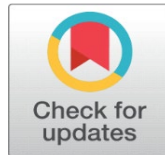


ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES: NEEDS ANALYSIS AS A COURSE DESIGN PROCESS AND DETERMINING THE CONTENT FOR THE COURSE WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE ENGLISH FOR TOURISM SYLLABUS IN KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT

ESP is an international movement that originated because of the demand for exclusive and focused learning of the second language for limited purposes at a higher level of education. Thus, ESP has its prominent features. ESP teaching is fundamentally built on the consideration of distinct purposes and the functions for which English is required. Furthermore, ESP teaching focuses more on language in context than on teaching English language aspects like grammar, vocabulary, and sound system. ESP is to develop procedures applicable for learners whose primary purpose is learning English for a purpose instead of just learning the language system.

The course designer must produce the teaching and learning material after carrying out a limited text analysis and then writing out the course syllabus. ESP is always based on the practical outcomes of learning the course. The dominating feature of ESP is that it deals with domains of knowledge of an average speaker. It deals with the subject-specific matter. There are certain precise features that we have to consider when we design an ESP course. A needs analysis is always situated within the methodology of English for Specific Purposes.

This paper explores why a needs analysis is necessary to design a course paper for an ESP course like English for Tourism and determine the content. There is a need for careful analysis to structure a multi-layered syllabus with elements of functions, topics and vocabulary with definite reference to the register analysis and the rhetorical and discourse analysis and genre analysis to get valuable information about the target situation language used.

Keywords: ESP, Socio-Cultural Context, Register Analysis, Rhetorical and Discourse Analysis, Target Situation Analysis, Deficiency Analysis, Authentic Texts, Language Audits

Abbreviations commonly used:

ESP – English for Specific Purposes
EAP – English for Academic Purposes
EOP – English for Occupational Purposes
EPP – English for Professional Purposes
ELT – English Language Teaching
ESL – English as a Second Language
LSP – Language for Specific Purposes
LBP – Language for Business Purposes

1. INTRODUCTION

J.M. Swales, in his journal article, "Language for Specific Purposes", opines that "Language for Business Purposes has become a major growth area in LSP, many of the pedagogical consequences are well described by [Dudley-Evans and St John \(1998\)](#)". He continues to cite that "internationalisation and the new globality (globaloney?) has drawn many more business people into bilingual and multilingual occupational settings" (65).

Therefore, it can be seen that ELT is slowly and steadily being replaced by ESP, which is becoming the hot topic, and the need of the hour for teaching English as a second language at the higher level of education. It is, thus, indispensable to study the concepts, language teaching and learning approaches and linguistic approaches to develop courses and design specific content. Consequently, it is appropriate to quote Styler, who goes on to lay down the reasons for ESP that are:

"The purpose of education in the 21st century; learning for the workplace; national culture and technological advances; the globalisation of education; education and quality control; and future challenges for educational institutions." (289).

ESP focuses on when, where and why learners need the language either in study or workplace contexts, asserts Helen Basturkmen in her book, *Developing Courses in English for Specific Purposes* (8). Huhta, Marjatta, Karin Vogt, Esko Johnson and Heikki Tulku, in their book, *Needs Analysis for Language Course Design: A Holistic Approach to ESP*, have written that the theoretical underpinning of their book is predominantly sociological rather than linguistic or pedagogical. They have conducted a hands-on investigation of communication needs in companies in a spirit of participatory, holistic and workplace-embedded communication analysis (1 - 8).

They believe that it is necessary to identify the communication needs in helping to devise practical, motivating holistic activities usable in pre-service and in-service training. The functions and notions of communication are not essential, but we must provide sufficient information for realistic workplace simulations in the classroom (1 - 9).

2. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

Diane Belcher argues that ESP now encompasses an 'ever-diversifying and expanding range of purposes.' (134). This continued expansion of ESP into new vistas has arisen due to the ever-increasing 'glocalized' world [Robertson \(1995\)](#). Flowerdew attributes its dynamism to market forces and theoretical renewal (326 - 337). Belcher, in her article, "Trends in Teaching English for Specific Purposes", also notes trends in the teaching of ESP in three distinct directions: the socio-discoursal, socio-cultural, and socio-political (165 - 186). Kavaliauskiene also writes on a new individualised approach to learners 'to gain each learner's trust and think of the ways of fostering their linguistic development' (8).

Teaching ESP has always been characterised by a hands-on, communicative approach to language teaching. Learners are taught to accomplish tasks that they are familiar with from their professional environment. This kind of language teaching and learning brings the task of needs analysis to the forefront. Helen Basturkmen, in her book, *Developing Courses in English for Specific Purposes*, shows the importance of needs analysis when she writes that:

Needs analysis identifies the language forms that students ultimately will need to use in the target language. However, the needs of the teachers, administrators, employers, institutions have a bearing on the language learning situation and quantitative and qualitative information, objective and subjective types, and the language involved in the learning process (11 –15).

Each ESP course has specific purposes and depends on the community to which the learners are preparing to engage with. Basturkmen quotes Hyland to reveal that the differences in courses are affected by such concepts as 'genre, authenticity, discourse community, communicative purpose, and audience'. ESP sits within the general framework of applied linguistics but is separated from General English language teaching for several reasons. ESP has:

- Its distinct methodology
- Uses authentic material
- The teacher is a consultant
- Draws practical teaching techniques from the disciplines it supports
- ESP is rooted in specific practical outcomes
- ESP focuses on the specific needs of the learners (14 – 18).

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are several other characteristics of ESP that several authors have put forward. For example, Belcher, in her article, "English for Specific Purposes: Teaching to Perceived Needs and Imagined Futures in Worlds of Work, Study and Everyday Life", states that ESP assumes that the problems are unique to specific learners in specific contexts and thus must be carefully delineated and addressed with tailored to fit instruction (135).

The work of Hutchinson and Waters English for Specific Purposes: A Learner-centred Approach has had a significant impact on ESP. They also emphasised the target situation of the learners. Later on, it included the context of the learning and the needs of the stakeholders. Munby's Communicative Syllabus Designs classified needs based on interlocutors and situations in the learners' target communicative situations.

Tony Dudley-Evans and Maggie Jo St John's contributory book, English for Specific Purposes: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach, gives us a detailed analysis of ESP. They give us the various concepts necessary to design the content and develop a specific ESP course. They write about the importance of discourse analysis. They define discourse analysis as the study of how sentences in spoken and written language form larger units at a level above the sentence, for example, in paragraphs, whole conversations or written texts. Macro-skills refer to essential skills like reading, writing, listening and speaking and listening to monologue. They also define certain specific concepts like macro-skills, micro-skills, register analysis and rhetoric analysis. A macro-skill can be broken down into several micro-skills. Micro-skills refer to the lower-level skills that constitute a macro-skill. They also highlight the importance of register analysis and define it as studying how frequently grammatical structures are used in texts. Rhetoric refers to the study of how written or spoken texts are effective in persuading readers or listeners to accept their arguments. It is relevant, focused on learners' needs, successful in imparting learning and more cost-effective than General English (9).

ESP courses aim to provide students with focused instruction concentrating on the literacy practices of the relevant domain or context. "Targeted learning will be highly motivational for learners because it specifically addresses their actual language learning needs," proports Christoph A. Hafner and Lindsay Miller in their introduction to the book, *English in the Disciplines: A Multilingual Model for ESP Course Design* (1 -10).

The relation between theory and materials/syllabus in ESP is instead a fascinating feature. Halliday, Strevens and McIntosh's book, mainly for language teachers, *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*, is valid proof. The authors are convinced that linguistic sciences are very applicable to language teaching. They also bring out the inadequacy of traditional grammar books. Language means "activity basically of four kinds: speaking, listening, writing, and reading" (9). It displays "different types of patterns...those of form and substance" (19). A proper theory of language enhancing "our understanding of language" (137) leads to improved applications in teaching. The major problem in language teaching is "the approach to language, and the descriptions of languages, on which the teaching is grounded" (156). These authors argue that linguistics provides the sole means of remedying these defects.

4. NEEDS ANALYSIS

Many exponents of ESP have agreed on the undisputed fact that any ESP course should be needs-driven and has an 'emphasis on practical outcomes.' state Dudley-Evan & St. John in their book, *Developments in English for Specific Purposes: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach* (1). Therefore, needs analysis is and always will be a fundamental part of ESP. Of course, needs analysis is neither unique to language teaching nor within language training, but it is often seen as the cornerstone of ESP and leads to a very focused course that asserts Dudley-Evans and St John (122).

Kathleen Graves introduces the concept of needs analysis and definition in her book, *Designing Language Courses*, where she argues that needs analysis involves finding out what the learners know and can do, what they need to learn or to what extent the course can bridge the gap. Today, it is widely believed that needs analysis is a prerequisite to any language programme objectives (98). Dudley-Evans and St. John felt that needs are derived from insiders and match with cognitive and affective factors. Likewise, product-oriented needs are derived from the goal or target situation, and process-oriented needs are derived from the learning situation (122). Hutchinson and Waters suggest that learner's needs should be taken into consideration when the process of planning the content of a language programme is taking place. "All language teaching must be designed for the specific learning and language use purposes of identified groups of students" (67).

Christoph A. Hafner and Lindsay Miller, in their introduction to the book, *English in the Disciplines: A Multilingual Model for ESP Course Design*, critique on the magnitude of a needs analysis in ESP, EPP or EOP and posit that:

At the heart of the ESP, the approach is needs analysis: the attempt to identify learners' specific needs so that these can be addressed in course design. One way to do so is by analysing the specialised disciplinary discourses, genres and registers with which the learners are expected to engage. This approach can be traced back to the 1960s, with seminal work in register analysis described by Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens and Barber (11-12).

Needs analysis is the systematic collection and analysis of all subjective and objective information necessary to define and validate defensible curriculum purposes that satisfy the language requirements of students within the context of the particular institutions that influence the learning and teaching situation (12).

Needs analysis evolved in the 1970s to include 'deficiency analysis' or assessing the 'learning gap' between target language use and current learner proficiencies [West \(1997\)](#). However, since the 1980s, there has been a debate if gathering expert and data-driven 'objective' information about learners is enough [Tudor \(1997\)](#). Nowadays, there is an increasing focus on looking at learners' personal needs, self-knowledge, awareness of target situations, life goals, and instructional expectations. [Belcher \(2004\)](#). There is also an increasing focus on 'appropriate perspectives on language learning and language skills.' [Far \(2008\)](#). Mike Brunton, in his article, "An Account of ESP – with Possible Future Directions", quotes Richards from his book, *Curriculum Development in Language Teaching*, where he says that:

The emergence of ESP with its emphasis on needs analysis as a starting point in language programme design was an essential factor in developing current approaches to language curriculum development (4).

4.1. NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR CONTENT

Hussein Hassan Ibrahim, in his article, "Needs Analysis as a Prerequisite for Designing an ESP Course for Medical Students", stresses the importance of designing the content for each discipline and writes that due to the recent invading nature of globalisation in the area of ESP programmes, vocational-technical education and human resources development, special attention has been given to need analysis for designing the course content (89-93).

Thus, ESP is about content-based instruction in various fields such as medicine, business, chemistry, information technology, computer science and engineering. There are two main ESP categories: English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP). EOP is concerned with "the preparations for professional occupations that students are likely to enter when they graduate" [Flowerdew and Peacock \(2001\)](#). EAP, in contrast, relates to the study purpose.

It is known that ESP programmes aim to develop linguistic skills, which relate to particular fields of activity. Wright explains that the "nature" of the linguistic items and the "ways" in which they are presented and "how" they are experienced are considered extremely important. He asserts that ESP benefits are stressed in three forms: learning efficiency, learning effectiveness and focused on the learner's need. It is relevant to the learner; it successfully imparts learning, and it is more cost-effective than "General English" (68). Different components are analysed when we do a needs analysis. Several exponents have advocated different aspects that have to come under the needs analysis scanner.

4.2. TEXT-BASED ANALYSIS

Text analysis can give the researcher or facilitator many hints about which text types and which discourse-types are most relevant to give a professional context. It is handy for pedagogic purposes, especially if the authentic texts can be included in the teaching. When teaching English as a second language for professional or vocational purposes, the needs analysis must be exploratory and ensure that multiple sources and viewpoints are considered. There are specific questions that

we need to ask when we do a needs analysis for a specific professional or vocational purpose:

- Which spoken communication situations are demanding in ones' view?
- Where does this communication take place?
- Which people will be involved?
- What kind of texts/genres do that specific professional need?
- Whom are these documents written?
- What is the purpose/aim of such a document?

A text-based needs analysis should have the following objectives:

What skills should it concentrate on to help the professionals communicate well?

Is the foreign language/second language more for oral or written skills?

- What skills would be essential components of oral performance and listening?
- How essential is terminology/ specialist vocabulary in this particular profession?
- How necessary is the perfection of pronunciation in this particular profession?
- Can one think of authentic assignments one would recommend improving the skills one needs as mentioned above?
- What would be the best ways of demonstrating the communication skills of this particular profession?

As a result of the research of competence it is a well-known fact that it includes verbal and non-verbal communication. There is also a need to analyse the situational factors and the communication situations of this particular profession. Therefore, some general communications are the most critical general competencies/skills that these professionals need to have. Can language practice improve some of the general competencies? What can we say about social rank, dress code, body language, politeness practices, admirable qualities of this profession, values highly appreciated, and finally, values not appreciated?

4.3. GENRE ANALYSIS

Christoph A. Hafner and Lindsay Miller, in their introduction to the book *English in the Disciplines: A Multilingual Model for ESP Course Design*, touch upon genre analysis:

The major innovation in ESP is genre analysis, as Swales (1990) pioneered and Bhatia (1993) in particular. Genre analysis focuses attention on the genres of the target community, which can be conceptualised as; staged, goal-oriented, and social processes' [Martin et al. 1987](#)). In addition, this approach considers texts in their socio-cultural context, looking at how the text types of a community response to the rhetorical demands of recurrent communicative situations. (1 – 12).

Helen Basturkmen also reveals the significance of genre analysis in her book, *Ideas and Options in English for Specific Purposes*, and says that:

Genre-based approaches focus learners' attention on text types, or genres, that occur in target discourse communities, that is, the work-or-study-

related groups the learners aim to enter or make progress in due to gains in their English language proficiency. ESP teachers lead learners to analyse sample texts to identify conventional formats and the collective mind-set for communication of the communities they want to work. Research and teaching based on analysis of genres in academic communities are described in Swales (1990) and on analysis genres in professional settings in Bhatia (1993).

In the 1990s, Swales focused on genre analysis. As a result, EOP is likely to offer only those structures and vocabulary relevant to the communicative needs of the occupation. At the same time, English for Work or Workplace has a curriculum based on the discourse analysis of the language used to complete the work tasks and adapt to the workplace culture by emphasising the language of social interactions with workmates.

5. DESIGNING A SPECIFIC COURSE FOR ESP, EAP OR EOP

In her book, *Introducing Course Design in English for Specific Purposes*, Lindsay Woodrow asserts that ESP courses are focused on the needs of the learners and other stakeholders, such as employers and universities. Thus, it can be an educational or occupational focus. Christoph A. Hafner and Lindsay Miller, in their introduction to the book *English in the Disciplines: A Multilingual Model for ESP Course Design*, assert that:

Our approach to course design is a hybrid approach. The approach intersects with and draws on a pedagogy of multiliteracies to address the evolving needs of ESP learners, as they are increasingly required to engage with diverse audiences and through mediated forms of communication' (1-12).

ESP is usually classified into two main branches: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). EOP is again classified by whether the area is professional or vocational. English for legal purposes is professional, whereas English for tour guides is vocational (1-15). As mentioned in the literature review, Halliday et al., in their book, *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*, affirm that language teaching must be based on linguistic theory. Linguistic sciences play a significant role in teaching and learning a language, especially in designing a specific course for ESP. Swales, in his journal article, "Language for Specific Purposes", makes the following statement:

ESP/LSP has a rather peculiar relationship with other branches of applied linguistics. Its closest connection is certainly with discourse analysis and pragmatics (including cross-cultural pragmatics); indeed, in some sense, it can be argued that in many ways, LSP is the prime realisation of applied discourse analysis (61).

In their book, *English for Specific Purposes: A Learner-centred Approach*, Hutchinson and Waters explain that all the decisions regarding ESP courses are supposed to be based on the learners' rationale for learning. Therefore, when we create a curriculum design or syllabus, "the students" target English situations have to be identifiable elements. The process of curriculum design can proceed once the elements have been recognised. Edwards, in his journal article, "Language for Business: Effective Needs Assessment, Syllabus Design and Materials Preparation in a Practical ESP Case Study", writes that:

It is agreed that when designing a curriculum for ESP students in the field of EOP (English for Occupational Purposes) that is learning tasks and

activities have a high surrender value', meaning that the students would be able to immediately use what they learned to perform their jobs more effectively (292).

Conceptualizing content is not a content-free process. When teachers consider students' goals and objectives they need to determine which aspects of ESP learning have to be included, emphasised, integrated, and used as a core of the course to address the students' needs and expectations. There may be different ways of conceptualising the content. For example, teachers can develop basic skills, communicative competence, intercultural competence, and vocabulary awareness.

6. THE NEED FOR A SPECIFIC ESP FOR TOURISM MANAGEMENT COURSES IN KARNATAKA

According to Edwards, when we design a curriculum for ESP courses in the field of ETP (English for Tourism Purposes), learning tasks and activities should have a high surrender value, so that learners will be able to use the learning in their workplaces, to perform their work-related tasks effectively (292). It is essential for those seeking employment in the tourism, hospitality and service industry to stay highly motivated to be accurately fluent in a high level of professional service language. Therefore, they are required to become proficient in English for Tourism Purposes (Cravotta np). Moreover, English for tourism is regarded as business English and incorporates business English and English for academic purposes by bridging workplace communication and classroom use.

7. THE NEED FOR ENGLISH FOR TOURISM

"Communication is an important linkage between consequence and action in tourism management", say Thavorn Thitthongkam and John Walsh, quoting Chen et al. and Donnellon et al., in their journal article, "Roles of Language in Tourism Organisational Management" (184). Communication to and from countless organisations need to use quality and functional language, and it is vital to communicate in meaningful statements. On the other hand, there can be no place for errors. Therefore, one has to aim for high precision at the managerial level. Several vital dimensions have been identified by Thavorn and Walsh that relate to the performance:

- The ability to increase customers' satisfaction
- The ability to enhance and maintain language competency of tourism people
- The ability to motivate international tourists
- The ability to better understanding demand
- The ability in understanding culture and
- To create effective internal and external communication (185).

Lauring, in his article, "Language and Ethnicity in International Management", says that language plays the role of a negotiated source of power. Its role is also described as creating and maintaining social structures and power relations (255-266). Bloch pointed out that language skills are demanded in various occupations within general management, Sales and marketing management, Financial management, Supply and distribution management, and administrative and support management (187).

Multinational corporations have accepted English as their shared corporate language to facilitate communication between headquarters and foreign subsidiaries as they enter new markets (Siemens 16-17). Furthermore, tourism organisational management occurs in English, and tourism organisations assume that employees will communicate in English effectively [Rees and Rees \(1996\)](#). Consequently, English competence is a requirement for reaching the managerial level. Therefore, English for Tourism is analysed as a tool employed to increase the organisation's effectiveness, principally, in organisational communication [Collins \(2003\)](#), [Westwood and Linstead \(2001\)](#).

It is found out that language's role helps to determine how an individual thinks and perceives. Based on this evidence, it is understood that positive organisational management will increase international tourists as long as the language is considered necessary for tourism organisational management. Therefore, it is broadly apparent that English for tourism and hospitality is used for the international tourism and service industry, which is considered under English for Specific Purposes, and its practical application needs to be understood.

Learning styles for tourism, travel, and hospitality is different from other English programs [Barron and Arcadia \(2002\)](#), [Dale and McCarthy \(2006\)](#). According to [Cassidy \(2004\)](#), a learning style integrates people's affective, cognitive, and psychological traits (419-444). On the other hand, Conner, in his article, "Introduction to Learning Styles. Ageless Learner, 1997-2007", believes that learning styles are mainly related to processes, learners' perception, organisation, and present information developed during the past decades (np).

8. CONCLUSION

Characteristically, ESP has functioned to help language learners succeed with language features or develop the competencies needed to function in a discipline, profession, or workplace. However, ESP has unquestionably moved away from trends in general ELT, and it has always retained its emphasis on practical outcomes. Hutchinson and Waters see ESP as an approach than a product. They mean that ESP does not involve a particular kind of language, teaching material or methodology. Instead, they say that ESP is centred on language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities (3). ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students. Most ESP courses accept basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners (5). It is recommended that greater collaboration between education providers' industry and representatives and professional industry bodies is undoubtedly required (Thitthongkam and Walsh 183).

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None .

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None.

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