

How my father pushed me to learn English

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I was English major in college and in my freshman year my father got sick. He went to the doctor's who gave him some medications. When my father got home, he called me and asked me to read the leaflets of his medications and tell him what the side effects and indications of each medicine are. I apologetically said that I was still freshman and that I was English not medicine major. "There are many difficult words in the leaflet", I added. "Shame on you", my father responded. "Is that why I sent you to college? I am not asking you to give me an answer now. Don't you have a dictionary?", he added. "Yes I do" I replied. "Take your time. Look up the meanings of the difficult words in the dictionary and then give me an answer", he advised. So I sat and looked up the meanings of all the difficult words in order to give my father the information that he needed. This way I exposed to English medical terminology. Learning medical terminology became an enjoyable task. In addition, every time my father received an English telegram, he would hand it to me and ask me to tell him what it was about. When I was junior in college, he asked me to listen to the news on the BBC and tell him about the world news, i.e., what was

going on in the world. When I first listened to the BBC news, I could not understand much and could not re-tell the meaning in Arabic. since BBC news is broadcast every hour, I listened to the same news cast several times a day while my father was out at work, in order to be able to tell him the details in Arabic. I thank my father for pushing me to go beyond books and what I was learning in class and for teaching me to search for information instead of saying "I can't" and "I do not know". He also taught that when one does something for the first time, he/she may not find it easy, but the task gets easier by, repetition, practice and determination. Soon difficult tasks become easy and fun.