



THE IMPORTANCE OF NEEDS ANALYSIS IN MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT IN THE ESP COURSE

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Abstract: The systematic and continuing procedure of gathering information on learners' preferences and needs, evaluating the information, and subsequently implementing curriculum judgments relying on the perception in favour of satisfying the requirements is known as "needs analysis." Prior to developing English for Specific Purposes teaching materials, it is critical to conduct a need analysis, which is especially important for ESP instructors. As stated, the bulk of specialists challenged whether ESP practitioners must likewise meet learners' on-going perceptual needs, such as self-awareness, consciousness about goal setting, personal goals, and educational expectations.

Key words: materials development, non-linguistic specialty, needs analysis, objectives.

ESP lessons are intended to help individuals use a language to suit specific needs instead of ameliorating their general language competence. ESP is meant to suit students' language skills and subject demands. Language acquisition and target goals are important indicators for controlling learner requirements. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), "Tell me what you need English for, and I will tell you what English you need." However, according to Brown (1995), the systematic collection and assessment of all personal and factual statistics is critical to the design and promotion of appropriate learning objectives that meet the expectations of learners in language learning under particular facilities that influence learning and instructional environments. In fact, learners should be completely conscious of the components, like as lexical, functional, and structural, which are frequently used in specific circumstances.

In terms of the needs analysis process, Long (2005) divided the process into two types: inductive and deductive. This survey needs analysis method process is both deductive and inductive because it mostly includes criterion-referenced tests, a questionnaire (which is related to the former one), and non-participant observations of students' texts as well as informal, unstructured interviews with the current ESP teacher of the students that are being observed.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), there is no conventional methodology to ESP. If the instructor is unfamiliar with such specialist areas, he or she will not be able to generate his or her own material for this subject. As a result, every strategy may be employed in classroom depending on the needs of the students. As claimed by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), taking into account learners' interests and needs allows for fruitful investigation. Consequently, various methodologies were adopted to assess students' goals and needs. The tools used to collect data include tests, questionnaires, and interviews in a form of final discussion of gathered findings with participants. The survey provides investigators with a wealth of data on learners and a range of related issues. The sociolinguistic model, which

particularly emphasizes course material and content selection, is at the heart of ESP program requirements.

Considering the importance of the needs investigation, the researcher conducted needs analysis with 49 Natural science students at Namangan State University at the beginning of the course in order to make sure their specific *"needs and wants"* and organize ESP course accordingly. To identify their exact language proficiency level, the students took a Placement test and it was based on assessing four sub-skills of the learners and according to the results; twenty-nine students were at the pre-intermediate level while the rest were at the elementary level. However, most students found listening and speaking more challenging in the test since they mainly focused on learning reading and grammar to pass national exams in English at school. Their first language is Uzbek and medium of instruction at the university is also the same language. Through the survey, the researcher could obtain the data on the individual differences such as learning styles, strategies, motivation and personalities of the students. Beyond this, there were questions about why they wanted to learn English and the students were asked to answer them in detail. The findings revealed that these students needed to learn English for the reasons that:

- They will have to take a standardized test such as IELTS, TOEFL or MULTI-LEVEL in order to study Master's degree at national or international universities.
- They will have to work with literature in English to develop professionally in their specialized field.
- They want to do research at international scale so that they will have to write research papers in English.
- They want to attend international conferences in their specialized field in the future.
- They want to travel to foreign countries in the future.
- They want to use English to read books and watch movies in English.

Materials Developments

Brown (2014) notes that second language acquisition is a long and complex process. The language learner is highly likely to be affected by the target language, a new culture and a new way of thinking. There is a diversity of considerations for successful language learning and teaching. One of them is materials development which has a great role in the organization of a language course. Richards (2006) points out effective instructional materials in language teaching are shaped by such factors as teacher, learner and contextual variables. This means that learners' learning style preferences, their language learning needs, interests and motivation have to be taken into account while selecting or designing language teaching materials. It is supposed that the best solution to deal with teaching students with different individual differences would be to become familiar with their specific needs through talking them about their interests, holding questionnaires and observing them at the beginning of the course. The findings from the needs analysis can be invaluable for teacher and help them design, select and adapt teaching materials for their learners in the classroom. Using a wide range of activities and tasks throughout the lesson allows the teacher to address diverse needs and preferences of the learners. This is also supported by Tomlinson (2003) noting that materials must be compatible not only with needs and wants of the students, but also with the principles of language learning. For this reason, while developing the activities for the lesson plans I have followed six principles suggested by Nunan (1988) so that:



- The activities have been clearly linked to the curriculum they serve.
- They have been authentic in terms of text and task
- They stimulate interaction.
- They encourage learners to develop learning skills, and skills in learning.
- They encourage learners to apply their developing to the world outside the classroom.

Materials Adaptation

The Internet can be a good provider for language teaching sources, yet making materials ideal for the learners requires materials developers to select and adapt in order to satisfy the needs of the target students. Darian (2001) cites that materials adaptation is a half art and a half science. Firstly, it is recommended that ESP course teacher should collect relevant materials from various sources such as course books and internet websites and then adapt them to suit the needs of the target learners. While adapting them, they should use several materials adapting techniques, for example, adding, deleting, simplifying, reordering and replacing materials recommended by Mc Donough & Shaw (1993). This helps them to develop meaningful activities throughout the lessons.

Technology Integration

As is well known, young people are considered to be members of the "net generation" because technology has already ingrained itself into their daily life (Van der Beemt, Akkerman & Simons, 2010). Numerous academics have studied the use of technology in ELT, and it has been found to be helpful in addressing learner requirements and producing good language instruction (Arno-Macia, 2012). Given this, the instructional lesson materials recommended incorporate technology advancements like Web 2.0 apps, educational platforms, and other technologies. For instance, project work and other course tasks mandate internet research for the target students in order to increase learner autonomy, while Canva and Coggle are suggested for creating presentations. The implementation of technology into ELT makes lesson tasks interactive, authentic and student-centered. By this way language teaching and learning can be much more effective in the classroom.

Teaching Methods

In language courses, teaching methods should be considered just as vital as instructional resources. The primary goal of current language teaching is to develop communicative competence of the students. The term *communicative competence* was coined by Hymes (1972) and Chiesa et al. (2019) defined it as the ability of a language learner about what, where and how to speak appropriately from the perspectives of culture, tradition and shared rules. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) maintains the development of communicative competence of language learners. The lesson plans presented above are based on implementing CLT as an effective method in the classroom. Brown (2007) notes that within CLT approach, interaction can be the heart of communication. This method makes the lessons student-centered and interactive and enables the language instructor to differentiate instructions to suit different proficiency levels and learning styles. Another similar approach used in the lessons is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) through which the students relate their language learning to real world life.

Furthermore, based on the peculiarities of CLT, the researcher included the activities in which language sub-skills are taught in an integrated way. As current language instruction uses post-modern teaching techniques, it is recommended that students integrate their sub-

skills in the different task performances just as they do in the real world. It is unnatural to educate speaking, writing, listening, and reading separately.

Thus, it is believed that CLT can match with the needs of learners and helps language teachers to develop meaningful and interactive lessons for the target students.

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