# A NEEDS ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES (ESP) COURSE FOR ADOPTION OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

Issarapu Amrutha Rao, Research Scholar, Department of English, Monad University, Hapur, U.P.

Dr. Ajit Kumar, Associate Professor, Supervisor, Department of English, Monad University, Hapur, U.P.

**ABSTRACT:**

English language teaching has become very important because of the global status of English and people all over the world are learning this language (Mackey, 2020). Communicative Language Teaching Methodology, being a modern and effective method of language teaching, has been implemented in many contexts of EFL/ESL teaching including ESP classes (Richards, 2021). This implementation has not been without problems in many Asian countries as CLT has been in clash with local cultures of teach (Ali Khan, 2022). Iran is still following a traditional approach to English language teaching. This study was an effort to discover the learning needs of Iranian university students to assess the implementation of CLT in ESP context. To fulfill such an aim, two different questionnaires were used as instruments of data collection. The students' questionnaire was arranged in multi-option question pattern and where the assessment of attitude and beliefs was required a limited number of scaled questions were included to achieve this end. The teachers' questionnaire had only scaled questions.90 first-year students and 30 university professors of educational administration of different universities answered the questions. The results of the data analysis revealed that students' learning needs and styles supported the adoption of Communicative Language Teaching and Method. Professors' attitude towards CLT was also investigated and the presence of a positive attitude was established. Subsequently, certain factors which do not allow the practice of CLT in ESP classes are identified and recommendations are made which can help in initiating a shift towards CLT.

## I INTRODUCTION

This study of students' learning needs in Iranian state universities is probably the first of its kind as despite the best efforts and use of all means of search no published literature related to this specific context could be discovered. The aim of the study was to establish the presence of a favorable environment for modernizing English language teaching in these universities by implementing CLT as a method of language teaching. This modernization is important to make ELT more effective in different fields of study to make students competent in English language. This is because of the role of which English plays in material achievements of an individual. A person with good English language skills can hope for a better start in practical life

English as an International Language Communication is the basic attribute of human life [11] and language is the main tool of human communication (Clark et. al., 1994). Initially this communication was within societies and communities at local level but it took a new dimension as people from various societies, communities and nations started interacting with each other. The period following the 1950s saw a tremendous increase in the need for communication among the people of the world in various spheres of international contact like politics, academics, economics, technology and culture. The world has started becoming a global village. This gave birth to the need and pressure of adopting a common lingua franca for this global village to facilitate communication and make it more practical for the people of various linguistic backgrounds [3]. This phenomenon led to the emergence of an international language. English was accorded this privilege and it became the language of international communicate-on or international language. Whatever may be the political or economic reasons and factors responsible for entrenching English in this position, the reality is that these reasons and factors can not diminish the importance of English and its pervasive use in international affairs. Presently, English is the language of international economic system. It is a language which has secured a place for

itself alongside local languages in multilingual communities and is also learnt by all classes of the society. Its acquisition can guarantee the availability of opportunities to employment, travelling, higher education, and even better life. These are some of the characteristics which according to Brutt-Griffler (cited in [6]) make an international language.

Following are some of the evidence which can be presented to support the position of English as a global language and a language of wider communication. The researcher states that over 85 per cent international organizations in the field of international relations make some official use of English. In Asia and the Pacific 90 percent of the organizations use only English for their official proceedings (ibid). Thus English is playing a vital role in political, social, educational, and economic concerns of the nations. English is the language of popular culture in the form of being the language of English films and music which entertain people all over the globe (ibid). The travel and tourism industries also rely on English as a common language of communication. The knowledge of English is also essential to

access printed and electronic information and higher education as higher education is dependent on English in many countries. Thus "knowledge of English is necessary for accessing many discourses at a global level from international relations to popular culture to academia [6]. A huge industry of language teaching exists in many countries of the world. This includes private language teaching institutions as well as private and state schools (Mackay, 2002:14 [6]).The number of the people who have some familiarity with English is growing and macro-acquisition of the language is also increasing (MacKay, 2002 [6]).Macro-acquisition means acquisition of the language by various levels of society both at individual level and in groups. Individually more and more people are learning it, and it is also finding a place in the academic curricula in various countries. The phenomenon can be explained by citing [3] who states that English is now taught over 100 countries and is emerging as the chief foreign language being learnt and displacing other language in the process

This approach has a focus on the view of language as a structured system of grammatical patterns, with a trend for formal and bookish language, with the aim to have students producing formally correct sentences and in terms of skills, an emphasis on reading and writing (Nunan 1988). Whereas there has been a surge of research and development in ELT world in the areas of language acquisition and teaching methodology, it seems that Iran could not benefit from these developments and modernization grammar translation method is still being adopted by most language programmers and language teaching programs have aspects which are not relevant to the needs of learners/students. There is a requirement, emerging as a consequence of international and national role of English and the developments in English language teaching methodology, to make ELT more relevant and meaningful for Iranian students by understanding their needs. Thus ELT in Iran should be more directed towards satisfying the present and future needs of learners and in this manner they can be well equipped for the future challenges of life where role of English is involved.

Needs Analysis Needs analysis (NA) is an information gathering process. Its emergence in language planning can be traced back to the 1970s and its widespread proliferation in the domain is attributable to its adoption by The Council of Europe's modern language project [7]. Opines that the development of a perception of need within communicative language teaching (CLT) in the 1970s had a widespread influence on needs analysis work. NA is considered as a basic principal of ESP and most of the information on NA initially came from ESP [13]. This is probably due to the fact that an NA approach is more useful when learners' needs are linked to a 'discrete set of communicative situations' [12].All these uses of NA refer to the fact that NA can be used for a range of purposes. It can be helpful in determining whether a program should be implemented by finding out if it matches the goals and objectives of the learners for learning a language and at the same time used as part of a program can help in improving various components of the program and making these more oriented to the needs of the learners. NA can also help in

evaluating an existing program and if found deficient can help in establishing the need for introducing a change and what kind of change may appropriately match the needs of the learners and simultaneously be acceptable to teachers. This is the type of utilization of NA which can help in determining whether a positive attitude towards implementation of CLT exists among teachers and learners and whether CLT is more attuned to the kind of existing learning needs. Needs analysis can be limited to gathering information about the attitudes, beliefs and opinion of the learners and teachers and concurrently a more comprehensive NA can be conducted to gather information about all contextual factors.

## II METHODOLOGY

The aim of this NA is also to establish the need of a change in the way learners experience the learning process and the proposed change aims at introducing a modern approach, which is CLT, as an alternate to traditional approach which is currently in practice. Correspondingly, the questions in the students' questionnaire had choices ranging from elements of the traditional approach to the elements of the modern approach. The intention was to explore their choices between the elements of modern approach and traditional approach related to the areas of role relationship, learning preferences, skills, pattern of interaction and activities [1].The questionnaire for the teachers aimed at investigating the attitudes, perception, and beliefs of the teachers about the elements of modern approach and the prevailing traditional approach. The purpose was to establish the ownership and acceptance of CLT, as in the case of any ELT innovation the successful adoption, apart from other factors, requires the support of teachers and it is difficult for people to accept something they do not feel involved in.

The analysis of responses is organized area-wise related to areas of present and future domains of language use, their attitude towards the place and role of English in universities, learning preferences, classroom interaction and learning activities.

Students Situation
Focusing on one area, Discussion and Debate, students are required to take

four semesters of Discussion and Debate courses, one per semester in set groups of students (A Class, B Class, etc.) When a student has satisfactorily completed the four required courses, the student can then elect to take a fifth or even sixth course of study in Discussion and Debate. The course is mandatory, but it is elective in the sense that the student can choose when to include it in his or her schedule. A suggested timeline of courses, is available online.2 Course content can vary from teacher to teacher. Some teachers choose to have students engage in mock debates, while others prefer to have students study historically significant debates and discuss the outcomes and effects on society. Each course consists of 14-15 weeks of instruction, and each class period is 90 minutes long. The physical layout of the classrooms is also varied. The majority of the classrooms consist of long tables which can seat three students. The desks all face a podium from which the teacher can lecture. Some rooms are equipped with overhead computer projectors, VCRs, DVDs, and other technological equipment. If a classroom does not contain these resources, the teacher can request them

for the room. If a teacher chooses to have mock debates, most rooms can be rearranged so that students face each other. The faculty is comprised of part-time teachers as well as full-time teachers, some native speakers and non-native speakers. This being said, the range of materials being used, and the teacher's goals can vary from course to course. However, all teachers wish to impart to students the strengthened ability to converse in English as well as discuss or debate their opinions upon completion of the course.

EGP and ESP English for Specific purposes can be simply described as the opposite of English for General purposes. English for General purposes is the language that is used every day for ordinary things in a variety of common situations, therefore English for Specific purposes is language used to discuss specialized fields of knowledge. (Bowker) In any ESP classroom, the reason the students are studying English is clear, and it is aligned with their future goals. It can be assumed that many if not all of the students enrolled in the aforementioned discussion and debate class do not, or will not go on to

become professional debaters in English debates. What is important to note is that the skills taught in these classes should be applicable to any situation in which the student will use English. The idea of turn taking, building opinions, making points and counterpoints against an opponent, are all useful in English conversation, but the true purpose, the specific purpose, that these students have for learning discussion and debate skills is not clearly evident. However, general skills are not part of a specific purpose. One of the benefits of ESP teaching over EGP is that if a student has a desired outcome or use for the English he or she is learning, that student is often highly motivated. They want to become proficient to achieve their accomplishments. Stevens claims that one rationale for ESP is that "it is relevant to the learner." (Dudley-Evans & St. John) Sometimes, EGP students may lack the focus their ESP counterparts have e. From this observation, it seemed plausible to utilize the ESP teaching methods, to allow students to have a defined use for their English. In turn intrinsically motivating them to improve their

English abilities, and create skills they could later use in life.

Need Analysis The needs analysis for this course was conducted in a slightly unorthodox manner. Needs analysis is the corner stone of ESP and leads to a very focused course. (Dudley-Evans & St. John) The goals of the discussion and debate course are to teach the students the skills needed for both discussion and debate. A main component of both debate and discussion is expressing ones opinions. The second year Japanese University students were at times painfully shy and hesitant to express their opinions. While the reason could be cultural or social, what was more important was to find a safe non-threatening for the students to express their opinions. In time, they could build their confidence, and perhaps be more direct in sharing their opinions. To begin, email seemed the most beneficial and convenient means for the students. "It [E-mail correspondence] involves students into the learning process where the dominating factors are interactivity, student centered learning, critical thinking." (Kavaliauskiene and Vaicuniene 2005) This scaffolded

procedure for the discussion allowed students to formulate their opinions, compose them, express them to the instructor and ultimately discuss their opinions in following classes. Having chosen the activity, the next step was to determine what exactly the students would need from instruction. A needs analysis was created by assigning a question that would help shape the course for the duration of the semester. Students were asked what topics they had previously debated or discussed during their first year classes, and to decide what topics they would like to debate during the first and possibly second semesters.

### III Implementation

After looking at E-mail as a genre through an ESP lens, the next step was to build lessons and materials via ESP that would match the students ability level, teach them the conventions of email, and help correct existing mistakes. These sub-goals would then lead to students writing concise, coherent emails that express their ideas. As stated earlier, the Discussion and Debate class only meets 15 times a semester, so any time designated to this activity must be

highly productive. This constraint is not unusual in ESP teaching. Stevens also suggests that ESP "is more cost effective than 'General English'." ESP often deals with fields such science, business, or medicine and is often under extreme pressure to complete research or publications in English very quickly. A workshop, a three-day course, or a weekly seminar is often the timeframe when dealing with ESP.

First, materials were gathered for the students. Very few e-mail textbooks exist, and an even smaller number of EFL e-mail textbooks exist. Many EFL schools and institutions rely on a textbook as the sole syllabus … [this] is often adequate for many general English courses where a suitable textbook exists. (Cowling) EFL E-mail is not in that group. Students were required to send the assignment via email. In the event a student had difficulty operating a computer, computer lab assistance was available to students anytime they used one of the school's many computer labs. The instructor then gathered approximately 20 emails and built a mini-corpus for the students. The emails were from both native and non-native

speakers. Also included were several blank emails, a sheet labeling the parts of an email, a checklist to follow for email completion, and finally, copies of the students' sample emails.

## IV CONCLUSION

Overall, the activity and its results were very successful. In only a very few cases, the students reverted back to errors they had made prior to instruction. An additional unforeseen problem was the use of cellular telephones. Some students who lack steady internet access via a designated computer chose to send their assignments via cellular phones. Originally, it was thought that any submission from any source would be preferred to the student not completing the assignment, but in actuality, the limitation of a cellular phone versus a computer greatly interfered with the messages. The students who chose to send assignments via cellular phone tended to have the most mistakes or difficulties with formatting. In the future, it may be beneficial to not accept submission from cellular phones. Additionally, a supplementary activity may be to have students choose something of personal interest, sports

team, musician, company, television program, actor/actress and send email in English to the person or organization. While every student may not receive a personal response, this extension activity will hopefully be highly intrinsically motivating to the students. Starting in 2008, the School of Contemporary International Studies curriculum has changed and the discussion and debate class has been absorbed into other classes. While debate topics may not be included in the upcoming courses, students will continue to need email skills to interact with academic faculty and perhaps internationally as well. To conclude the students' emails did become easier to understand, and lacked major flaws. In this sense the intended goal was reached. While no student's email was perfect, the vast majority improved, and this aided classroom discussion. ESP was a useful tool for instructing students how to write emails.

## V REFERENCE

1. Rosa, W. Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. In A New Era in Global Health: Nursing and the United Nations 2030

Agenda for Sustainable Development; Springer Publishing: New York, NY, USA, 2017; Available online: https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4 (accessed on 17 June 2021).

2. Ibnian, S.S.K. Writing Difficulties Encountered by Jordanian EFL Learners. Asian J. Humanit. Soc. Stud. 2017, 5, 2321–2799.

3. Muhamad, N.; Rahmat, H. Investigating Challenges for Learning English through Songs. Eur. J. Engl. Lang. Teach. 2015, 6, 2321–2799.

4. Misbah, N.H.; Mohamad, M.; Yunus, M.M.; Ya'acob, A. Identifying the Factors Contributing to Students' Difficulties in the English Language Learning. Creat. Educ. 2017, 8, 1999–2008. [CrossRef]

5. Nikolaeva, S.; Synekop, O. Social Aspect of Student's Language Learning Style in Differentiated ESP Instruction. Univers. J. Educ. Res. 2020, 8, 4224–4233. [CrossRef]

6. Rajprasit, K.; Pratoomrat, P.; Wang, T. Perceptions and problems of english language and communication abilities: A final check on Thai engineering undergraduates. Engl. Lang. Teach. 2015, 8, 111–120. [CrossRef]

7. Hutchinson, T.; Waters, A. English for Specific Purposes: A Learning-Centred Approach; Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 1987.

8. Dudley-Evans, T.; John, M.-J.S. Developments in English for Specific Purposes: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach (Cambridge Language Teaching Library); Cambridge University Press: New York, NY, USA, 1998.

9. Otto, P. Choosing specialized vocabulary to teach with data-driven learning: An example from civil engineering. Engl. Specif. Purp. 2021, 61, 32–46. [CrossRef]

10. Rafiq, K.R.M.; Hashim, H.; Yunus, M.M. MOOC for Training: How Far It Benefits Employees? J. Phys. Conf. Ser. 2019, 1424, 1–5. [CrossRef]

11. Carver, D. Some propositions about ESP. ESP J. 1983, 2, 131–137. [CrossRef]

12. Elaish, M.M.; Shuib, L.; Ghani, N.A.; Yadegaridehkordi, E.; Alaa, M. Mobile Learning for English Language Acquisition: Taxonomy, Challenges, and Recommendations. IEEE Access 2017, 5, 19033–19047. [CrossRef]

13. Selvaraj, M.; Aziz, A.A. Systematic Review: Approaches in Teaching

Writing Skill in ESL Classrooms. Int. J. Acad. Res. Progress. Educ. Dev. 2019, 8, 450–473. [CrossRef]

14. Lim, T.M.; Yunus, M.M. Teachers' Perception towards the Use of Quizizz in the Teaching and Learning of English: A Systematic Review. Sustainability 2021, 13, 6436. [CrossRef]