Designing an English for Specific Course for Teachers Training College Students

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Abstract: *This paper attempted by measuring and designing the course of English for Specific Purposes especially for the teachers training college students. English for Specific Purposes surveys the development and classification of ESP areas, The basic principles and techniques in ESP design were covering the Syllabus, Materials and Methodology of assessment. ESP depends to the learners needs. ESP can be classified into the two parts, Such as: EAP (English for Academic Purpose) and EOP (English for Occupational Purpose). In this study,Tthis research is focused on the ESP which is referring to the EAP. The study of ESP for this case is based on the learners' needs. The researcher was given some questionnaires to the learners that will be the next students in ESP class. Then, the researcher was taken the data by collecting the data. Afterwards, the researcher was analyzed the data by taking the percentage of the research. Last, the researcher was designed the course design, syllabus and lesson plan of teaching.*
Keywords: *ESP teacher training, ESP teacher competence, students' needs, need nnalysis*

I. INTRODUCTION

English language is deemed significantly important in almost every area of discipline especially in this globalization era where communications among individuals all over the world are borderless and through a variety of channels. With the globalization of trade and economy and the continuing increase of international communication in various fields, the demand for English for Specific Purposes is expanding, especially in countries where English is taught as a foreign language (Gao, 2007). Dominant areas in ESP are now business English, English for academic purposes (EAP) and course design issues need to take into account the target learning needs of ESP students.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987),ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learners' reasons for learning. Thus, as an approach to effective course design for ESP learners, the course needs to be evaluated from time to time to determine if the set goals have been achieved. Taking a similar stance, Strevens (1968) has been widely quoted as stating that ESP instruction is derived to meet learners' need.

According to Lwai et al. (1999), the term 'needs analysis' generally refers to the activities that are involved in collecting information that will serve as the basis for developing a curriculum that will meet the needs of a particular group of students. Mehdi (2008) conducted a study on 'introduction to Needs Analysis' and made the assertion that the role of needs analysis in any ESP course is indisputable. Arguably, such an orientation in ESP contexts is seen as the logical

first step in course design as it provides validity and relevancy for all subsequent course design activities. Tajino et al. (2005) in their study on meaningful collaboration in EAP course design quoted Brindley (1989) saying that a good starting point for designing an EAP course is an understanding of students' needs.

There are certain matters to be considered before designing an ESP course. When designing an ESP course, the primary issue is the analysis of learners' specific needs. Other issues addressed include: determination of realistic goals and objectives, integration of grammatical functions and acquisition skills, and assessment and evaluation. Although ESP contexts view these issues from their own perspectives, the proposed framework for ESP course development is argued as being of benefit to teachers who may encounter problems in ESP course design (Gao, 2007).

ESP is taught in many universities in the world. Many teachers of English have ESP sections. It has to pay attention to ESP course design. ESP teaching has much in common with English as a foreign or second language and English for academic purposes (EAP). Quickly developing business English can be considered as part of a larger concept of English for Specific Purposes.As English continues to dominate in business, technology, media, education, medicine and research for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is rapidly growing to fulfill people with an instrumental purpose (Tsao, 2008; Xu, 2008).

ESP (English for Specific Purposes) has been referred to as "applied ELT" as the content and aims of any course are determined by the needs of a specific group of learners. ESP is often divided into EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and EOP (English for Occupational Purposes). Further sub-divisions of EOP are sometimes made into business English, Professional English (e.g. English for doctors, lawyers) and vocational English (e.g. English for tourism, nursing, aviation, and bricklaying).

According to Dudley-Evans (2001) the absolute characteristics of ESP namely: 1. ESP is designed to meet the specific needs of the learners, 2. ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the specialism it serves, 3. It is centered not only on the language (grammar, lexis and register) but also the skills, discourses and genres appropriate to those activities. The learners focused on the English language skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. In addition, training enhances confidence in teachers or workers to learn an important skill as *Impact Measurement Centre* points out that "English as Foreign Language training program can change a school or company's culture for the better and it can show how much is the improvement after training" (Centre, 2005).

EAP (English for Academic Purposes) refers to any English teaching that relates to academic study needs (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998; Robinson, 1991; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987: 2). ESP students are usually adults who already have some acquaintance with English and are learning the language in order to communicate a set of professional skills and to perform particular job-related functions. An ESP program is therefore built on an assessment of purposes and needs and the functions for which English is required.

Language curriculum development often starts with determining how syllabus design can address the specific needs and wants of learners. The study responded to the need for up-to-date descriptions of students' language needs and the provision of English programs that were relevant to the students' academic study and future careers. The study was designed to identify the language needs of undergraduates and to inform the syllabus rationalization and curriculum renewal of the department's English programs.

Traditionally ESP courses were typically designed for intermediate or advanced adult learners. Nowadays many students can start to learn academic or vocational English at an earlier age and at a lower level of proficiency. However, the course for Teacher training college students is not appropriate to the characteristics of the Dudley-Evans. EAP is for the University students while EOP is for the employment. In this research, a teacher has to design the material based on the student's need in English for Academic Purpose namely for the teachers training college students. Furthermore,the teacher should apply it in the classroom demonstration. The learners as the audiences, they were asked to fill the questionnaires based on their needs in learning ESP class.

In this research, the problem should be stated clearly and specifically, namely "How the English for Specific Course is designed for the teachers' training college students in Nommensen HKBP University based on the Dudley-Evans's characteristics?".Referring to the problem, the purpose of this research is to design the English for Specific Course for the teachers training college students in HKBP NommensenUniversity.This research took some questionnaires to the students before designing the course of English for Specific Purposes subject. The researcher distributed some questionnaires answered by the students.

This research is focused on the student's needs in English for Specific Course especially for the teachers training college students. The researcher took 50 students as the recipients which contains of the 5th (fifth semester) that will be for the next students in ESP class. The researcher hopesthe result of this research can be shared to somebody that needs this course based on the student's needs in order to get the purpose of the study.

II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1 Parameters of ESP Course Design

According to Dudley Evans and St. John (1998: 145-154), there are a number of parameters which need to be investigated in making decisions about course design. The questions listed below by them should be investigated by course designers before making on designing an ESP course.
1. Should the course be intensive or extensive?
2. Should the role of the teacher be that of the provider of knowledge and activities or as a facilitator of activities arising from learners' expressed wants?
3. Should the course be pre-study or pre-experience or run parallel with work?
4. Should the material be common-core or specific to learners' study or work?
5. Should the course designed be worked out by the language teacher after consultation with the learners and the institution, or should it be subject to a process of negotiation with the learners?

A comprehensive English language needs analysis is definitely needed in order to design an effective ESP course for teachers training college students. Fig. 1 shows the conceptual framework of this study and the identification of English language needs relies on Hutchinson & Waters' needs analysis model (1987), whereas aspects of designing an ESP course were adapted from Dudley-Evan & St. John (1998).

2.2 Absolute and Variable Characteristics of ESP

Strevens (1988) formulates a definition of ESP, which makes a distinction between four absolute characteristics and two variable characteristics.

The absolute characteristics are that ESP consists of English language teaching, which is:
1. Designed to meet specified needs of the learners;
2. Related in content (that is in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations and activities;
3. Centred on language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics and so on, and analysis of the discourse;
4. In contrast with 'General English'.

The variable characteristics are that ESP:
1. May be restricted as to the learning skills to be learned (for example reading only);
2. May not be taught according to any pre-ordained methodology.

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) provide their definition of ESP. They also use absolute and variable characteristics of ESP as Strevens (1988) centers on defining ESP (Dudley-Evans and St John (1998).

The absolute characteristics:
1. ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learner;
2. ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the disciplines it serves;
3. ESP is centred on the language (grammar, lexis, and register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to those activities.

The variable characteristics:
1. ESP may be related to or designed for specificdisciplines;
2. ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of 'General English';
3. ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be used for learners at secondary school level;
4. ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students. Most ESP courses assume basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners.
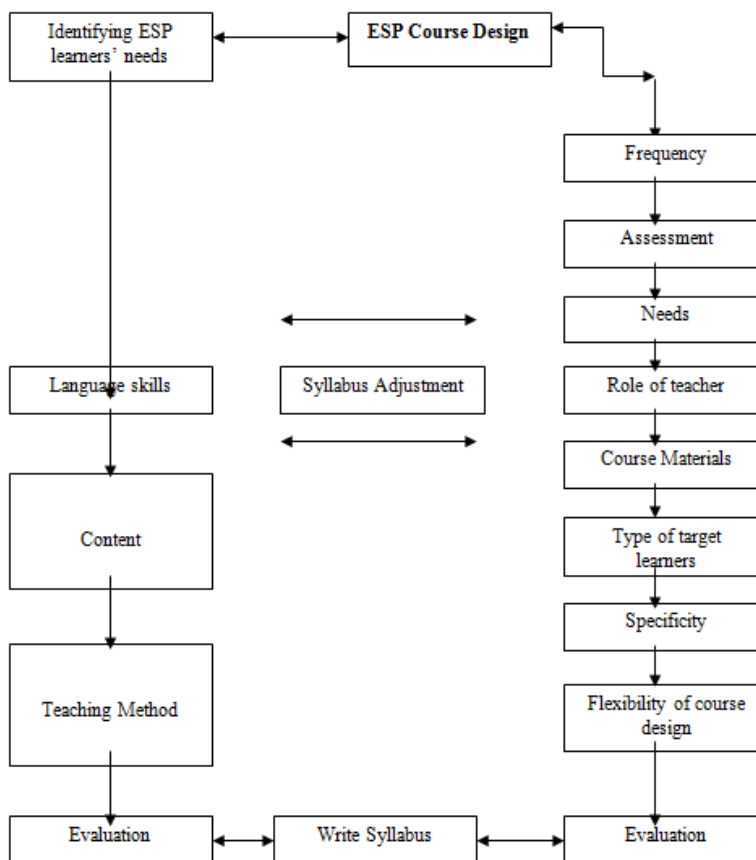
Adapted from Hutchinson & Waters (1987) & Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998)

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Source of the Data

The source of data for this study is the questionnaires that were distributed to the learners who take ESP subject on English Department of HKBP Nommensen University Medan. The researcher was designed the questionnaires to the students based on the students' needs. Then, the researcher was designed the ESP course design for the teachers training college students.

3.2 Data Collecting and Processing

The data will be collected through designing the questionnaires. After collecting the data based on their needs, the researcher was designed the syllabus for their materials. The research for this study took some of the students in HKBP Nommensen University that weretaking English Department. The researcher was designed the course design based on their needs. The researcher was implemented qualitative research method for this study. The researcher was took 50 participants of the students that contains of the 5th (fifthsemester) students. This research is

taken for the students that will be for the next students in ESP class. The researcher was able to evaluate the English course as a whole based on their perceptions and provides some suggestions for the improvement of the course.

The next step was collected the questionnaires and analyzed the students' needs in learning ESP subject in their college. The researcher was took the percentage of them by choosing their needs on the importance of English skills in teachers training college students, The importance of English language for students' on future career and Analysis of students' overall perceptions about the current English course.

3.3 Technique of Analyzing the Data

In analyzing the data, the researcher was designed the questionnaires to some of the students in HKBP Nommensen University. Furthermore, the researcher was collected the data and analyzed their needs in learning ESP subject. The next steps, the researcher was took the percentage based on the result of analysis. After taking the percentage of this research, the researcher was designed the syllabus to the students that will take ESP class.

3.4 Validity

A test is valid if it was measured accurately what it was intended to measure. Validity is a degree to which a test measured what it was supposed to measure, or can be used successfully for the purposes for which it was intended. In addition, in qualitative research was the process of collecting the data from several sources. It was took the data from more than one sources (e.g. observations and documents).

IV. RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

Based on the information collected from the respondents, the result was analyzed by the researcher. Table 1 below shows students' perceptions on the importance of four languages skills:

Table 1. Analysis of the importance of English language skills for the teachers training college students

Subsections of the items	Listening Freq %		Reading Freq %		Speaking Freq %		Writing Freq %	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Not important at all	1	2	0	0	0	0	2	4
Of some importance	2	4	4	8	2	4	6	12
Important	30	60	16	32	14	28	20	40
Very Important	17	34	30	60	34	68	22	44

It was revealed that speaking and reading skills were deemed the most important skills according to these students as these two skills collected the highest percentages (68% and 60% respectively). This indicates that the teachers training college students have to active in the learning process in speaking and reading skill and present their work in the class. This could be the reason they rated these skills as such. Table 2 below shows how students responded when asked which language skills were important for their future careers:

Table 2. Analysis of the Importance of English Language for students' future career

Subsections of the items	Listening Freq %		Reading Freq %		Speaking Freq %		Writing Freq %	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Not important at all	6	12	5	10	0	0	2	4
Of some importance	4	8	5	10	5	10	8	16
Important	16	32	2	4	25	50	6	12
Very Important	24	48	38	76	20	40	34	68

The students again rated the reading (76%) and writing (68%) skills as the two most important skills for their prospective jobs. Such perceptions indicate that students feel prospective employers would place greater emphasis on employees' reading and writing skill when assigning tasks or activities at the workplace. Table 3 below shows the findings of the study in students' overall perceptions about the current English course

Table 3. Analysis of Students' Overall Perceptions about the Current English Course

Students' Perceptions	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
I am satisfied with the current Englishcourse	31	62	10	20	4	8	5	10
I am ready to use English in my future job	34	68	15	30	1	2	0	0

Students' Perceptions	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Freq	**%**	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**
The current English course is interesting	30	60	14	28	2	4	4	8
The oral presentation is related to our area of specialization	20	40	18	36	6	12	6	12
The essay writing is related to our area of specialization	16	32	15	30	14	28	5	10
The listening skill activities are related to our area of specialization	12	24	13	26	15	30	10	20
Productive skills (speaking and writing) are stressed in this course	22	44	25	50	2	4	1	2
Receptive skills (listening and reading) are stressed in this course	3	6	5	10	10	20	32	64

From Table 3, it can be observed that only 31 students (62%) chose the option 'strongly agree' by expressing their satisfaction with the current English course. It may very well be that these students are those who have lesser or no problems in accomplishing tasks given to them in this course as they have good proficiency of English language. Not with standing this fact, 10 students (20%) selected the option 'agree' to indicate that they were satisfied with the English course. Only (18%) of students stated that they were not satisfied with the current English course.

On the other hand, majority of the students were quite confident that they were ready to use English in their future job whereby 34 students (68%) chose the option 'strongly agree' and 15 students (30%) chose the option 'agree' on this matter. However, 2% of the students felt that

the course did not prepare them for using English in their workplace. A majority of the students (88%) stated that their current English course was interesting for them. However, as this item sought to find out their perception in their course. However, 12% (6 students) stated that they did not find the English course interesting.

The result shows that the students wanted the course to be focused more on productive skills (such as oral presentation) as well as essaywriting tasks that more useful in their specialization. In relation to essay speaking and writing activities, 47 students (94%) agreed that the topics of these activities were stressed in this course. However, 3 students (6%) of the students were not productive in their area specialization. On the other hand, for listening and reading 42 students (84%) were disagreed on this statement that receptive skills were stressed.

V. CONCLUSION

The results of this needs' analysis study indicated that a new ESP course focusing on speaking and writing skills should be developed at this college.Furthermore, Not only writing and presentation but also selecting texts for them to read and analyze are needed. If they want to be English teachers, knowing how to read in English is important. Thus, reading is to be focus here. The ESP course should include workplace-based oral presentation (i.e. education, teaching techniques), specialized listening and reading on the course materials and topics relevant to students' area specializations. The goal of developing an ESP course for teachers training college students would have to take into account the principal findings of this comprehensive needs analysis study. A newly designed ESP course would enable the teachers training college students to learn relevant workplace-specific language context that would serve to prepare them well for their future workplace in their areas of specializations (i.e. teaching students). ESP course will help the English teachers to emphasize learning activities targeting the ESP students' broad workplace needs (indicating a broad focus) or specific target communication needs (skills-focused).

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