

Preparing Preparatory Year English Language Learners for Professional Colleges: An Evaluation of Current Placement System

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Abstract

The present study aims to analyze the pros and cons of both the existing system (English for General Purposes for one year and English for Specific Purposes for six months) and the proposed one (both ESP and EGP for one year) in Preparatory Year Programme (PYP) in Qassim University. It starts with an assumption that if the students are placed on the medical or science track in level-1 instead of level-2, they can be better prepared for the professional colleges after studying ESP for a full year. The study uses quantitative research approach by analyzing the data statistically in a comprehensive way. The complete record of high school grades, Pre-PYP tests and the first semester results of 615 PYP students in the main branch have been thoroughly studied. Likewise, 50 medical male, 50 medical female, 50 science male and 50 science female students have been surveyed on the 5-point Likert scale with 10-items quantitative tool. Major finding is that existing system of placing the students on medical and science tracks in the 2nd semester is better as the students get refined and polished due to the competition and hard work in the 1st semester of PYP. They remain both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated that despite their low performance on the high school exams, aptitude test and entry test, they still have another chance of being placed on the medical track (the first choice of majority of the students). The study, nevertheless, recommends reforms in the existing system without changing it drastically.

Keywords: EGP, ESP, language learners, medical track, preparatory year programme, professional colleges, science track

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