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# Needs Analysis, Course Design and Evaluation of Business English

**B.A. Essay**

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## Abstract

This essay explores aspects of the English Teaching particularly related to the English for Special Purposes (ESP) starting with the extensive description of favorable factors, which led to gradual rise of the importance of the ESP. Subsequently the study explores its development and gradual shift towards a more practical approach. Furthermore, it discusses the concept the ESP by contrasting it with the General English (GE) teaching applied in most of the educational institutions. Subsequently it investigates the community of practice by clearly reviewing their nature and highlight typical features in order to distinguish a community of practice from alternative communities and groups, which do not belong to the ESP. It reviews the needs analysis, its gradual development, aspects necessary to reconsider before performing it. It further explores all 8 elaborate steps necessary to conduct a proper needs analysis. Eventually focus of the study quickly changes to the syllabus and examines its purpose and perils associated with the high reliance upon it. The study provides overview of three widely used models of teaching, such as language-centered, learning-centered and skills-centere course design. At the same time making the reader aware of characteristics associated with each one of them and ultimately stating researchers personal opinion regarding their usage. Lastly, it discusses role of the teacher in the practice of teaching, by analyzing Dudley-Evans's statement regarding the ESP practitioner necessity to conduct five different roles, such as Teacher, Collaborator, Course Designer and Materials Provider, Researcher, and Evaluator. The study discusses separately each single role and provides suggestions to the potential ESP practitioner in order to increase the efficiency of delivered ESP course. This paper is concluded by summarizing all key notions along with their benefits, limitations and the suggestion for the further study.

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## 1. Introduction

Business conferences all over the world are regularly conducted in English and occasionally this causes a displeasure for anyone whose native language is not English. Comprehending the intention of another speaker is not straightforward at all. The application of English is gradually expanded since the internationalization of the business environment grew. Moreover, the number of global enterprises, multinational companies and mergers is estimated to increase. A multitude of international non-native to non-native conversations are performed daily in a huge number of various environments, such as trade, diplomacy, tourism, journalism, science and technology, politics etc. When individuals are participating in long-term international communications, such as international business negotiations, they establish their own “framework” or “network” (Goffman, 1979). Within such a framework, rules, norms and analytical procedures are constructed, becoming universally distinguished as an approach, unique, or typical to the particular framework. As a result, norms of appropriateness, standards of conversation, awareness of where negotiations stages start and finish, and an understanding of the subsequent negotiating responses are more likely to become arranged by the mediators during the time of regular interactions. This kind of a framework is created and preserved through an array of communication techniques (e-mail, telephone, face-to-face negotiations) which allow for continual interaction, thus, particular standards and techniques are divided by a large number of people, surpassing cultural boundaries. Investigation has determined that 85% of international associations operate by using official English, 85% of the scientific articles in the world are published in English, 80% of electronically gathered data is published in English, 70% of the semantic journals worldwide are written exclusively in English (Crystal, 1997).

In the world of business, individuals who use the English language do not worry about appropriate syntax or grammar as long as they are capable of successfully conveying the information. Occasionally it indicates that by using the simplest and the shortest expressions, individuals are able to communicate without unnecessary obstacles. The role of the Business English (BE) is gradually increasing, thus, for anyone willing to enter such specific market is required to communicate in English using appropriate terminology to decrease the time needed to finish a transaction. In order to fulfill these needs, educational institutions continue to develop a variety of

English for Special Purpose courses.

The main purpose of this paper is form a set of guidelines for any potential ESP practitioner, so he or she will be aware of risks and benefits by designing the ESP course. This paper will investigate the historical background concerning the ESP, as well as its gradual development. Subsequently, the ESP will be directly compared with the GE to look closely at its characteristics. Due to the nature of the business environment and the demand to work in groups, the concept of community of practice will be investiagated. Later on much more focus will put on the needs analysis and how the results acquired from the needs analysis affect the development of the syllabus. Subsequently reader will have a chance to get familiar with different models of the ESP course, as well as its associated advantages and disadvantages. Furthermore, role of the teacher will be discussed, especially in relation to his or her different roles, as well as his or her decreasing significance in the process of teaching. Ultimately paper will be concluded with the appropriate summary, remarks and suggestion for the future investigation.

## **2. Historical Development**

Growing interest in English courses designated for distinct usage allows new concepts of the study of language to gradually flourish and develop into more complex and distinct forms. Generally, the aim of linguistics had been to unravel the rules of English language of its user, but recently we have witnessed a gradual shift from formal components, that constitute the language towards a more practical approach, where language is used merely as a tool in real life communication (Widdowson, 1978). This kind of sensation helped to promote English for Specific Purposes and significantly contributed to its rise. Business English is regarded as an area of ESP, as it shares common features, such as syllabus design, material selection, need of analysis or course design, with other types of languages perceived as ESP, like Scientific English or Technical English. Nevertheless, some linguists claim that Business English shouldn't be treated as any other ESP due to its unique mixture of general content (skill conveying business related information in a more effective manner) and specific content (specific job area) (Ellis & Johnson, 1994).

Most of the major breakthroughs regarding the development of Business English date back to the second half of the twentieth century, when teachers and course

designers started to look at it from a completely different angle. By the 1960s and early 1970s it has been agreed upon that vocabulary should be perceived as a major factor distinguishing Business English from General English. Later on, English-speaking users experienced a shift towards a greater focus on training, which included the capability to speak, listen, read and write more effectively in relation to a business context. The 1970s and 1980s brought different tendencies in both General English and Business English teaching, as emphasis shifted to more thorough analysis of formulaic language and how it would decrease the time needed to share the information in relation to business situations. By the 1980s the expansion of specialist training programs organized by companies gave employees the opportunity to attend various courses to enhance their business related skills, leading to the publication and popularization of books with business content. In the twenty-first century Business English has become even more significant and it is difficult to think of Business English as merely a branch of General English.

Simply looking at the number of graduates with BE background in Europe across the European Union, one third (32.7 %) of all students in post-secondary education were studying social sciences, business or law in 2013 (Statistics Explained, 2016). Nowadays, business English is greatly acknowledged in the community as one of the most prominent fields of study. Educational institutions continue to construct new and more diversified business courses and degrees.

### **3. Basics of English for Special Purpose**

There have been numerous efforts to specify ESP in the sphere of language teaching. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) interpret ESP as "an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to the content and methods are based on learners' reason for learning". It is obvious to presume that ESP targets particular needs to study English and afterwards focuses on the distinct objectives required to achieve proficiency in the language. As a result, ESP attempts to convey knowledge regarding linguistics in relation to the particular context. ESP automatically determines that there are needs exclusive to particular students in respect to the specific business environment. The ESP practitioner is compelled to investigate them and discuss in the classroom. The strength of ESP lies in its ability to emphasize the importance of three features, which are efficiency, effectiveness and speed of learning, which sounds extremely appealing to any potential learner. Continuous usage of ESP programs ensues faster attainment of

linguistics skills and additionally leads to the acquisition of the desired state of knowledge. This is due to the fact, that it follows one specific scheme, where the trainee is not required to learn unnecessary formulas and facts which will not be useful in the future.

ESP allows the speaker to learn English, which will suit their personal needs and be based on authentic target-based situations. ESP creates an opportunity to acquire desired knowledge in a sped up, intensive context (Wright, 1992). Throughout an ESP program the learner is obliged to make the best use of provided learning resources to accelerate their learning efficiency, as learning materials have been scrupulously selected prior to the course by the teacher. All of them carry precise, analyzed linguistic features and expertise. Nevertheless, without the needs analysis the trainer would be powerless to establish explicit needs of his or her pupils. Learning effectiveness is the final step, as after completing the course, the trainee is able to assess the usefulness of the program by using acquired language skills in relation to work-oriented assignments. Directly after comprehending required linguistic items proposed in the ESP syllabus, the learner is able to use proper English in relation to business contexts. Furthermore, trainees are qualified to pursue additional training in English usage to improve their position at work. All features mentioned above lead to increased academic efficiency, as the time needed to obtain primary language skills is reduced to a minimum.

The benefits of ESP can be drawn out much further by comparing them directly with General English model features. ESP courses are meticulously constructed to teach previously specified community of learners and to match particular linguistic needs of the student. A study of General English does not have such requirements as it can begin anywhere, for instance by starting a conversation with native speaker of English at different occasions. In this manner GE teaching can target daily life activities such as buying groceries or ordering drinks in a bar. The ESP is designed to be largely professional-oriented and attempts to focus on terminology used in particular contexts. Furthermore, GE lectures offer a variety of different courses. Students have a chance to master diverse linguistics skills, as GE does not neglect the language at its superficial level, due to this fact it is immensely advantageous and constitutes a bigger part of English lectures. Nevertheless, many trainees have particular learning needs, which are not always satisfied, mainly due to the wide range of materials required by the GE syllabus or lack of time to discuss more thoroughly linguistics items with relation to the

work context. After completing the course students are not fully qualified to meet with the demands of future employers or to perform efficiently in a specific job area.

#### **4. Community of practice**

Communities of practice are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour: a tribe learning to survive, a band of artists seeking new forms of expression, a group of engineers working on similar problems, a clique of pupils defining their identity in the school, a network of surgeons exploring novel techniques, a gathering of first-time managers helping each other cope. In a nutshell: Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. (Wenger, 2007)

Typical features of such communities of practice differ. A number of them might have names, or simply do not. A part of communities of practice can be exceptionally formal as a result of their structure, the rest are greatly flexible and informal.

Nonetheless, representatives are brought together to cooperate in shared practices, furthermore by ‘what they have learned through their mutual engagement in these practices’ (Wenger, 1998). In this regard, a community of practice differs from community of interest as it implicates a mutual practice.

Etienne Wenger (2007) states, that three aspects are critical in order to distinguish a community of practice from alternative communities and groups:

Firstly, the domain, as a community of practice is definitely more complex compared to other social associations. A community of practice requires its own identity characterized by a mutual sphere of interest. Belonging to the community thus results in a allegiance to the domain, and thereupon a collaborative set of skills that separates them from additional people.

Secondly, the community follows their interest within limits of their own domain. Members continually interconnect in the form of shared activities, such as debates, as a result they form strong relationships that allow them to help and learn from each other

Thirdly, there is the practice in terms of which every member of a community works as a practitioner. They gradually establish a common collection of resources,



subsequently used as a tools to address recurrent complications. Efficiency of shared practice rises as members spend more time with each other.

The level of technical knowledge or abilities correlated with performing various assignments are not the most significant factor in a community of practice. Communities flourish around aspects that matter for its members (Wenger, 1998). This statement indicates that arranging them around a specific sphere of interest only magnifies the impression of a member of being a part of shared identity. Numerous sustained interactions and the skills to engage in massive or more elaborate projects bring people together and strengthen trust and relationships.

Being alive as human beings means that we are constantly engaged in the pursuit of enterprises of all kinds, from ensuring our physical survival to seeking the most lofty pleasures. As we define these enterprises and engage in their pursuit together, we interact with each other and with the world and we tune our relations with each other and with the world accordingly. In other words, we learn. (Wenger, 1998)

Communities of practice might be perceived as a self-organizing structure and bear multitude of the advantages and features of associational life. Proper functionality of a community of practice is dependent on the development of suitable a shared collection of beliefs and obligations. At the same time, members are compelled to acquire an efficient set of resources, such as vocabulary, text or habitual activities to undertake various tasks. Strictly speaking, the practice of approaching and performing assignments should be shared to considerable extent among representatives of given community of practice. The role of the ESP practitioner is to introduce potential members into a particular community of practice. At the same time, the teacher along with other representatives have to examine how to raise the level of participation of every person in the community.

Acknowledging that communities of practice affect performance is important in part because of their potential to overcome the inherent problems of a slow-moving traditional hierarchy in a fast-moving virtual economy. Communities also appear to be an effective way for organizations to handle unstructured problems and to share knowledge outside of the traditional structural boundaries. In addition, the community concept is acknowledged to be a means of developing and maintaining long term organizational memory. These outcomes are an

important, yet often unrecognized, supplement to the value that individual members of a community obtain in the form of enriched learning and higher motivation to apply what they learn.  
(Lesser and Storck, 2001)

## 5. Needs Analysis

A needs analysis represents a form of assessing particular linguistic needs of the trainee or group of them. It has not been considered as a research area until the early 1970s, as its importance grew gradually along with expansion of the communicative approach. Shortly after, needs analysis theory experienced a series of continuous developments, mainly due to the work performed by Richterich (1972) and Munby (1978). Supporters of the communicative approach quarreled over the choice of the didactical evidence, as it should have been dependent on systematic investigation of the trainees' demand from the target language.

All linguists acknowledge that it is fundamental to determine wants, lacks and needs of the learner. "Needs are those skills which a learner perceives as being relevant to him; wants are a subset of needs, those which a learner puts at a high priority given the time available; and the lack is the difference a learner perceives between his present competence in a particular skill and the competence he wishes to achieve" (Dickinson, 1991). Some researchers saw a demand to create a clear distinction between the concepts of needs analysis and needs assessment - which are regularly used stating that "assessment involves obtaining data, whereas analysis involves assigning value to that data" (Graves, 1996). A needs analysis requires "compiling information both on the individual or groups of individuals who are to learn a language and on the use which they are expected to make of it when they have learned it" (Richterich, 1983).

Anyone willing to establish a successful ESP course is at some point compelled to make use of a needs analysis. It is extremely important to understand why the student is inclined to learn a new language and in what business context he will be using it, as goals of the course change accordingly to the needs of the learner.

### 5.1. Using Needs Analysis to form a Business English Syllabus

A needs analysis must be efficient, safe and practical. It can be performed through three different acts: planning, collecting data and putting information into the analysis. The ESP practitioner, before conducting the needs analysis, must devise a

valid plan of action. Before undertaking any serious course of action, the researcher is obliged to answer questions regarding the type of information needed, the purpose of the data and how to attain it in the first place. After the course designer answers the questions mentioned, above he or she should construct research questions in relation to those questions. After crafting a fitting plan and proper questions, he or she can collect the data. Analysts changing the BE syllabus layout by usage of the need analysis theory should keep in mind the need to study the precise requirements of the school, society, and its learners.

## **5.2. Analysis of the Current Position**

The three primary sources for obtaining data are language-teaching organizations, user-establishments, and the student. Throughout the procedure of information attainment, the researcher should compile a mass of information including the students' training environment, their perception of learning and teaching process, favored approaches and systems, their needs and the availability of materials. Students willing to study Business English at the university are obliged to engage in a vast number of mandatory lectures, which aren't equally satisfying or appealing. A comparatively enormous number of qualified lecturers have different opinions regarding the content and techniques involving in the teaching of Business English. Both perspectives of the trainers and pupils should be closely examined and evaluated. The internet clearly facilitates the accessibility of academic sources, so students will be to find appropriate materials. Nonetheless makers of the program can often be traced back to BE teachers, as they can easily gain access to the data gathered by the educational institution or collect it directly from the learner. Performing an analysis of the present situation, the ESP practitioner is required to collect data concerning students' personal needs, learning motivation and language skill. Completion of the present situation investigation can be profitable to both teachers and students, as it builds a solid foundation for the ESP syllabus, which will continue to affect the teaching and learning process.

## **5.3. Analysis of the Target Needs**

Target needs are directly connected with the needs represented in the target context. Put simply, target needs analysis concentrates on acquiring data from the target situation and simultaneously evaluating the trainees' position regarding this situation.

Questions mostly involve the idea of why the language is used, the form of the language being practiced, the role of the student and the date and location in which language is used. Learners of Business English are constantly motivated to continue studying the language, as in the future it is highly probable that he or she work in a business-associated establishment. It is desirable to the program maker to investigate the set of skills demanded by most potential employers of his students. The language required to operate efficiently in the business environment is quite distinct, as actions such as talking on the telephone or, writing an e-mail can be quite troublesome to a person without adequate skills and experience. Throughout the duration of the lecture, the teacher is required to highlight adequate language features. Trainers conducting analysis of the target needs regularly rely on aids in the form of interviews, questionnaires or case studies to closely examine target need. If required, he or she is free to use different methods to attain detailed data. Worth examination is the fact that after establishing an appropriate framework for the syllabus, the trainer is highly recommended to check if curriculum promotes the ideology represented by the foreign business institutions for whom the Business English learner hopes to work. If not, he or she should reconsider the content of the syllabus and seek to improve it.

#### **5.4.The Analysis of Localized Components**

The overall aim of Business English schooling is to cherish multidisciplinary skills. Researchers continue to observe the trend that development of various talents is determined by their regional-economic localization, as different provinces, districts or schools are more likely to emphasize different aspects of Business English. Subsequently it greatly influences the development of training objectives, teaching models and the content of the course or guiding principles for university administration. It is implied that needs analysis should be set up not solely on account of learning and target needs. For instance, students seeking courses such as, Port and Shipping Management or International Transportation & Logistics Management will need to enroll to the maritime university. Such universities take an advantage of their location, resources and subsequently are able to fulfill students' demand in this particular field of study. These specialized programs might not be very popular compared to other business related fields of study, but maritime universities will not lack students because other universities, due to their limitations are not able to construct identical courses.

## 5.5.Procedures of Needs Analysis

When performing a need analysis, the ESP practitioner can pick out numerous strategies, but needs to keep in mind that every procedure affects the type of the information obtained (Richards, 2002). Schutz and Derwing (1981), introduced eight detailed stages to perform a needs assessment. These stages are: to determine goals, to set the limits for target population, to delimit the framework of examination, to choose a data collecting device, to gather evidence, to evaluate data, to decipher outcome, and to criticize the research.

- 1) Determining if the goal is directly related to establishing the purpose of the study specifically in order to determine appropriate outcome.
- 2) By setting the limits on the target population, the researcher is able to specify the target population of the investigation in order to carry out more pragmatic decisions regarding costs, place and length of the project.
- 3) Delimiting the framework of examination involves outlining the limitations of the research mainly to increase its potency.
- 4) Choosing the data collecting device includes picking out proper information gathering instruments. Deciding the data collecting device relies upon the environment, range and goals of the research.
- 5) Gathering evidence consists of compiling the necessary information via the data collecting device that will be used in this process. Distinctive kinds of data collecting device, like distributing surveys, performing personal interviews, or conducting observations depend upon a different type of approach and subsequently changing the upcoming stages.
- 6) Evaluating the data, the analyst can use numerous aids in the form of computer-assisted investigation methods or simply based on his own observations and calculations. Applying computer-assisted investigation methods to interpret the data is more practical as it significantly decreases time and the amount of work, in contrast with observations and personal calculation that demand lengthened contact with the target contexts and qualitative analysis of the outcome.
- 7) By deciphering the outcome, the analyst interprets the data developed from the technique of information analysis. Afterwards, the analyst seeks to deduce suggestions regarding the learners' language requirements by using the product of data investigation.

8) Lastly, the criticism of the research portion involves writing down recommendations for additional studies and clarifying the drawbacks of the research.

Clearly this is not the only available method to conduct an appropriate needs analysis. Nevertheless, it has been applied numerous times and the ESP practitioner willing to use it will not be compelled to deal with additional errors arising from using a different method. Ultimately a large number of errors may force the BE trainer to conduct the needs analysis additional times.

## **6. Meaning behind the term 'Syllabus'**

A syllabus can be interpreted as “a document which says what will be learnt” (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Nevertheless, this kind of explanation seems simple and many linguists would rather accept the definition presented by Hyland, “a plan of what is to be achieved through teaching and learning, identifying what will be worked on in reaching the overall course aims and providing a basis for evaluating students’ progress” (Hyland, 2006). On the other hand, this specific attitude drastically shifts power over the course to the syllabus. In the case of General English, it does not seem to be a problem as an overwhelming number of linguistics items requires a larger amount of the control, so the lecturer will not focus solely on one aspect of speech, neglecting other features. The ESP trainer cannot pursue the same path as his General English colleague. Referring strictly to the ESP syllabus, the opinion claimed by Parkes and Harris seems more appropriate, "The syllabus is, thus, both a professional document and a personal document, one that reflects the instructor’s feelings, attitudes, and beliefs about the subject matter, teaching, learning, and students, as well as setting out the 'nuts and bolts' of the course. When so constructed, the syllabus can serve as a guide to the instructor as much as a guide to the class" (Parkes & Harris, 2002).

### **6.1.Purpose of a syllabus**

A curriculum, as stated by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), is not required to represent a central figure in the teaching process. Nonetheless it might serve as an aid to satisfy a collection of needs. To use a curriculum in the most effective manner, the user needs to be mindful of various actions a syllabus is able to perform in the complex learning and teaching mechanism. Hutchinson and Waters continue to imply countless reasons for application of a syllabus by trainers. They focus on the complexity of the

language and how improbable it is to master a new language in merely one sitting. To decrease the time and effort, language should be divided into more convenient entities. Furthermore, a well-established curriculum allows a student to raise his confidence to accomplish course goals. The pupil is presented with a precise plan of action of how he should operate to increase his learning efficiency and where it will lead him. He is merely obliged to follow it. At the same time, the trainer and trainee are immediately able to assess if the time invested to organize the program could be used more efficiently on different activities and is not merely a waste of time.

The lecturer who is writing a curriculum is able to personalize to reflect his personal view on the nature of the language and learning process. Through the course of writing a curriculum, the trainer sets up principles for choice of materials, features in the exercises to focus on and supplementary texts students should use. Kausar (2009) identifies several features that any syllabus should contain. Primarily an explicit structure of how knowledge is delivered and a basic set of skills required to accomplish the general objectives of the program. Secondly, consist and clear directions given to the lecturer and students of how to work in the lecture room. Thirdly, a viable basis for assessing a trainee's development in a specific field of the language. Fourthly, a reliable foundation to evaluate correctness of the method of teaching comparing it directly with the general goals of the course and students specific needs.

## **6.2. Perils concerning the Syllabus**

The arguments delivered above state the importance of a syllabus as a document in the procedure of learning and teaching. Nevertheless, despite undisputed versatile functions, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) state a number perils associated with high reliance on the syllabus. Primarily, the ESP practitioner needs to know why he or she choose to create a curriculum and clearly determine its purpose in the teaching process. The syllabus is only a guideline leading into a particular state of knowledge as ESP students are recommended to interact with the teacher to let him know their personal objectives and goals. The syllabus is not able to define intangible aspects, which play a decisive role in a process of knowledge acquisition: motivation, personal traits, mental state or personal beliefs. Finally, curriculums cannot estimate personal distinctness in the form of time or increased attention of the lecturer needed for the trainee to master linguistic features of the language in a business context.

The BE teaching is not so flexible when comparing it with the GE teaching, as it

requires the specific environment and the teacher with linguistic knowledge in relation to the business content. Nevertheless, the ESP is mainly focused on learners needs and in order to achieve them the ESP practitioner is allowed to operate with much more freedom. The teacher blindly following the syllabus is not able to prepare himself or herself for every possible issue arising from the personal distinctness of every single student.

## **7. Course Design**

In course design you need to distinguish between relevant and useless information. This is exactly the role of course designer. Teachers are able to pick up data in its raw state and effectively interpret it to construct a unique sequence of learning experience, where the student is gradually introduced to new concepts and ideas to lead them towards the goals established beforehand by the teacher. General English course design differs from Business English course design, as GE puts more emphasis on courses in relation to literature, linguistics and culture. Students, who are more interested in Business English need to be aware that greater focus is put on the value of language in business communication. Hutchinson and Waters were able to distinguish three types of ESP course design, labeling them as skills-centered course design, language-centered course design and learning-centered course design (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987)

### **7.1. Language-centered course design**

Language-centered course design is the most recognizable form of course design, due to its simplicity. Its purpose is to connect, in the most straightforward manner, the discussed topic or target situation, which is a part of the content of the ESP course, with real life situations. Simply speaking, all course outcomes are limited to the particular target situation and desire to identify its features using the required linguistic tools, so the learner is not considered a part of the system. The course designer's role is limited to identifying and interpreting target situations. Eventually the teacher is recommended to create a syllabus, which consists of materials able to demonstrate syllabus features.

The syllabus completely ignores students' state of knowledge and their individual skills. Every student is treated in the same manner and is expected to acquire information at the same pace as his or her peers. Finally, the instructor is



able to establish evaluation procedures to investigate expertise in syllabus components. Lacking flexibility, error tolerance and proper feedback, this method will always struggle to counter errors arising from the influence of users not used to such a linear system. Language-centered course design is praised for its logical approach, but at the same time criticized for inflexibility, as it views learning as a logical and uncomplicated process, which effectively prevents it from gaining more supporters (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

## **7.2. Learning-centered course design**

Learning-centered course design is characterized by its emphasis on the quality of information delivered directly to the students. Through the process of composing a learning-centered course the teacher is forced to make decisions regarding the structure of the course, which consists of a number of readings, assignments or examinations. All of them play a crucial role in the procedure of acquisition of knowledge and at the same time accomplishing goals set up by the course. Nevertheless, after the instructor has established all the necessary course requirements, the balance of control gradually shifts toward the students. The teacher is expected to take on the role of mentor or coach, rather than the central figure in the process of the transmission of knowledge. Students should be aware from the very beginning that responsibility for learning should not be placed merely on the shoulders of the teacher.

According to William G. Perry (1970), people who become familiar with the college system of education, have a tendency to behave according to the “dualistic learning” system. Dualists learners presume that any given lecturer is a specialist in his or her field of expertise and simultaneously convey information using most the appropriate model of teaching. This method compels the learner to act more independently, to establish his or her own personal goals and to keep his or her motivation at the highest possible level. Therefore, the instructor is not solely responsible when the learner fails to follow the course requirements or complete it having attained desired skills. Teachers developing this type of courses, need to keep in mind potential conflict resulting from the learner's need for control; and should not let students completely take over the lecture, as certain learning outcomes might not be met. The point of balance should be set up based on the maturity and skills of the students. Initially the instructor will exert control over the

course, as the majority of the students would not be able to establish proper metacognitive skills. At the same time, this type of model encourages the promotion of long-term learning, which initially could be confusing, as most teachers at lower education levels rely heavily on the memorization of given content.

Originally pupils were able to transfer their thoughts onto a piece of paper in the form of an exam to achieve a satisfying grade but were not able to preserve this knowledge for a long period of time. Learning-centered course design tries to eliminate this issue by the introduction of activities in which the lecturer introduces real life situations to students. They are expected to apply gained knowledge to find the most effective solution. Subsequently the teacher is expected to provide feedback to evaluate the quality of the work and to propose further actions that will lead to improvement of their skills, understanding of the topic and finally achieving goals stated in the syllabus (King, 1993). At the same time, the instructor is able to assess the efficiency of the chosen learning activities and adjust them to give better results and to further benefit learners. Throughout the term the teacher, by using tests and other evaluation methods, is able to rank the students based on their gained knowledge in the form of grades. A learning-centered course generally abstains from being referred to as a client-centered course, as most of client-centered courses are required to follow the specific motto, “the customer is always right.”

Such catchphrases are widely used in the retail market to gain more clients and to simultaneously allow them to reshape the image and policies portrayed by the company. In this specific case customers are represented by the students, who instead of retail products are given knowledge offered in the most convenient form. Every learner is highly encouraged to influence the course design chosen by an instructor, his choices should not be limited merely to his shallow personal needs or “customer satisfaction” demands, such as simply better grades. Instead, the student should co-operate with the teacher throughout the length of the course to mutually influence each other’s process of thinking and reshaping the course design, so that by the end of the course both sides will be equally satisfied with the outcome. The lecturer is able to complete all goals stated from the outset in the syllabus and the student finishes the course with the required state of knowledge and set of skills expected of him or her by future employers to further pursue career in their desired field.

### 7.3. Skills-centered course design

The skills-centered approach is based on two significant principles: theoretical and pragmatic. The elemental theoretical assumption specifies that any given language is underpinned by a specific set of skills and procedures, which are adopted by the learner to generate or understand dialogue. A skills-centered model avoids looking at surface performance data (General Objectives), an approach favored by language-centered course design, and instead examines more closely the competence (Specific Objectives) that highlights performance. As a result, all learning goals are presented in terms of both competence and performance (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

The pragmatic foundation for the skills-centered approach comes from differentiation distinguished by Widdowson (1981) amidst process-oriented lectures and goal-oriented programs. Holmes (1982) identifies that in most cases the main concern regarding the ESP would be the time needed to accomplish the learning objectives and the students' experience in this specific field of study. Both of these factors act as a restraint to any potential learner, as students from the very beginning are not able to achieve the aims of the program prepared by the ESP practitioner, as they do not have enough time to acquire the necessary linguistic skills. Holmes tried to explain such inconsistency originating from deciphering "needs" by looking only at target situation requirements. On the assumption that the ESP lecture is constructed in terms of its goals, it might result in a considerable number of students failing such courses. After all, ESP exists as a procedure allowing people to master their linguistic talents for special purposes, therefore, neglecting the specific needs and semantic proficiency of the learner could never take place.

The process-oriented approach stays away from this issue by discarding difference between the ESP session and the target situation. The ESP course is not recognized as a self-sustaining entity from which students would efficiently use English in the required target situation, as according to Holmes not every learner will be able to obtain such proficiency. Alternatively, the ESP program and the target situation are perceived as a sequence of regularly refined degrees of expertise with no clearly defined points of triumph or failure. As a result, learners are not obliged to fulfill all course goals composed by the ESP practitioner. The process-oriented model makes students more aware of their own strengths, weaknesses, and potential and at the same time motivates them to continue improving their semantic proficiency, even after the end of the course. Nonetheless the skills-centered model still perceives students as users of

language instead of learners of language and is more concerned with procedures of language use rather than language learning.

#### **7.4. Recommended course design**

As Business English is considered a part of ESP, it does not face obstacles in embracing course designs used exclusively for ESP. Looking back at all analyzed course designs a conclusion can draw that learning-centered course design would be the most suitable aid in BE teaching process. This is due to the fact that people interested in expanding their knowledge in the area of Business English are aware from the very beginning what to expect from the course and what kind of skills they need to acquire to be more effective in the type of job they wish to pursue. It is crucial to take into account an employer's requirements and needs so that in the future students will be prepared to satisfy them.

### **8. Importance of the Role of the Teacher**

'What is the difference between ESP and the 'General English' approach?' Hutchinson and Waters (1987) answer this interesting question quite simply, "In theory nothing, in practice a great deal." Going back to 1987 it was troublesome to reject such a statement. Through this period lecturer in General English courses were aware of the specific needs displayed by the learner of English, but would not perform a needs analysis to establish the required measures to accomplish them. Today teachers' pay much more attention to these obligations and do not neglect the importance of the needs analysis. Furthermore, the selection of textbooks improved vastly, giving teachers access to various academic sources with the intention of efficiently corresponding to the objectives of the student. In fact, this example displays how ESP started to affect the General English teaching process. A great number of General English lecturers might be depicted using ESP concepts, relying heavily on needs analysis to form a syllabus or applying knowledge of using English in real time conversations. Nowadays linguistic professionals are not able to assess a distinct line between English for Special Purposes and General English. Continuous development of ESP teaching would not be possible without the vast number of roles an ESP teacher is required to perform.

Dudley-Evans defines the genuine ESP practitioner as a person who needs to conduct five different roles (Swales, 1988). These are Teacher, Collaborator, Course Designer and Materials Provider, Researcher, and Evaluator. Starting out with the first

function, the teacher's role is identical to the role performed by the General English lecturer. The remaining four functions illustrate the contrast between the General English teacher and the ESP Practitioner. For the sake of matching the particular demands of the learners and understanding the tasks that the students will need to carry out in their job environment, the ESP teacher needs to act as a collaborator and must cooperate closely with subject specialists. The benefits of such a close partnership were investigated and published by Leslie Owen Wilson (2004). The cooperation between the ESP trainer and the field specialist does not need to end prematurely, as they both can continue to collaborate to give lectures; the nature of this relationship was examined by Johns (1988). As a result of promoting self-training courses, ESP practitioners are able to acquire an exceptional understanding of the learners' demands and propose more pragmatic solutions and to achieve them by way of establishing more favorable learning, counseling and teaching activities.

Furthermore, by continuously applying favored methods used by ESP trainees, they can propose new ESP concepts, applicable for the alternative ESP trainer, engaged in related environments. Mostly at the beginning, the positions held by ESP trainers are more eminent than GE teachers to provide a convenient perspective for assessing shared misunderstanding amidst semantic and scholastic features. Strictly speaking, ESP practitioners serve as a mentor for the learner, concentrating on the learner's language weaknesses during the review sessions, allowing learner to devise the questions to direct his or her own development. In this manner, the learner will become more autonomous and more easily recognize his or her intellectual demands and semantic strengths and weaknesses; resulting in the diminishing role of the ESP trainer. Usually the ESP practitioners have ability to establish close partnership with field specialist as they are accustomed to their distinct teaching environment. Such partnerships allow ESP trainers to specify explicit semantic needs of the learner mandatory for the EPS practitioner to achieve success. As a matter of fact, constructing such a solid bond between the ESP trainer and specialist eventually leads towards considerable enhancement in both semantic and content spheres (Jackson, 2004).

Both the ESP trainer and the GE lecturer are generally obliged to construct seminars and supply students with suitable materials. This causes controversy as many linguists continue to argue about how precise those materials are required to be to satisfy growing demands of ESP learners (Materials Provider and Course Designer). The acquisition of new materials might appear to the ESP practitioner as a particularly

challenging action, especially as the teacher is compelled to approach the content from various perspectives (Bhatia, 2008). Many genres at surface levels can be perceived as a type of texts, with sub-genres sharing certain features. For instance, enquiry letters are widely used as a common method to find out if the firm has any available or upcoming job openings. Most of letters of enquiry on the surface level look alike, but its content or sub-genre is defined by the position individual is trying to apply to. The teacher is required to cover the material at the surface level, but he needs to evaluate how many sub-genres he or she is willing to investigate. Furthermore, these genres are extremely susceptible to changes, as they continue to develop over the time and depend on other the materials they interact with. The business environment is characterized by dynamic communication methods, for example, an e-mail can lead to telephone conversation and subsequently to a conference. The ESP practitioner needs to consider all these eventualities, but definitely will not have enough time to teach his or her students about all possible sub-genres, thus, appropriate selection of materials is crucial for the ESP program to be successful.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) promote materials that are able to cover a vast scope of areas, maintaining that semantic designs, objectives, discourse formats, skills, and blueprints for numerous topics are indistinguishable. Subsequent investigations have proved Hutchinson's approach to be not completely accurate. Hansen (1988), for instance, provides clear distinctions between sociology handbooks and anthropology, and Anthony (1998) presents exclusive factors of writing in the area of engineering. Regrettably, excluding materials composed for notable fields such as business studies or computer sciences, many ESP practitioners are more eager to use works from numerous fields. Subsequently they make a great deal of the texts unnecessary and possibly even puzzling to the trainee as to what is relevant in the target area. As a result, a vast number of ESP trainers are left with no choice but to compose new materials. At this point the ESP practitioner is required to act as a 'researcher' to not rely entirely on already established texts.

Overall, the practice of teaching ESP is limited to detecting the evidence in semantic analysis in the target subject-specialty (Basturkmen, 2006). Sierocka (2008) states that the ESP teacher should first be able to investigate their own objectives "in what they really want to achieve" from the perspective of the learner. Therefore, anterior to constructing lecturers or providing textbooks, they are obliged to conduct proper research in order to examine closely the genre of documents, terminology, and

skills necessary to successfully operate in the specific environment (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). For example, the ESP practitioner would repeatedly attend other lectures, interview the administration personnel or explore the strategies that the learner requires in the process of knowledge acquisition (Johns and Price-Machado, 2001).

All these roles mentioned by Dudley-Evans are pointless without a deep understanding of the topic by the lecturer and his eagerness to satisfy the curiosity of the students often showcased by demanding questions regarding vocabulary, structures and usage in everyday life situations. In the case of the BE teacher, throughout a lecture he is required to act as coordinator, participant, designer or source of knowledge. Nevertheless, to truly be successful and aspire to be more than a capable BE teacher this might be unsatisfactory. Some linguists, such as John Swales, will not tolerate putting ESP teachers in the same basket as General English teachers. In order to emphasize distinctions between them Swales adopted usage of the phrase 'ESP practitioner' instead of 'ESP teacher' to avoid confusion. In the case of the Business English term 'BE trainer' is more common.

This state of being is mostly related to the business background of many BE teachers. At some point in their lives, they had a chance to work in business companies, which certainly acts in their favor, as this kind of knowledge can gain the respect of students, who will be more eager to learn about material, if the lecturer will connect the terms with his own real life experience by describing procedures of organization, marketing strategies or process of launching a new product. In an effort to gain the attention of the listeners, the BE trainer needs to start working from the very first lecture. Most first lectures start with the BE teacher introducing himself and subsequently showing his CV. This type of action might appear as quite simple, but its importance is extremely significant. In this type of work opinions regarding the BE trainer are mostly established during the first lecture. Starting off on the wrong foot can cause dire consequences and quickly discourage potential listeners, which inevitably leads to lack of respect and failure to become a successful BE trainer. Regardless of their background or qualifications, the BE trainer should be perceived as a professional when it comes to the investigation of problems faced by usage of the language by its specific users.

The BE trainer should be able to convey knowledge to his learners in a most straightforward and accessible manner. Every teacher might have his own unique style of speaking in front of audience. Some are able to discuss the topics from syllabus in

more caring manner to create more friendly environment. Other teachers could be more strict and precise to not to stray from the subject. Both approaches can be equally successful and does not really relate to the subject taught by the teacher. It's a matter of personal choice, which will better reflect his personality, because as Parker Palmer (1998) wrote, “[Good] teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher.” At the same time given the popularity of various public speaking courses, the teacher is expected to be a proficient public speaker with little or no room for improvement in this area.

## **9. Evaluation of Business English skills**

The practice of evaluation is no anomaly in terms of being an unconscious act in our common daily routine. In the process of language training, evaluation is crucial as it acts in the form of feedback for students and it serves as an evaluation of the seminar (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). Nunan and Lumb (1996) appeal that, “Monitoring and evaluation are essential parts of everyday life. We monitor ourselves and others as we carry out the many tasks of everyday life- shopping, riding the subway to work, looking after our kids in the park, watching television and so on.”. From a pedagogical point of view, evaluation and testing should not be viewed as the same concepts, as testing is merely a part of evaluation, and evaluation is directly connected to the learning environment (Rea-Dickins and Germaine, 1992). Evaluation should be executed by the ESP or GE trainers and not by any other experts in this field of expertise, as teachers are aware of attributes assigned to each individual student. Additionally, the trainer recognizes complications in the classroom environment and can successfully apply an appropriate type of evaluation according to the required situation. The trainer is regularly involved in various forms of evaluation.

Nonetheless ESP is restricted to only two forms of evaluation (Bojovic, 2006). The first is students’ evaluation. In any given language program teacher is compelled to determine student’s efficiency at strategic point, for instance, at start of the course or by its end. The ESP practitioner mostly uses placement, achievement and proficiency tests. Placement tests determine, if the pupils have fundamental vocabulary and set of skills in order to efficiently operate in the classroom. It is conducted before the ESP program begins. As a result, learners can be placed in the ESP course or in a level most suited to their requirements and needs. The placement test serves as a diagnostic tool to illustrate aspects that learners should work on to reach expected proficiency levels. Nonetheless



competent placement tests, should not focus only on negative factors. Achievement test reflects the nature and the content of the course. Tests can be conducted at any given time throughout the duration of the course. The teacher is able to assess what student has learnt over specific period of time. In order for achievement test to meaningful, it should not be biased and the ESP practitioner should test aspects of the language previously covered in the lecture. Finally, proficiency tests are carried out to estimate if learner will be able to carry out language assignments demanded from them. Students' language skills will be measured according to certain criteria essential to achieve proficiency in specific task. As a result, proficiency tests are classified as a criterion-referenced examination.

The second form is assessing the program and supplementary material in order to estimate their usefulness with relation to the learners needs. There are many ways to evaluate the effectiveness of an ESP course, ranging from test results to questionnaires. Students are not always the best avenue for acquiring unbiased feedback, as many might fear to express their true feelings regarding the program or criticize the authority. It is difficult to assess frequency of performing a course evaluation, as conducting it too often or too rarely can be equally devastating. Every single ESP practitioner should asses how often a course evaluation should be conducted based on his or her own needs. In order to allow ESP community to grow, it is fundamental that ESP users comprehend what ESP truly stands for, and acknowledge the numerous functions that ESP practitioners are required to perform in order to guarantee its progress. These actions will ensure the attraction of new potential learners and will not aggravate the position ESP holds in English teaching today.

## 10. Conclusion

ESP emerged as an answer to the social demand associated with flourishing business environment. The demand for qualified workers have immensely increased. In order to fulfill the need for it, educational institutions introduced a number of courses with the primary objective to educate people willing to work in a business environment. The teacher inclined to design to the ESP course is compelled to begin from analyzing learners' particular needs and demands. Based on the learners' needs and their forthcoming use of the language, aims and objectives of the course can be established, a method which includes application of particular linguistic functions, awareness of specialist phrasing and the skills required for exchanging of information at eventual workplace. The ESP practitioners should be aware that the ESP is not merely a teaching lists of specialized terminology. Assumptions and inaccurate beliefs regarding use of the language in particular ESP situations are presumably an effect of faulty needs analysis. The efficient needs analysis is required to involve observations of the linguistic use in relation to the particular context. Results of the needs analysis should be interpreted and based on their outcome an appropriate syllabus should be developed. Nevertheless, the BE trainer should not rely on it too much, as may cause more trouble than benefits.

ESP had been improved for numerous years, so the ESP practitioner can use already existing teaching models to reduce the time and effort, but every kind of teaching models has its weaknesses, which should be familiar to the teacher willing to use it. In order to increase their efficiency of the course, the ESP practitioner must be able to conduct different roles, such as acquiring suitable and genuine materials. At the same time, the ESP practitioner is compelled to act as the course designer in order to determine how language is practiced in real world situations and to convey this knowledge to his or her learners.

The genre analysis and knowledge regarding discourse is significant in BE design. The course designer should be prepared to establish programs that teach genuine language from multitude of various fields, supported by the detailed needs analysis, suitable materials and techniques. From the beginning, the ESP practitioner is required to acknowledge the fact that a great deal of the language that learners require will not be contained or reflected in any ordinary course books. Therefore, the BE teacher should be inclined and capable to assemble his or her own material. Typically, to formulate all

of this, the teacher is required to exploit the professional development opportunities in the ESP community, in addition to depending on the proficiency of more qualified associates. The ESP teaching model is exhausting and sometimes tedious as the time needed for every group of students to achieve proficiency can vary. ESP is certainly a challenge for who teaches it, additionally it presents limitless opportunities for professional development purposes. Furthermore, evaluation and assessment should also be integrated into the design procedure to guarantee that required objectives and goals are accomplished. The ESP program is basically established by the demands of the learner and business community. The success of the courses is determined, by teacher's ability to fulfill those particular communicative goals. This study forms a set of guidelines for anyone interested in developing ESP course. Nevertheless, in order to acquire more efficient results, each individual ESP course should be examined using an appropriate tools to gather the quantitative data to assess particular needs of learners and subsequently to fulfill them.

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