Modern Methods of Studying Terms in the Field of Pharmaceutics in English

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ABSTRACT

This article deals with an ESP course taught as an obligatory subject in a pharmacy undergraduate degree programme in Spain. The language course is only one of the contexts involving disciplinary English as the degree programme integrates English in several content subjects. The ESP course is an attempt to find the right balance between students' language needs, pharmacy-specific language skills, and the language-related demands of pharmacy content subjects which integrate English. The co-existence of ESP and CLIL teaching is seen as an opportunity for a closer cooperation and coordination with disciplinary experts to make connections between disciplines and activities towards better learning outcomes. We propose a course aimed at raising students' language awareness through focused tasks which will cater to student's communicative needs related to the two main themes of the course: chemistry and pharmaceutical care.

ESP (English for Specific Purposes) language courses aim to address students" specialized needs and expectations relevant for their respective academic disciplines and professional domains (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). ESP courses, rather than general English courses, are then a good occasion to introduce university level students to disciplinary language and communication in their respective areas. Nonetheless, today disciplinary language is more and more present beyond language-centered courses in university settings around the world. The implementation of English through approaches like EMI (English-medium instruction) or CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), or other local varieties based on them, changes the situation of ESP teaching. Whereas EMI refers mainly to the use of English as a medium of instruction with the focus placed on content learning outcomes and no explicit attention to language learning issues (Airey, 2016), CLIL is a dual-focused educational approach which aims to accommodate the learning of content and language, albeit the two elements do not have to be pursued always to the same extent (Coyle, Hood & Marsh, 2010). On the language content continuum, Airey (2016: 73) places CLIL in the middle between EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and English-medium instruction, though underlines the artificial nature of such a division due to the close and inseparable link between language and content.

Despite this growing amount of disciplinary English across the subjects, students" language learning outside language courses is often only incidental, so ESP and EMI/CLIL teaching can still co-exist and complement each other, especially in non-English speaking countries. Next to new challenges, the two approaches within the same institution can trigger changes and innovations in traditional ESP courses to better adapt them to students" communicative needs as well as generate enriching opportunities for interdisciplinary collaborative initiatives (Arnó-

Macià & Mancho-Barés, 2015; González Ardeo, 2013; Woźniak, 2017). Leonardi (2015) shows that ESP and CLIL at university level overlap in their focus on communicative, task-based activities or authentic tailored materials adapted to the needs of students who lack content knowledge and acquire it at the same time as English. These convergence points, coupled with the growing amount of English used in content subjects, may call for more integrated approaches to ESP teaching in search of more active and meaningful learning. Nonetheless, Tarnopolsky (2013) defends traditional language-focused ESP courses at the beginning of university studies to raise student" awareness of the peculiarities of disciplinary language and communication and help to catch up on English language deficiencies which may still exist. More integrated approaches can be more appropriate for the following years of studies when students have acquired more knowledge about their area of study and future profession. Such a progression towards more integrated approaches seems justifiable if we consider that ESP course in the initial years of university will not be able to reflect and replicate the complexities of professional communication as students do not know in what situations they are likely to use English.

The ESP language course was expected to complement the disciplinary language learning needs and assist the activities students will complete in English in content subjects, but simultaneously still maintain the position of an independent subject, with its own objectives, planning and decisions. Considering the expectations and needs identified, one of the first tasks was to understand the tasks pharmacists are required to perform in English and decide on relevant thematic areas to be incorporated in the course. First-year students" knowledge about the subject matter is still very limited and they do not know a real context for the vocabulary and structures they will study, so our activities cannot closely resemble future professional tasks. As far as language learning is concerned, focused tasks are designed to prompt learners to use specific linguistic features, whereas unfocused tasks are designed to encourage communication in general (Ellis,

2009). The overview of activities conducted in English across the subjects allowed us to decide which meaning-focused tasks can prove more effective with content lecturers and are thus more suitable for CLIL activities in content subjects. As disciplinary insiders, content lecturers can better address students" content-related queries, for example, when writing a research article or a laboratory report. However, often unaware of language considerations and feeling responsible for content learning outcomes, content specialists primarily use English as a means for content learning and only to a limited extent as an aim in itself. Our main aim was to incorporate activities and tasks which would interrelate with other academic activities performed in English and would help students complete their tasks in English and thus prepare them for professional activities in the future.

The first part of the course is dedicated mainly to communicative needs related to chemistry and chemical experiments and students are expected to complete two individual and one group tasks. In the first individual task, students record a podcast called „What's the difference between ...?" about laboratory equipment. Each student prepares an educational radio programme for secondary school students about three laboratory items of their choice. The podcast should include clear definitions of each of the selected items explaining their appearance, functions and use. Next, students have to compare and contrast the items using a series of expressions practiced in class, e.g.: in contrast, whereas, both, differ in, are similar in, etc. The odd number of the items to be explained prompts the use of comparative and superlative forms of adjectives. As students can only use their voice and cannot support their explanations with images, they need to be as precise as possible so that their listeners would be able to identify the equipment if they entered a laboratory for the first time. Students submit their audio recording and the written text, and they are encouraged to practice and repeat the recording as many times as they wish and submit the best version. This task is directly linked and extends the activity developed in the first semester in the subject called Introduction

to Laboratory Work. Most of the vocabulary related to laboratory equipment is first introduced in a CLIL activity called Hot-seat in which students prepare definitions in English for a list of selected laboratory items and participate in vocabulary games in class (García et al., 2018). This way, the first individual task is an opportunity to link content and language related to laboratory work.

Our students start to study Introduction to Pharmaceutical Care in the first year, but it is not until the third year that they study the main content matter of this area. This poses certain limitations on the tasks we can assign and the extent to which content knowledge can be involved. In the individual task, students are asked to produce an audio recording for a patient suffering from temporary vision loss, who is thus not able to read the patient information leaflet. The patient is a 50-year old man with constipation who is allergic to gelatin. First, students read two authentic patient information leaflets (Dulcobalance and Glycerol) to identify the suitable medicine for this patient. In their audio recording, they should justify their choice and explain usage and safety information covering all the points in the checklist provided in the rubric (for example, how often to take it, possible side effects, how to store it, etc.) adapting the written information from the leaflet to the audio format and avoiding verbatim repetitions from the leaflet or any technical language that could be incomprehensible to the patient. Specifically, they should ensure that the patient understands the meaning of laxative, dehydration and expiry date, so their definitions should be incorporated in their explanations. Conditionals are the main grammar focus of this task and at least one sentence with unless is requested. The pronunciation, intonation and pace are particularly important for this task as this time the students are not asked to submit the script and all the evaluation is based on their recording.

In this article, we set out to show that a language-focused ESP course is still needed in a CLIL setting, mainly to raise students" awareness of language and its role in disciplinary communication and to equip students with the necessary vocabulary, structures as well as learning strategies to complete their disciplinary tasks in English. The result of our course design is an eclectic, based on exercises and focused tasks that by some might be viewed as too traditional, conservative and too form-focused, but it embodies a balance between disciplinary language and content. Our materials and activities are linked to other activities carried out in English in the other Pharmacy subjects, so ESP and CLIL aim to complement each other to reinforce meaningful **learning.**

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