

Chapter II

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE OBJECTS OF THE STUDY

The field of teaching or learning English for medical purposes belongs to the branch of applied linguistics or English for specific purposes (ESP). The growing importance of English in modern medical field is indicated by the widespread teaching of English in medical schools around the world and the use of English as an instrument of international medical communication including English medical texts and English communicative events. So, the key terms in this study are *English medical brochures* and *pharmacist assistants*.

II.1. ENGLISH MEDICAL BROCHURES

II.1.1. THE EXISTENCE OF ENGLISH MEDICAL BROCHURES IN SOCIETY

As an international language, English has also a big influence in marketing field. In one study about the language sources in Economics matters recorded by David Crystal in *Encyclopedia of Language* [1989], it is concluded that the use of non-English sources is found to be as little as 10 % and the remaining 90 % are English. The data supported by the fact that in non-English speaking countries; there is a market reliance on

products using English brochure. In order to maintain their marketing demand, companies try to provide English Brochures although the products are only available in local market.

As in other companies, pharmaceutical companies in Indonesia also provide such English brochures. There are many English Medical Brochures circulated in the society as the result of the existence of foreign pharmacy companies and the strategy of local pharmacy companies to compete in the global market. Facing Asian Free Trade Area [AFTA] in 2003, in which foreign companies can easily do their business in our country, market competition will become too complex. At that time, it is predicted that many foreign companies including pharmacy companies will take part in daily commerce of Surabaya community. Now there are more than 73 pharmacy companies doing their business in Surabaya. They surely use English for the instructions of the use of their products. For local pharmacy companies, their brochures are also provided in both English and Indonesian. Therefore, the estimate number of English medical brochures circulated in society is over 5000.

II.1.2. THE FUNCTION OF ENGLISH MEDICAL BROCHURES

English medical brochure has a great role to bring pharmacy companies into contact with drug consumers. It provides detail information about the products. The instruction reflects general understanding of the

healthy body and diseases, and provides an outline of health care process. This information is needed by patients for proper future action.

II.1.3. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLISH MEDICAL BROCHURES

As a kind of technical text, English medical brochure is characterized by brevity rather than beautiful and elegant variety of expressions. Its main purpose is to be informative and functional rather than entertaining. Thus, the most important qualities of technical style are clarity, precision, conciseness and objectivity [Weisman-1980:26]. Qualities of this text can be observed by the use of sentence structure and diction as the main elements of style. It usually uses simple sentences and mostly in passive construction. The ideas or thoughts are expressed clearly. Formal language is used. The brochures usually contain special vocabulary like medical and chemist jargon. Another characteristic is the use of linguistic and non-linguistic modes of expression. Non-linguistic expressions are such as charts, statistical data, mathematical formula, etc. However, these expressions are never totally independent of each other. Linguistic expressions or verbal language is always needed to interpret and clarify the meaning of the use of non-verbal language.

According to medicine law regulation issued by The Health Department, every medical brochure, including English medical brochure, has to mention:

1. Name of patented medicine (nama obat jadi)
2. Volume/net weight
3. Drug composition
4. The name of pharmacy company
5. The address of pharmacy company
6. Registered number
7. Dosage
8. Dosage administration
9. Pharmacokinetics
10. Indication
11. Contra indication
12. Side effect of overdosage
13. Warning and precautions
14. Interactions
15. Suggested storage
16. Warning sign for caustic medicine
17. Doctor's prescription

[Source: Direktorat Jendral Pengawasan Obat dan Makanan DEPKES RI '96]

For products of foreign pharmacy company, they have to be registered first in order to get license for their regulation in society. Further, they have to rely on all of the conducted rules as well as local company's products.

II.2. PHARMACIST ASSISTANTS

Pharmacist assistants are graduates of SAA ('Sekolah Asisten Apoteker' or in English 'Pharmacist Assistants School') or SMF ('Sekolah Menengah Farmasi' or in English 'Senior Pharmacy School'). Both schools are occupational schools, which are quite different from Senior High Schools. In these schools, the teacher focuses more on classes of specific subject rather than the general one. In SMF and SAA, students are taught how to read doctor's prescription, how to mix substances into certain medicine, etc. General subjects such as History, Biology, English are given as compulsory subjects.

II.2.1. THE ENGLISH COMPETENCE OF PHARMACIST ASSISTANTS

The English competence of pharmacist assistants is considered low. It leads from the fact that English as a foreign language is taught as a compulsory subject in many medical school around the world including SAA and SMF but with a little fit to the demand of modern pharmaceutical world. Furthermore most of English teachers have less awareness and

response to the important area of language teaching. Ideally, teachers should focus on the specific English-language needs of pharmacists, on themes and topics specific to the medical fields and focuses also on a restricted range of skill that may be required by pharmacists, for instance, comprehending medical brochure.

Misunderstandings are particularly common in connection with medical brochures. Patient's compliance with drug therapy is notoriously poor because patient's understanding of medical matters is not often good and the stress of information given by doctors cannot always be understood. In one study held by Steward and Cluff [1981:55] of a number of investigations, it is reported that from 25%-59% of patients made error in self-medication and that from 4%-35% of patients misused medication in a manner which could pose serious threats to health. Thereby, pharmacist assistants should supply information needed by patients.

II.2.2. THE DUTY OF PHARMACIST ASSISTANTS

In a dispensary, pharmacist assistants have more contact with consumers than the other employees. It is highly desirable that they should be responsible for determining the standard, giving detail information and counseling to patients in order to increase patient's obedience. Consequently, pharmacist assistants should read and

comprehend every doctor's prescription and also medical brochure to give appropriate suggestions to doctor or pharmacy company if necessary.

In details, Pan Pacific Asian Congress on Clinical Pharmacy -1994 - determined the pharmacist assistants' tasks and the development of pharmacy service. The development of pharmacy service includes three stages. First, pharmacy service is focused on making, mixing and giving drug to patient. It usually happens in under-developed countries. Second, When pharmacy industries grow up, finished goods and medicine are produced in amount unit, the activity of mixing drug in dispensaries only about 5% to 10% of the whole activities. Pharmacy service is focused on preparing and giving drug only. The third stage is called "Good Pharmacy Service". The service is more focused on patient's interests than product interests. At this time, the pharmacist assistants' roles become very important. They have to understand the products well, because they are responsible for the effectiveness, safety and efficiency of medicine consuming process. Moreover, they are responsible for patient's recovery processes.

Today, Indonesia is on the way to the third stage. The pharmacist assistants' responsibilities move from product interests to patient interests. Facing this stage, they have to be prepared for those purposes. At least, they should have good comprehension of detail information about the product. This will help them to get the best result of their job.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA