students' academic training and consequently affects their performance in the occupational settings. Quite the contrary, in a situation where learners are taught what they need, they become capable of performing well in their disciplines (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). In the needs-based syllabus, learners see the relevance of English courses with their future professions (Çelik & Topkaya, 2018; Stapel, 2016; Yekta, 2018). Thus, an urgent intervention to refine the status quo of ESP is a must. The exigencies of ESP in the medical context require an immediate update in light of the premise of the new paradigm shifts.

Humanizing language teaching/learning

Humanism has been adopted over the long-established Behaviorism. The humanistic approach, which has won worldwide recognition, places a focus on individuals and their specific needs (Chen & Schmidtke, 2017; Daoud, 2017; Shirkhani & Ardeshir, 2013; Thornbury, 2011). The humanistic curriculum is based on the learners' needs and interests, not on others' expectations (Shirkhani & Ardeshir, 2013). Learners are no longer thought of as 'empty mugs to be filled with knowledge' by teachers but in some ways decision-makers and problem-solvers who know where they are going and why. This has re-conceptualized the course organization, evaluation and teachers'/learners' roles. The humanistic approach empowers learners by giving them more leeway to shoulder the responsibility of their learning. The teachers and learners swap roles in the learning process. In Thornbury's (2011) words, "humanistic education prioritizes personal growth and self-realization, goals which are achieved when learners are invested affectively" (p.178). Four methods (The Silent Way, Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia, and Total Physical Response) were based on humanism. These methods gathered strength to reduce teacher dominance and maximize learner-centeredness (Thornbury, 2011). However, the post-method era (the 1990s onwards) brought about a rejection of the notion of 'methods'. According to Kumaravadivelu (2006), methods hamper individuals' creativity and stifle their freedom. The post-method pedagogy, which builds on the humanistic approach, gives space for local identities, self-awareness, and self-directed learning.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

ESP has been taught within the realm of humanism to meet the specific needs of learners. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) defined it as "an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning"(p.19). A big deal of literature is available on ESP with debate as to (a) how broad or narrow the focus of an ESP course, and (b) how to specify what exactly ESP constitutes and (c) how to teach it (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). The authors argued that a narrow-angled course may be appropriate where needs are limited, and the course can legitimately focus on a few target events and use content or topics from one discipline. Nonetheless, the classical version of ESP has been questioned lately. The inclusion of professional matters in language

courses has increased under an array of labels, e.g. integrated ESP, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and English as the medium of instruction (EMI). The emergence of CLIL, which shares with ESP the theory of NA, challenges the traditional ESP. CLIL addresses the shortcomings of ESP in terms of method and practice (Alhasani & Stojković, 2017; Ardeo, 2013; Bhatia, Anthony & Noguchi, 2011; Ghobain, 2014; Richards, 2013; Stapel, 2016). Yang (2016) postulated that the CLIL approach transforms "the 4-skills-focused language courses into language-plus-content forms" (p.45). The syllabus in a CLIL program has dual focuses: learning the target language and the professional content (see Figure 1). It integrates both language and subject-matter (e.g. medicine).
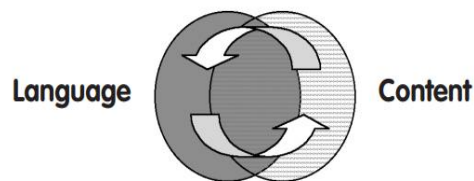

Figure 1. Language and content integration (Nordmeyer, 2010, p. 4)

CLIL has gradually become an established teaching approach in the European contexts for about two decades. It has been suggested as a surrogate for the traditional ESP. A good example of an elaborated and overall framework of a CLIL training course in the German context was suggested by Stapel (2016) and it could be adapted in some other contexts.

Although CLIL is an attempting approach that encourages both language and content learning, it is not a recipe for success in all contexts. It requires content knowledge and transferable skills, which may become a burden on language teachers, especially in under-resourced contexts. Yang (2016) noted that CLIL teachers have "joint content and language expertise that ESP practitioners commonly lack" (p.46). Hence, fostering CLIL is a challenge in contexts where there is a dire need for teacher training, appropriate materials, and specific means. Perhaps, this is why CLIL has been introduced at a snail's pace, unlike ESP which gained currency worldwide and established itself as a popular branch of ELT with a myriad of sub-divisions.

Needs analysis

Needs Analysis (NA) has been designated as the first logical step in preparing an ESP course (Bhatia, Anthony & Noguchi, 2011; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Jordan, 1997; Stapel, 2016; Robinson, 1991). A successful ESP course proceeds by a rigorous analysis of the target tasks, linguistic features and knowledge requirements of that situation (Robinson, 1991). Several NA definitions and models have been suggested depending on the purpose of analysis, yet the present situation analysis (hereafter PSA) and the target situation analysis (hereafter TSA) are the most recurrent in the literature. PSA was suggested as a dynamic process reflecting learners' needs throughout the study program (Richterich & Chancerel, 1980). It identifies what the learners are like at the beginning of a course. TSA, on the other hand, establishes the learners' language requirements in the occupational or academic situations they are prepared for. Robinson (1991) and Jordan (1997) argued that PSA is not a substitute for TSA but a good complement to it. Both PSA and TSA include detailed profiles of the learners' needs

to be used as an input in course design. For a comprehensive analysis of needs, TSA and PSA may be combined. To Hutchinson and Waters (1987), the most important characteristic of ESP courses is their relevance to the specific needs of learners. In the authors' words, "tell me what you need English for and I will tell you the English that you need" (p. 8). In a similar vein, Richards (2001) alleged that "different types of students have different language needs and what they are taught should be restricted to what they need" (p. 32). Rahmanpanah and Mohseni (2017) argued that even well-designed courses address the needs of idealized groups of target learners while in fact very learner is in need of a unique course that matches his/her needs. This is difficult to attain in reality. It is important thus to prioritize a set of common (shared) needs for immediate uses in a given context, and individual needs may be satisfied autonomously.

English in the medical context in Yemen

A considerable number of ESP-oriented studies is available in the Yemeni context. The most note-worthy are invited here, and the bulk of which are MA theses and Ph.D. dissertations. To begin with, Bin-Tayeh (1996) came up with a needs profile of medical students at Sana'a University based on the perceptions of undergraduates, lecturers, and graduates. Building on the finding, the author developed a proto-syllabus model for the students of General Medicine. Likewise, Gamal Abdullah, a chronicler and one of the premier ESP authors, addressed the ESP situation with a special interest in the medical context. In 1999, he investigated the language needs of secondary school graduates who wanted to join the Medical Faculty at Aden University. The findings illustrated the informants' needs for medical and general English. Based on the findings, the author proposed a pre-sessional medical English course. In a subsequent study, Abdullah (2005) defined the language needs of first-year students. Both studies confirmed that the medical English program offered to the students of medicine was inappropriate. The ESP materials did not correspond to the students' present and future needs. The study proposed a schema for a medical English course on the basis of students' needs. Again, Abdullah (2015) examined the ESP materials provided to the students of pharmacy at Aden University. The results showed that the objectives and contents of the teaching materials lacked harmony; the materials of the prescribed course covered only a few needs. Likewise, Al-Ahdal (2008) surveyed the needs of medical undergraduate students of nursing, medical laboratory, and dentistry at Hodeidah University. The study proposed a 20-hour pre-sessional ESP course with essential conversational skills at the pre-college stage to facilitate understanding of lectures and presentations. It is an English course for academic medical purposes. Reporting from Hodeida University, too, Laban (2008) reviewed the English program used in the Faculty of Medical Sciences to establish a three-fold needs analysis: TSA, PSA, and learning needs analysis. The study evaluated the medium of instruction, methods of teaching and evaluation system. Along the same line of research, Al-Kadi (2012) surveyed the English needs of dentistry students at Ibb University, and in 2017, Alqasem surveyed the situation of teaching English in the same institution. These two studies accumulated evidence of the inadequacy of the existing ESP program. Both studies explored the requirements for tailoring an English course that meets the students' needs and learning styles.

Touched on above, prior research confirms the significance of analyzing the needs for ESP programs. The studies conducted in the local context showed a serious gap between the expected needs and the actual scenario of ESP. Nevertheless, the majority of the studies in question were limited to samples of undergraduates who anticipated (rather than experienced) the English needs in the occupational settings (post-study needs). Besides, these studies were influenced by the structuralism wherein the focus is on teaching discrete items with little time for language learners to practice the language on their own. Despite alluding to the learner-centered approach, the previous studies put the onus on policymakers to determine the course description, organization, implementation, and evaluation. In designing courses, the decision-makers assume some needs for an ESP course and suggest materials accordingly. Such top-down curriculum design arguably disables teachers' freedom to select context-bound methods which suit the particularity of their teaching circumstances (Daoud, 2017; Kumaravadivelu, 2006). More pointedly, the learners' needs in the prior investigation were theoretically analyzed but not humanized. They underwent the sway of 'teach-to-test' approach, which implies mechanical teaching. Additionally, some studies took place two decades ago, and there is a gap of time which requires an updated file of needs.

Keeping the results of the previous studies in mind, this attempt contributes to the ongoing debate about the appropriateness, applicability, and effectiveness of ESP courses in medical contexts. It rests on the widely accepted argument that needs analysis (NA), which comes within the humanistic curriculum, provides validity and relevancy for all subsequent course design and activities (Brown, 1995; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Theologidou, 2018; Jordan, 1997; West, 1994; Yekta, 2018). The study primarily aims not to prepare a compendium of ESP or the intricacies of NA but revisits EMP and prioritize a set of immediate needs in the academic and job-related situations. The significance of it emanates from the need to (a) challenge the hegemony of traditional views of language learning and (b) maximize chances of humanism by allowing learners to have a say in what they learn and enable teachers to shape their teaching.

Method

This descriptive study took place in a medical milieu where English is the primary medium of instruction. Driven by the nature and objectives of the study, a survey design was adopted to elucidate the participants' experiences, views, and feelings about the need for English in academia and job-related settings.

Participants

120 informants were recruited to respond to a questionnaire. The majority (70%), aged between 19-23, were enrolled in the faculties of medicine and health sciences as students/interns. They attended a 6-year course of study followed by a one-year internship (i.e. they were in the PS). The rest of the sample (30%) were graduates who have already joined the workforce in public hospitals, health centers, private clinics, the Red Cross and MSF organizations. That is, they were in the TS where they use English for job purposes. Besides, 20 professors teaching medicine at the universities of Sana'a, Taiz, and Ibb were interviewed. They are referred to as subject-matter teachers (SM teachers).

Instruments

Data were collected via questionnaires and structured interviews. One version of the questionnaire was prepared to poll information from the participants in the PS, and a modified version for participants in the TS. Both versions were based on the literature as well as the researcher's familiarity with ESP in the local context. The SM teachers' structured interview was designed to extract information about learning situations and the relevance of English to medical studies and future jobs. Having been developed, the instruments were piloted and checked for validity and reliability. The reliability value was 0.79 at Cronbach's Alpha, and the validity was obtained in two ways: expert validation and pilot validation.

Procedures

Initially, 150 questionnaires were distributed. However, only 120 copies were valid for analysis. As for the interviews, all the 20 SM teachers were interviewed on a predetermined schedule. The dataset was analyzed quantitatively. The process of data analysis started with feeding the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) in which the respondents' answers were converted into numerical values. Each pre-determined response in a scale option was assigned a number. For example, 'strongly disagree' was coded 1; 'disagree', 2; 'neutral', 3; 'agree', 4; and 'strongly agree', 5. As to the nominal data, each response item in multiple-choice questions was given a number (1=apply; 2=doesnot apply). That is, each response was either ticked or left blank. The descriptive statistics of the totals, means, frequencies, and percentages were obtained and classified.

Results and Discussion

Data were arranged and discussed in two parts: PSA and TSA. The results of each part are displayed as figures, tables, word clouds, or percentages. The package of results is taken as a whole and given a due interpretation. Based on the results, some suggestions are provided.

Part (I): Analysis of present situation needs

Data elicited from the students' questionnaires and professors' interviews yielded general needs for English in academic settings (English for Academic Purposes). In response to question 5 in the questionnaire and question 3 in the structured interviews, the participants perceived general purposes of English in the present situation (PS). The responses are arranged in terms of frequencies and encapsulated as word clouds (Figure2). The figure shows information about the participants' recurrent uses of English. The learners stated that they needed English primarily for study, e.g. reading textbooks, reference books, and handouts, followed by attending seminars and taking an international test (TOEFL). Less importantly, they felt they needed English for internet applications and social interaction. The SM teachers, on the other hand, stated that their learners need English primarily for medical studies. Looking at Word Cloud (B) more closely, the professors underscored the purposes of needs with almost similar rate – textbooks, handouts, lectures, assignments, note-taking, followed by exams, projects, TOEFL and so on.
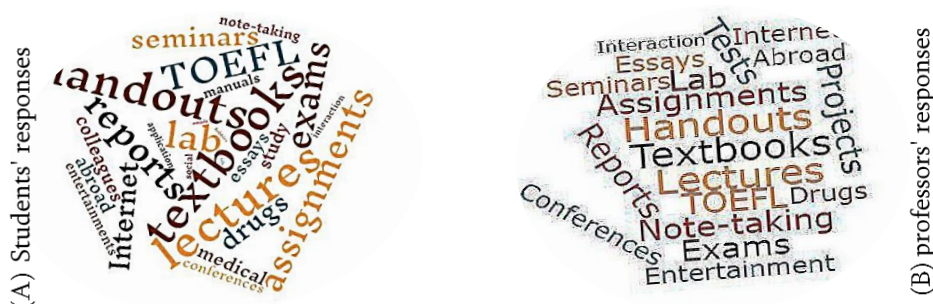
Figure 2. Word clouds of the common uses of English in the PS

In response to Q6 which is a rank-order question, in the questionnaire, the majority of the informants in the PS felt they needed English in the classroom with a percentage of 89%, followed by the lab (77%) and clinics (68%). Only a few stated they needed English in public places (14%) and at home (18%). On the other hand, the SM teachers perceived the need for English mainly in clinics and hospitals at the rate of 65.40%, and 57.70% respectively. A few believed that the graduates would need English at home (15.40%) or in public places (14.40%). That is, English for academic purposes (EAP) in the faculties of medicine comes as a prime concern. In terms of reading and writing skills, the informants needed English to (a) read textbooks and handouts, (b) write lab reports and projects, (c) take test/exam, (d) take notes, (e) write assignments, and (f) use PCs. As for oral skills, the informants stated that they needed English for classroom discussions, lectures, seminars, labs/clinics (e.g. to discuss a patient's case with colleagues and/or English-speaking doctors/nurses). Similarly, they stated that they needed English in the classroom to give an oral presentation and interact with teachers. This signifies the importance of communication skills. In the same landscape of needs, the informants in the PS stated that they needed English for examination/tests. That is, good English skills are required for written exams/tests, reports, and projects. In addition, taking an international language test (e.g. TOEFL) and the pursuit of higher studies were among the needs for EAP which requires a sound knowledge of all the language skills. Obviously, the respondents had expectations for their future medical careers (study abroad and/or better job opportunities). They had high incentive and needs for medical and general English (i.e. medicine-related needs and career).

As for priorities, responses to Q7 in the questionnaire yielded different perceptions on the areas of English that the learners needed to improve. The responses were coded and transformed into a graphical representation (Figure 3). As the figure displays, the respondents stated that they needed to improve medical terminology with a percentage of 95%, followed by listening comprehension at the same rate, followed by writing skills (94%), reading comprehension (90%), communication skills (84%), speaking skills (83%). That is to say, learners in the PS need to improve English skills that help them make progress in their

studies, then the skills of general English to communicate within the medical community. The figure also shows that the students in focus seem not to have major problems with grammar and general vocabulary that were rated lower than the other language aspects. This could be attributed to the fact that the English syllabus at school is grammar-oriented; general vocabulary was acquired piecemeal throughout the course of their study. The participants felt they needed to improve all the language areas with an emphasis on aspects related to the medical career at the TS. As for the SM teachers, they believed their students needed to improve writing and speaking skills with a rate of 93.3% and 88.5% respectively and communication skills, terminology, and listening skills (61.5%, 53.8%, and 53.8% respectively.
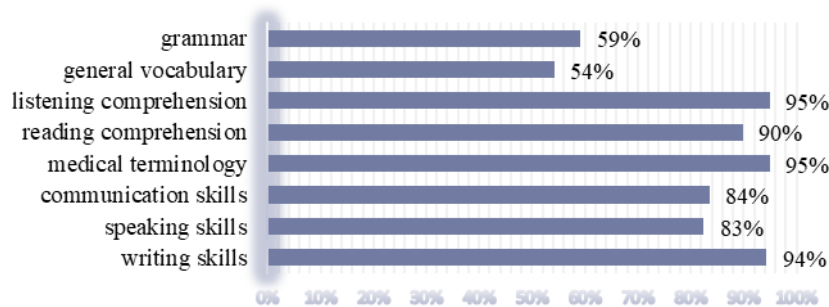

Figure 3. English priorities at the present situation (PS)

With reference to the 5-point Likert scale question in the structured interview regarding the sorts of English, the responses were coded as 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neutral; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree. The mean scores and standard deviations were obtained, and the results are presented in Figure 4 below. As the figure shows, the learners' need for medical English ranked first, followed by conversational and formal English (4>μ<5). Then, general and informal English come next (3>μ<4). Last but yet considerable, the means scores of English collocations, idiomatic and literary English fall between 1.000 and 3.000. This result suggests that medical English is the first demand. Informal and literary varieties were additionally needed but were not as essential as medical and general English was. This confirms the results in Figure 2 which shows that the English at the faculties of medicine was needed for study (medical English) followed by job-related tasks (general English), and finally for fun and entertainment.
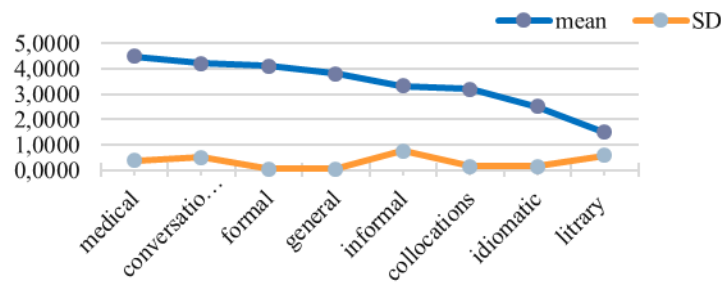
Figure 4. English preferences at the PS

Part (II): Analysis of the target situation needs

The target situation analysis (TSA), on the other hand, illuminated the need for English after completion of the university studies. This is germane to situations in which the graduates use English as part of their work/profession- English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). The table below shows summarizes the participants' responses regarding the needs of English in work-related settings. The results are arranged according to the degree of importance of the language skills in the TS. Compared to the needs in the PS, the priorities in the TS changed remarkably. For instance, the graduates need English at work to (a) interact with foreign doctors/nurses, (b) use online resources, and (c) write lab reports and prescriptions (mean scores: 4.8692, 4.8462 & 4.7692 respectively). In comparison, teachers and learners ranked these needs in the PS as secondary needs. As data in the table show, the informants' interest in receiving training in reading and writing is slightly stronger than the oral skills. Regardless of the slight differences in the mean scores, the respondents' perceptions are considerably high in terms of the amount of training in all the language skills and sub-skills. Even the expectations of the professors changed. They stated that the graduates need English to read about medical devices and medicine (96.2%), followed by using the internet (88.5%), participating in conferences and seminars (65.4%), taking TOEFL test (61.5%) and social interaction (27.6%).

Table 1. The participants' common uses of English in the TS

	I need English to:	Mean	St.D
A	Interact with foreign doctors/nurses.	4.8692	0.1016
B	Use online resources	4.8462	0.08170
C	Write lab reports/prescriptions	4.7692	.129228
D	Take a language test (e.g. TOEFL, IELTS).	4.2692	.25234
E	Pursue my study abroad.	3.9154	.02581
F	Read about drugs and medical devices.	3.8462	0.04970
G	Interact with workmates/colleagues.	3.5000	.64207
H	Write case histories	3.2692	.25134
I	Attend academic conference/seminars.	3.2692	.12234
J	Write research/medical essays.	3.2308	.15163
K	Interact with people in ordinary situations.	2.2308	0.11449

By examining data in the table, it is evident that items from A to D illustrate the most important needs in the TS (mean scores between 5.000 and 4.000). As for item A, interacting with foreign doctors and nurses, implies that the graduates think of opportunities for working with English-speaking professionals. As for item B, using the internet for medical resources, shows that learning online has turned into a recognized channel of learning. The items C, D, E, and F show a downward significance of needs. Writing lab reports and taking TOEFL test, for example, seem to be more pronounced than reading about drugs and medical devices, and so on. The difference in the mean scores of items from A to G in the table is still considerable. The items from H through K illustrate that English plays less important roles because Arabic is also the medium of daily interaction even in seminars and conferences where both Arabic and English are used interchangeably.

Noticeably, there is an increasing need for TOEFL, study abroad, fun, and internet applications– needs which were underrepresented in the previous investigations. Despite differences in priorities, the participants in both the present and target situations were notably aware of the importance of English for the TOEFL test. This sounds reasonable as they wished to continue higher education abroad where a language-ability test is required. Likewise, the informants stated that they needed English to deal with medical terminology, which is an essential aspect of medical studies and profession. The SM teachers explained introducing medical terminology in the English syllabus. They surmised that the medical terms require adequate knowledge of affixation and other ways of word-derivations. In this regard, it is important to refer to Panocová (2017) as a good reference of the medical vocabulary (e.g. collocations, jargons, and affixation) that teachers and course designers may make use of. The terminologies facilitate understanding medical-related issues as well as interacting with the subject-matter teachers who deliver their lectures in English.

Results also show that the informants had certain language problems. These problems are presented graphically (see Figure 5). Responses to Q6 in the SM teachers' structured interview revealed that students of medicine had limited vocabulary (21%), poor listening

(16%), poor writing (22%), and poor speaking (15%). Students also had poor reading abilities (16%) and poor grammar with a rate of 10%. This illustrates the need for a program that takes into account these language aspects with due attention to the receptive and productive skills altogether. In addition, the cultural aspects should also be considered for they are essential in L2 pedagogy from the viewpoint of post-method pedagogy (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).
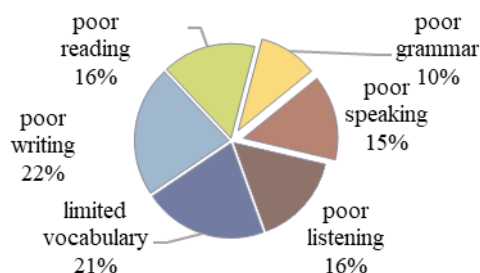

Figure 5. English problems as perceived by SM teachers

Taken together, the needs in PS and TS are of different priorities. The diversity of present (academic) and future needs rationalizes the necessity of integrating academic skills with subject-specific skills. A needs-based syllabus is expected to reflect students' needs in terms of the language skills in both PS and TS. Robinson (1991) conceded that "EAP is...specific purpose language teaching, differentiated from EOP by the type of the learner: future or practicing student as opposed to employee or worker" (p.100). However, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) noted that there is not a clear-cut distinction between EAP and EOP as people can work and study at the same time. Students in the PS felt they needed English primarily for study– (a) communicating with teachers, (b) doing assignments, (c) answering exams/tests, (d) writing memoirs/reports, (e) giving oral presentations. Besides, they perceived the Internet applications, TV programs, and fun activities as additional needs. On the other hand, the informants in the TS recognized the need for English to accomplish job-related activities– (a) reading about medicine/medical devices, (b) writing diagnostic/lab reports, (c) interacting with English-speaking colleagues. Additionally, they felt they needed English for the TOEFL test, participating in seminars/conferences, surfing the Internet, and having fun. These needs are quite similar to the needs reported in some other medical contexts where English is a medium of instruction, for instance Abdullah (2005, 2015), Al-Ahdal (2008), Al-kadi (2015), Alqasem (2017), Bin-Tayeh (1996), Laban (2008) in the local context; Çelik and Topkaya (2018), Kayaoğlu and Dağ Akbas (2016) in the Turkish medical context; Ghobain (2014) in the KSA medical context; and Faraj (2015) in the Libyan context. These studies diagnosed and criticized the status of ESP and provided extended profiles of needs. However, most of those needs were overstated and seem to be difficult to address in the local context due to two main reasons: (a) ESP is not ripe and is still on the fringes of the medical setting, and (b) it is hard to design an overall course that matches the specific needs of all individual learners. As needs generally vary from learner to learner, a formal structured course may not appeal to all the individuals' needs. Hence, prioritizing a set of common needs is instrumental for it can be used as a guideline for formal teaching, taking into account the practicality and

particularity of the local contexts (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). That is to say, in order to accommodate the immediate needs in the PS and TS, there should be space for learners to satisfy their needs in their own way. Infusing the curriculum with humanistic elements enable learners to voice their interests, desires, and concerns (Lojova, 2016; Rahmanpanah & Mohseni, 2017; Theologidou, 2018).

Although CLIL is more meaningful and relevant to scientific courses, it is not surprising that a sudden plunge into CLIL- or any of its associates- is unlikely to be flawless in the local settings. This could be attributed to some factors. For one thing, English competence of the SM teachers is questionable. Attending some specialized lectures, the author observed that the core courses were taught in English and Arabic (mother-tongue). Both teachers and students transferred the features of their first language to English. The medical terms were commonly code-mixed with Arabic which is the medium of communication. In addition, ESP courses are imposed on learners and teachers altogether.

Therefore, the pedagogues, policy-makers, and future prospects may enforce a change in the map of ELT to humanize and refine EMP in the faculties of medicine and health sciences. The present study, allied with findings from similar studies could be used to update the profile of needs from a humanistic standpoint. Towards this end, the following points are put forward.

Learner autonomy

Driven by the shortcomings of the formal teaching, which has failed to provide adequate ESP program, the study supports adopting opportunities of individualized learning. A learner-oriented English program would be an advantage over an imposed course. Giving learners an opportunity to manage their learning is a concept of modern curriculum that this paper puts forward. Only when learners are given this opportunity can they enjoy the fun and excitement of being autonomous learners. As human beings, learners have needs in common and, at the same time, every individual learner has his/her own needs. Put differently, while there are discipline-related needs that all students may share, there are needs that learners may satisfy by learning individually and/or collaboratively. Formal instruction caters to the common needs (i.e. the needs of an idealized group of learners), and individual needs are better addressed autonomously. Building on the humanistic curriculum, Theologidou (2018) suggested involving learners in daily decision-making as part of NA tasks so as to identify what they need to learn and discuss how this can be realized in the classroom. With this in mind, teachers should provide space for learners to decide how they may learn better; teachers encourage but not coerce students.

Informal learning

It has been widely accepted that (a) a formal setting is only one of several venues where learners can satisfy their needs, interests, and desires, and (b) informal learning is inseparable of the overall learning process. It complements the formal learning by giving ground for learners to continue learning beyond the confinements of the classroom. Theologidou (2018) argues that the term 'learning spaces' is more appropriate than the 'classroom' because learning today goes beyond the rigid classroom teaching. The classroom used to be the primary context of

English learning. However, it is now conceptualized as a platform for preparing learners to find links between the in-class and beyond classroom learning (Blake, 2008; Theologidou, 2018). Blake (2008) asserts that "curriculum encompasses not only the time spent in class. . . but also the effort spent outside the classroom working in groups … as well as all those moments of the night and day spent alone, quietly studying the target language" (p.131). In line with Blake's argument, learners in the context under scrutiny should be encouraged to learn at their pace and on their own to satisfy their needs that the formal teaching fails to address adequately. English learning should be relevant to learners' studies and careers.

Technology-enhanced language learning (TELL)

Today's learners have a technology-integrated mindset. The landscape of ELT has changed under the influence of technology which has become in the hands of learners and integrated in everyday activities. Internet-based activities fuels interest in personalized learning which may be a good source of English exposure. It contributes to spontaneous English learning. Considering technology-based resources as informal opportunities of language intake compensate for the pitfalls of formal language learning which depends largely on rigid textbooks. If they are taught conventionally, this technology-oriented generation get the feeling that they are taught something irrelevant to their day-to-day needs and interests. The vested interests should devise suitable tools to measure the outcome of this mode of learning.

Teacher autonomy

The study advocates for teacher' autonomy. It builds on Kumaravadivelu' (2006) post-method principle that there should be room for teachers to shape their teaching. Teachers should be empowered to decide what works and what does not work in their teaching situations. The post-method pedagogy views teachers as co-learners, theorists, and researchers who "theorize from their practice and practice what they have theorized" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p.184). Being in direct contact with their learners, teachers know better than anybody else how their learners learn efficiently. Teachers are familiar with the priorities, preferences, and learning styles of their students. Lojova (2009) maintains that teachers in the classroom behave according to their interiorized beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and understanding of learning and teaching. They base their teaching on their subjective experience, created opinions, pedagogical intuition, and learned knowledge. Thus, teachers should be the engineers of their teaching. They decide on shaping teaching that responds directly to learners' needs in a friendly environment.

Conclusion

This paper redressed the situation of EMP in the Yemeni context. It drew on recent trends that give ground to learner-based curriculum. This attempt falls within the main tenets underpinning the post-method pedagogy which empowers teachers to create teaching framework and encourages learners to shoulder the responsibility of their learning. The results do not entail the demise of previous analyses but reinforce them by bringing humanistic dimensions into the fore. The focus of an ESP course should be on learners and their unique personal and cultural needs, instead of encapsulating the learners' needs as discrete segments of

the language. Both teachers and learners should feel they are important and have a say in what they learn/teach. Again, the ESP teachers and SM teachers should teach in unison in order to unite learning English and content (subject-matter) in a single approach. This paper also suggests repositioning ESP by adopting another approach to teaching English for medical purposes- CLIL is a case in point. Although adopting CLIL or any of its associates in preference to the traditional ESP would be a challenge, it is worthwhile to try it. It enhances both language and content learning which is motivating for the learners. The course designers may build on previous CLIL models (e.g. Stapel's (2016) project) to customize a course that fits the local context. The fact that NA is a giant work that requires a thorough exploration leaves this small-scale study with certain limitations. It could not cover all the variables the NA contends with, such as syllabus, materials, textbooks, evaluation, methodology, learners, stakeholders, outcomes, etc. Perhaps, further research including a larger population or a triangulated method of data collection would provide a diversified dataset that this endeavor could not cover.

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