

A Needs Analysis of Communicative Needs of Engineering Students in AJ&K

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Abstract

The current study falls in the realm of English for specific purpose (which according to Hutchinson and Water, 1987 is an approach of teaching and learning of English based on learners need) because it was thought that Engineering English is also a part of ESP like other subjects such as technology of scientific English. There is a continuous advancement in the field of Engineering which has created the needs for students and professionals to master the Engineering language not only for academic purpose but also for practical purposes because in this world of industrialization and modernization of the students to cope up with the current requirements of the society.

Introduction

The current study falls in the realm of English for specific purpose. ESP is an education of English related approach towards scientific, technological, economical and academic realms [2]. The role of English has been acknowledged to a great degree in the world. In general, it was thought that the teaching and learning of foreign language are mostly related to English, which is considered as the international language. English language has become the flesh of communication around the globe. Now-a-days English language got much importance due to its internationality and because of wide spread use as a means of communication. ESP focuses on the register, lexicons, discourse and genre of English Language [3]. English language serves as a vehicle which alleviates further progress in other fields such as medical, engineering, commerce, technology etc. English language is considered to be a language to be used by the speakers globally. It serves as a means of communication among the speakers of different countries. English language is regarded as majority language having 470 million speakers. It is also acknowledged that English language is being used as second language and has more non-native speakers than native speakers. English for specific purpose is actually a kind of revolution in the realm of linguistics [4]. As first language it has 228 speakers whereas the rest

of the speaker use it as second language, 45 million speakers use it as official language and 60 million speakers use it as mother language. English language used as a medium of communication and instruction around the globe therefore it has become the need of learners in order to achieve success in every field of life. Engineering has been emerging as a field around the world because it plays vital role in the development of a country. Therefore, an attempt was made in the current study to analyze the present communicative needs of the students of BS Civil Engineering 1st Semester. The foci of English language teaching and learning has been changed throughout the world from traditional methods towards modern methods such as based on communication approach and learners centered syllabus. But unfortunately, in AJ&K in Pakistan, the focus yet has not been changed and that's why even after completing higher education in any field of studies such as technology, business, medical etc. Our students are not able to perform well. The reason behind not performing well is because of lacking in proficiency in English language and not having pragmatic competence over the use of language.

Objectives of the study

The researcher tries to;

- 1) Investigate the English language needs of students of BS Civil Engineering 1st Semester
- 2) Investigate what are their requirements of communication
- 3) Investigate that whether their communicative needs are fulfilled or not

Research Questions

In order to achieve the objectives of the current study of the following questions are designed;

- 1) What are the English language needs of the BS Civil Engineering 1st Semester students of AJ&K?
- 2) What are the requirements of communication of the BS Civil Engineering 1st Semester students?
- 3) Whether the current communicative needs of the BS Civil Engineering 1st Semester students are fulfilled or not?

The purpose of the current analysis is to investigate the English language needs of the BS Civil Engineering 1st Semester students because it was observed that after completing schools level education when they step into the practical field they are not able to utilize all their knowledge which they gain in their academic courses. They have required knowledge related to the field but they are unable to perform well due to the lack of communicative skills that are required in their particular field. It is regarded as a great dilemma for AJ&K education system that we are not able to produce shining adult experts who have thorough command over their but are unable to perform due to inability to communicate well. The researcher tried to find out the lacking in the present syllabus so that recommendation and suggestions can be given in order to design a learners' need based syllabus.

The paper would give information whether the students believe that current syllabus is fulfilling their communicative needs or they are contended with the present trends of teaching English. It will also provide an opportunity in analyzing the needs of change in regards of the teaching methods of English in different contexts I AJ&K. The analysis will be helpful for the teachers in this respect that they will also come to know about the needs of the students and can also change their way of teaching in order to fulfil the communicative needs of the students. It will be of great significance for educationists, curriculum designer, syllabus designer, textbook designers, policy makers and professional trainers in the respect that there is a need for change in the existing syllabus/content of English and also in determine which areas should be focused more according to the needs of learners.

Literature Review

The central term of ESP in needs analysis which within the realm of linguistics is regarded as the analysis of particular needs of the second language. Needs analysis deals with a set of procedures which help the researchers in analyzing the needs of the learners and reason behind learning a second language such as in this context English. Needs analysis serves three main purposes which are given below;

- It can be used in developing goals, objectives and contents of a syllabus
- It can be used for reviewing and evaluating syllabus
- It can be helpful in designing as well as implementing a language program

Needs analysis procedures got prominence in language planning during the 1970s. These procedures have a long tradition in other areas of adult learning. Needs analysis is used as a way for the particularization of behavioral purposes. The detail and comprehension features of the syllabus such as function, topics, lexis and structural exponents are developed from the above-mentioned objectives of the needs analysis. In last few decades, advancement has been made in the area of business and communication because of which the central focus of the designers of the course has been shifted from teaching of English for academic purposes to teaching of English for specific purposes such as professional purposes. In last year's researchers conducted studies in order to investigate the most appropriated processes of bettering the skill of learners in using English for specific purposes.

Mumby [5] introduced Communicative Syllabus Design which Johnson K. 1982 regarded as a functional based approach towards the teaching and learning of English language which earlier based on structural programs.

Abdul Hafeez [6] in his research the needs of introducing communicative syllabus for teaching in Pakistan found that these kinds of syllabuses can be fruitful on the behalf of learners because they will gain academic and practical knowledge related to their fields. Since communication in English language has become the key of success therefore the communicative approach-based syllabuses should be designed and implemented in Pakistan because it was thought that these syllabuses pay attention equally on all the language skills and can gear up the students to use English for communicative purposes.

Ghulam Mustafa Mashori in his research regarding principles for designing communicative course investigated that the rules of setting aims, objectives, learners' needs, selection of right content, emphasized areas of language use, language structure and function, tests for teaching are very essential thing which a designer of the syllabus should kept in mind [7].

Sheba R.Dayal [8] conducted research on learning of English language in the ESP realm and resulted that learners' needs were not fully satisfied according to their current syllabus and they demanded the change in current syllabus. They gave importance to the skills of speaking and listening as the most essential skills over which they want to have mastery.

Akyel with his co-author conducted a research "A language needs analysis research at an English medium university in Turkey" in order to explore what are the needs of the University students in the scenario of ELT curriculum. The researcher followed a triangulation research method. They conducted the data by taking interviews as well as questionnaires. Their study focused mainly on the learning strategies [9].

Hülya Sönmez along with the co-authors conducted a research on "An Examination of Needs Analysis Research in the Language Education Process" and analyzed the research methods, data tools and analyzing methods of language education and teaching procedures. The researchers elaborated on the needs of the teachers and the students [10].

Nimasari conducted a research "An ESP Needs Analysis: Addressing the Needs of English For Informatics Engineering" in order to find out the needs of English Language usage. For this reason, a questionnaire was developed to know about the different needs of ESP classrooms. Under the scenario of ESP, the classroom environment was analyzed critically. The driven outcomes showed ten differing areas of English language use [11].

Pushpanathan conducted a research "A Need For Needs Analysis" in order to explore the significance of needs analysis in the present era. The researcher examined the learning process of a language from a closer viewpoint. He explored the syllabus, curriculum, and teaching materials in order to know if they meet the students' needs [12].

Todea and Demarcsek conducted a research "Needs analysis for language course design: A case study for engineering and business students" in order to highlight the significance of needs analysis for language course. The researchers took engineering and business students as tool and conducted their research while creating two differing groups; one named by Teachers and other named by Students. They collected the responses of the students regarding the English course and its various topics [13].

Another closely related research on need analysis was conducted by Ratmo and Tutut sumartini from university of Pamulang in 2020. The title of the study was "Need Analysis of medical Personnel's English Communication Skills". In this Study the major focus was on EOP (English for occupational purpose). The researchers narrate English communication skills needs on professional basis, medical personnel to acquire English competence to meet with their desired level of zenglish proficiency skills, they also need English training programs, and this will determine the urgency needs analysis on the medical personnel English

communicative skills. It's a survey-based research, data was collected on the basis of observational notes, interviews and through questionnaire: Finding of the study reveals the importance of English communications skills at professional level in general and medical personnel's particularly [14].

In the line with Imelda (2019). The 2016 education policy and curriculum development (Pakistan) still have many problems for both teachers and students in the use of instructional material as pointed out by Tanti Kurnia, Hutagalung and Aini (2020) in their research "Development of intercultural communication learning materials based on need analysis". They further argued that although the basic function of language is communication but this functions sometimes be disrupted without accompany of good communication skills. In simple words communications skills support language skills [15].

Fayzuloeva, Ametova and Mustafayeva (2020) presented need analysis of learner needs with the studies of "Tashkent state institute of oriented studies". They argued that need analysis aims to present learners' wants, needs and lacks prior to organizing a course. According to them need analysis is one of the most basic rudiments in course curriculum establishment [16].

Aleem Shakir and Sadia Haider in their research regarding designing for front office department staff of Pakistani hotels concluded that the existing syllabus which is based on structural content should be changed according to the current requirements towards communicative needs of the learners and also support the demand for the change in the teaching and learning process from traditional methods towards more advanced methods of teaching and learning. In the current study the researcher also tried to find out the present status of students' communicative needs, their perception about their current syllabus [17].

Research Methodology

The present study aimed at investigating the present status of the communicative needs of the learners, their ideas regarding their present syllabus, in order know that they are satisfied with the existing syllabus and prevailing trends of teaching. To collect the data, the researcher used questionnaire.

Population and Sampling

The directed population of the current study was all the students of Civil Engineering 1st Semester of division Mirpur. The sample of the study consisted of 60 students studying in their final years of course of studies. The researcher used the probable sampling technique to assess the participants. Samples are heterogenous in nature both male and female participants took part in this study. They fill in the questionnaire organized by the researcher for the purpose of data collection.

Research Tool

The needed information was taken from the subject instead of any informants. In this study, the research tool was a set of questionnaires which the researcher organized to collect the data regarding the communicative needs of the students. It was learners-based instrument in which

they have to give responses in the written form on the designed set of questions in the questionnaire. The nature questionnaire was closed-ended in order to remove the ambiguity which may be aroused in interpreting the results obtained in open-ended questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section S, consisted of questions about the learners' current situation of communication as well as other language skills while section-B deals with the perception of learners about the communication and pedagogy of English. Hence this questionnaire takes into account all the required points for needs analysis in ESP context.

Quality Criteria

The experts of this field checked the instrument of this study to see its reliability and some changes were made in the questionnaire as per the instructions of experts. Then it is administrated in the field just to get reliable outcomes. When the instruments were administrated in the field it is found that students did not find any difficulty in interpreting the items in the questionnaire which revealed that the designed instrument is valid. The researcher gathered the data from the subjects by meeting them personally.

Data Analysis and Findings

The collected data was statistically analyzed and results are illustrated with the help of tables as shown below;

Q.1 What are the most emphasized skills in the existing syllabus of English?

The findings are represented in the following tables as;

| Languages Skills | Percentages of findings |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Reading | 28.3% |
| Writing | 23.3% |
| Speaking | 6.67% |
| Grammar | 28.3% |
| Presentation | 5% |
| Listening | 8.3% |

The findings of the above table shows that reading, writing and grammar whose percentages 28.3%, 23.3% and 28.3% respectively, are the skills which are emphasized in the current syllabus of English according to the learners.

Q.2 What are the most ignored skills in the existing syllabus of English?

| Languages Skills | Percentages of findings |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Reading | 8.37% |
| Writing | 3.37% |
| Speaking | 43.3% |
| Grammar | 3.33% |
| Presentation | 36.67% |
| Listening | 3.3% |

The findings in the above table represented that learners ranked speaking and presentation skills which are the most ignored area in the existing syllabus.

Q.3 Which is the most suitable language skill in English for the profession which you want to adopt?

| Languages Skills | Percentages of findings |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Reading | 8.3% |
| Writing | 3.4% |
| Speaking | 50% |
| Grammar | 3.3% |
| Presentation | 16.67% |
| Listening | 10% |

The analysis revealed that learners ranked speaking, listening and presentation as well mostly required skills for their future profession which they want to adopt.

Q.4 what is the skill you lack the most?

The findings are represented in the following table as,

| Languages Skills | Percentages of findings |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Reading | Nil |
| Writing | Nil |
| Speaking | 58.3% |
| Grammar | Nil |

| | |
|--------------|--------|
| Presentation | 16.67% |
| Listening | 8.3% |

Presentation, listening and speaking are the most ignored skills according to the learners.

Q.5 what is the skill which should be focused more in your opinion?

The findings are represented in the following table as,

| Languages Skills | Percentages of findings |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Reading | 3.3% |
| Writing | 1.67% |
| Speaking | 66.67% |
| Grammar | 6.67% |
| Presentation | 16.67% |
| Listening | 5% |

At top students ranked the speaking skill which according to them should be the most focused area of language skills for their communicative purposes in order to keep pace with their surroundings.

Section-B

In this section the researcher designed ten different questions in order to know the agreement and disagreement of learners about the current needs of communication and existing syllabus.

| Sr.No | Questions | Remarks | |
|-------|---|---------|----------|
| | | Agree | Disagree |
| 01 | Do you think that your current syllabus of English has made you able to communicate in a good manner? | 14.5% | 85.5% |
| 02 | Does the current syllabus of English fulfill your communicative needs for the job you want to do? | 24.5% | 75.5% |

| | | | |
|----|--|-------|-------|
| 03 | Should the current curriculum be changed according to modern trends? | 87.5% | 12.5% |
| 04 | Can you communicate well in English outside the classroom in the real life situations? | 19.5% | 80.5% |
| 05 | Can you give presentation in English well? | 22.5% | 77.5% |
| 06 | Do you face hurdles in verbal skills and perform good in writing skills? | 79% | 21% |
| 07 | Does your teacher uses only lecture method in classroom? | 15.6% | 84.4% |
| 08 | Do you feel that teaching methods of English in classroom should be based on presentation? | 77.9% | 22.1% |
| 09 | Do teaching methods of teaching of English should be changed? | 75% | 25% |
| 10 | Should the syllabus be designed according to the communicative approach of learning? | 82.5% | 17% |

The findings of the current study can be explained in the light of proposed research questions.

1. What are the English language needs of the BS Civil Engineering 1st Semester students of AJ&K?

The findings of the results reveal that the most required English needs of English students are speaking, presentation and listening as compared to reading, writing and grammar. The findings reveal that majority of the learners believe that they are lacking the speaking and presentation skills the most lacking areas. The analysis of the questionnaire supports the above discussed findings in order to give scientific and objective answer of the proposed research questions. From the section-B analysis it becomes evident that the current syllabus of English for the learners of BS Civil Engineering 1st Semester students based on the structural contents such as grammar and writing skills, no heed attention is paid towards improving

communicative skills of the learners, which has become the foremost needs of the learners in order to compete with this world and to have a name in their surroundings as well.

2. Are the current communicative needs of the BS Civil Engineering 1st Semester students fulfilled?

The findings of the study reveal that according to existing syllabus their structural skills are improved, which means that the content of their existing syllabus focuses on structural and traditional content in which more attention is paid to grammar, reading and writing. The current situation are communicative skills including speaking, listening and presentation, which are according to them the most required needs in order to pave their way fir the successful future. The findings indicate that the existing syllabus of English for the students of English is insufficient in respect of its content because they cover a few English language needs of the learners and neglects the most required skills (speaking, listening and presentation). In the view of learners needs, which they believe that should be fulfilled.

Conclusion

In the present research paper (needs analysis) an attempt is made towards the investigation of the language needs for English students of BS Civil Engineering 1st Semester in the division of Mirpur. The findings of the study reveal that knowledge of English language is regarded as a decisive factor for getting the purpose of achieving success in the present world of modernization and standardization. In this respect it is analyzed that the existing syllabus of English of the students does not prove fruitful, to achieve the needed proficiency in English language. The needs analysis conducted in this particular course suggests that learners have clear crystal ideas about their needs of English language. Hence the findings of current study shows that existing syllabus of English is based on traditional methods of teaching and learning as well, such as focuses more on the structural skills of the English language rather than the functional skills of the language. The existing syllabus is not satisfying the communicative needs of the learners. The results reveal that learners want a change in the learning and teaching process of English from traditional to modern methods. They show inclination towards the use of communicative approach of teaching which will prove helpful in achieving their target needs i.e. communicative needs. It is finally concluded that learners need not only to be taught better comprehension ways but they need to be taught better speaking skills for communicative situations. So, in a nutshell, the curriculum designers should take this need of learners into their consideration and create a course pedagogical strategies with to help the students have grip on the English language as well as to portray their ideas in public speaking. This is how they can make progress by making their way for a better future.

Recommendations

So it is recommended that a communicative based course should be designed in order to meet the needs of the students, so that when they step into practical field of their studies, they are able to perform well. It is suggested that functional approach of learning and teaching for English language is beneficial for the alumina of English. They can communicate in a better way by this kind of learning. So by looking at the findings of needs analysis for communicative

purposes should be offered on behalf of the BS Civil Engineering 1st Semester. It is also recommended that the methodology of teaching should be based on communicative approach.

Pedagogical Implication

The results and findings of the current needs analysis will prove helpful for the curriculum designer, policy maker and textbook designers because it reveals the lacking areas of the offered courses of English, which should be focused by the above-mentioned expertise. It will help the educationist and syllabus designer in making decisions that in which areas of the existing syllabus amendments should be made. Which areas related to the English language needs of the learners. It will prove helpful in designing and organizing English courses for the learners, to develop their communicative skills.

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