TO STUDY MEDICAL TERMS IN LATIN AND GREEK LANGUAGES

Yorova Sayora Karimovna
Head of Language Department of Samarkand State Medical University
The 1st Year Student of Medical Department Harsh Saini
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Abstract. This article is illustrates the using of terminology in the field of medicine and linguistics. The terminology of the modern medicine is the most complicated terminological system of the modern science. The total amount of medical terms remains unknown, but its estimated amount exceeds one million terms. You realize that it is impossible to learn one million words, even for an intelligent person, because we use in our native language only several thousand words.

Key words: suffix, medical term, prefix, latin words, root word, professional communication, doctors.

It is estimated that about three-fourths of the English medical terminology Is of Greek origin. The main reason for this is that the Greeks were the Founders of rational medicine in the golden age of Greek civilization in the 5th Century B.C. The Hippocratic School and, later on, Galen (the Greek from Asia Minor who lived in Rome in the 2nd century A.D.) Formulated the theories which dominated medicine up to the beginning of The 18th Century. The Hippocratics were the first to describe diseases Based on observation, and the names given by them to many conditions are still used today, for example, arthritis, nephritis, pleuritis (pleurisy).

The second reason for the large number of Latin medical terms is that the latin language lends itself easily to the building of compounds. When new terms were needed, with the rapid expansion of medical science during the last century, Latin words with Greek endings were used to express the new ideas, conditions, or instruments. The new Words follow the older models so closely that it is impossible to distinguish the two by their forms. Such recent words as appendicitis, Creatinine, cystoscope, epinephrine, streptococcus, and many others do not appear different from the classical terms. The fact is that about one-half of our medical terminology is less than a century old.

The third reason for using the classical roots is that they form an International language, easily understood by anyone familiar with the Subject matter.

This course teaches you how medical terms are 'built' or 'put together' instead of just memorizing lots of medical words and their meanings. You will learn to recognize the meaning of a medical term by dividing the word into its three basic component parts: the prefix, root and suffix. By knowing the meanings of the prefixes, suffixes, and root words, you can easily figure out the meaning of a medical term.

For example, if you see a medical term containing the root word 'cardi' and the Suffix 'it is', you know that the term has to do with an 'inflamed' (itis) 'heart' (cardi).

This technique of word building is a simple and straightforward way to learn Medical terminology without long hours of memorizing the medical vocabulary.

You will learn Latin and Greek terminological elements.

You will be able to figure out unfamiliar words by recognizing their Building blocks from which they are constructed.

You will be able to construct many words correctly by learning to put these Building blocks together in the proper way.

You will be able to determine the meanings of thousands of words that you Have never seen before and which are used in medicine.

Greek and Latin medical terms can be broken down into one or more word parts. For simplicity in explanation, let's say that there are four possible word parts,

And any given medical term may contain one, some, or all of these parts:

Root terminological elements (a shorthand notation "root")

Final terminological elements (a shorthand notation "suffixes")

Prefixes Combining vowels

An example of a word with three of the above parts is the medical term Pericarditis, which means inflammation of the outer layer of the heart. Pericarditis can be divided into three parts:

peri – card – it is

Once divided into its essential parts, pericarditis can be translated:

a)   the prefix peri- translates to surrounding,

b)   the root –card- translates to heart, and

c)   the suffix –it is translates to inflammation.

Hence, pericarditis is an inflammation of the area surrounding the heart, or an Inflammation of the outer layer of the heart, anatomically known as the Pericardium.

Medical terms always consist of at least one root, although they may contain More. The root of a word is that part which contains the essential meaning of the Word. An example of this was seen above in the term pericarditis. The root of The word – card – refers to the heart, so any prefix or suffix added to the root (card) will only function to add to the specificity of that word. An example of This would be the prefix brady, which means slow. If "brady" is added to the Root "card", the term bradycard – which roughly means slow heart – is created. Then, if the suffix ia – which means abnormal state – is added to "bradycard", The medical term bradycardia is formed. The translation of bradycardia (brady-Card-ia) is slow – heart – abnormal state, or the abnormal state of a slow heart Rate.

Linking or Combining Vowels:

As was discussed above, a medical term must Have at least one root, but may not have a prefix and/or a suffix. An example of This is the term sternocleidomastoid, which is a muscle that has attachments at

The sternum, the clavicle, and the mastoid. The term sternocleidomastoid can be Divided into three parts (three roots, in this case): stern – o – cleid – o – mastoid. Notice that there are vowels between the three roots. These are linking or Combining vowels, which serve to make a term easier to pronounce. The vowel Used most of the time is o, but other vowels such as I and a are also used. Combining vowels are often used between roots and suffixes or roots and other Roots, but they are NOT used between prefixes and roots.

Learning to read a medical term

When you look at a medical term and attempt to decipher its meaning you begin With the suffix, move to the prefix (if present) and then the root word.

For example: When trying to understand the word pericarditis you would Identify it is (meaning inflammation), then peri (meaning around) and then card(meaning heart). Therefore, this word means inflammation around the heart.Let's try another one: for example: leukocytopenia – penia (meaning decrease), Then leuk/o (meaning white) and finally cyt/o (meaning cell). Therefore, this Word means a decrease in white cells.

Defination of a clinical term

Clinical terminology includes the names of diseases, symptoms And signs of diseases, methods of diagnostics, prevention and treatment Etc. The advantages of clinical terms are those that one word includes The notion which can be explained by a phrase or a sentence. For Example, the term "bronchoscopia" means "examination of the internal Surface of th bronchi by means of a special device bronchoscope". Of Course, it is not convenient and medical professionals do not use such Long explanations. They use clinical terms instead. Clinical terms are a Part of professional medical English. They are laconic, clear and Understandable by all the participants of the medical-therapeutic process Including doctors, doctor's assistants, nurses and other medical staff. The use of clinical terms in professional communication is one of the Points of medical ethics and deontology.

The structure of clinical terms

Most of clinical terms consist of Greek equivalents and Terminological elements. Greek equivalents are Greek synonyms of Latin names of organs, parts of the body, tissues, systems etc. Terminological elements are parts of the terms denoting the process Occurring in this or that organ, part of the body, tissue etc. The majority Of clinical terms consist of one Greek equivalent, that is an organ, and terminological element indicating the process taking place in this organ. Although some other variants of clinical terms exist. They are nouns of Greek and Latin origin belonging to 1-5 declensions: cataracta, ae f (cataract); icterus, I m (jaundice); asthma, atis n (asthma); hydrops, opis M (dropsy); febris, is f (fever); insultus, us m (stroke); caries, ei f (tooth Decay) etc

Principles of building clinical terms

In clinical terms Greek equivalents always occupy the first Position and terminological elements – the second one.

In case terminological elements begin with a consonant the Vowel –o- is inserted between the stem of Greek equivalent and Terminological element. For example: myelomalacia (myel-o-Malacia) – softening of the spinal cord.

In case terminological elements begin with a vowel, as a rule the Vowel –o- is not inserted. For example: phlebectasia (phleb-Ectasia) – dilation of veins. Clinical terms can consist of two Greek equivalents and one Terminological element, or one Greek equivalent and two terminological Elements. Some other structures of clinical terms are possible. For

Example:

Gastroenterocolitis (gastr-o-enter-o-col-it is) – three Greek Equivalents and one terminological element (inflammation of the Stomach, small and large intestines); Amorphus (a-morph-us) – one Greek equivalent on the basis of Which by means of the prefix a- and inflexion –us the adjective is Formed (shapeless, without certain form); Atrophia (a-trophia) – one terminological element with the prefix a- (interruption of supply or nourishment).

The pattern of building clinical terms

1.   Write down necessary Greek equivalent and its stem (the stem is Used in the term).
2.   Write down appropriate terminological element.

3. Build the term considering the rules of the linking –o.

4. It should be noted that clinical term has a general notion of the Process, therefore secondary words are not translated.

For example: removal of stones from the urinary bladder by means of Cutting.

a) Cystis, cyst (Greek equivalent – urinary bladder)

b) Lithus (terminological element – stone) Tomia (terminological element – cutting)

3. Cystolithotomia (cyst-o-lith-o-tomia)

Suffixes in clinical terms

Suffix is a morpheme added at the end of a word to form a Derivative. In English a suffix is a letter or group of letters, for example, ly' or `-ness', which is added to the end of a word in order to form a Different word, often of a different word class. For example, the suffix `-ly' is added to `quick' to form `quickly'. In Latin suffixes are also used to Build clinical terms

Prefixes in clinical terms

Prefix is a letter or group of letters, for example `un-' or `multi-', Which is added to the beginning of a word in order to form a different Word. For example, the prefix `un-' is added to `happy' to form `unhappy'. In Latin prefixes are also used to build new clinical terms.

Final terminological elements

Final terminological elements are usually written at the end of Clinical terms. They denote various processes taking place in the organs, Tissues, parts of the body: pathological ones provoked by different Diseases, the processes of examination, treatment, diagnostics by means Of different instruments and devices.

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