ESP NEEDS ANALYSIS MODEL

Shermatova Nazokat Nuriddin kizi
Master of the Chirchik Pedagogical Institute,
Tashkent region
Supervisor: (PhD). Maksudova Hilola

ABSTRACT

In this article we aim to discuss some sample models of identifying needs analysis in teaching English for specific purposes. This issue demands to clarify every significant aspect related to students` interests, weak points and also to their chosen spheres. We will cover some scientists` theories and ideas to discuss the topic.

Keywords: questionnaire, academic standing, future goal, major area, learning experience.

АННОТАЦИЯ

В этой статье мы стремимся обсудить некоторые модели анализа выявления потребностей при обучении английскому языку для конкретных целей. Этот вопрос требует прояснения каждого существенного аспекта, связанного с интересами студентов, слабыми сторонами, а также с выбранными ими сферами. Мы рассмотрим некоторые теории и идеи ученых, чтобы обсудить эту тему.

Ключевые слова: анкета, академический статус, будущая цель, основная область, опыт обучения.

INTRODUCTION

Needs of learning plays a critical role in affecting students learning motivation, attitude and outcome (Rahman, 2015). Therefore, needs analysis is the initial stage in the procedure of designing any kind of language courses. Brown (1995) explained that needs analysis in language courses as identifying possible language skills the learners need in the target language environment when they are asked to fulfil certain purpose in professional tasks. Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman (2004) defined the term as the method by which the researcher explores the specific needs for a programme and the most suitable content should be provided.

As the initial phase of any ESP course, researchers in this field developed different kind of models to conduct the analysis (McDonough, 1984; Robinson,1991;

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Jordan, 1997; Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). To some extent all the mentioned models contain some of the basic needs analysis components. The model developed by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) is considered to be the most integrated and holistic model for exploring the needs for ESP course (Rahman, 2015).

This model in Figure 1 as presented above emphasizes and covers all the concepts in the investigation of learners' information, lack, and needs concerned both learning in the course and language use in the workplace. Liao (2009) designed a 50-item questionnaire to explore students understandings about how important the four language skills are needed at work, the result conformed that the needs for ESP course may be affected by variables like "academic standing, future goal, major area, and learning experience". But Rahman (2015) argued that the ideas of other stakeholders in the professional area should also be taken into consideration. Bacha & Bahous (2008) reported that teachers and students have different thought about how importance of writing skills as well as other language skills the author suggested joint efforts from all the concerned sides to develop proper materials to meet students' real language needs in workplace.

Different groups of people may have different perceptions about language needs in the working context and inclusion of all sides guarantee a full understanding of the specific language needs and in turn facilitate the material selection and course design in ESP.

The term "analysis of needs" first appeared in the 1920's in the West Bengal, a province of India when Michael West introduced the concept of "needs" to cover what learners will be required to do with the foreign language in the target situation and how learners might best master the language during the period learning. After 1920's the term, needs analysis came to an end to exist until 1960 when the term, 'English for Specific Purposes' appeared at the Makerere Conference (Commonwealth Education Committee in 1961) as West states. The key stage in ESP is needs analysis. Needs analysis is the corner stone of ESP and leads to a focused course. According to Robinson [4, p7], "needs analysis is generally regarded as critical to ESP, although ESP is by no means the only educational enterprise which makes use of it". Strevens suggests that needs analysis is a necessary first step for specific purposes language teaching; it is more concerned with the nature of scientific discourse. Hutchinson and Waters argue, "any language course should be based on needs analysis".

Hamp-Lyons opines that needs analysis is fundamental component to an ESP/EAP approach in term of course design. Dudley-Evans & St John define as,

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"needs analysis is the process of establishing the what and how of a course". They argue as, "needs analysis is neither unique to language teaching-needs assessment, for example, is the basis of training programs and aid-development programs-nor, within language training, is it unique to LSP (Language for Special Purposes) and thus to ESP". They stress three aspects of needs analysis. Dudley-Evans & St John [5, p126)] state as: "First, needs analysis aims to know learners as people, as language users and as language learners. Second, needs analysis study also aims to know how language learning and skills learning can be maximized for a given learner group. Third, needs analysis study aims to know the target situations and learning environment so that data can appropriately be interpreted". It is obvious that needs analysis is a very crucial first step prior to designing and developing a language course, producing materials for teaching and learning, and developing language test. West states that language needs analysis is essentially a pragmatic activity focused on specific situations, although grounded in general theories, such as the nature of language and curriculum. Therefore, in the ESP/EAP context, needs analysis is crucial in determining the aspects of language that are crucial for a particular area of teaching. Robinson suggests, needs analysis is not only just for determining the "what and how of a language of teaching". She also suggests that needs analysis should be repeated so that it can be built into the formative process. She also suggests that this would lead to a very informative database of learners, sponsors, subject-specialists and above all ESP practitioners' view and opinions of English language [4].

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

ESP practitioners should undertake the needs analysis. The main sources for needs analysis are the learners, people working or studying in the field, ex-students, documents relevant to the field, clients, employers, colleagues and ESP research in the field . The main instruments for executing needs analysis study are questionnaire, analysis of authentic spoken and written texts, discussions, structured interviews, observations and assessments. It is important for ESP practitioners to carry out needs analysis study prior to developing and designing an ESP syllabus, a course, selecting a teaching approach and other relevant processes that require needs analysis.

Different components of language needs analysis are employed to investigate different focuses and issues in language planning, development, teaching and learning. Many ESP scholars suggest that TSA (Target Situation Analysis), LSA (Learning Situation Analysis), PSA (Present Situation Analysis) are the fundamental components for assessing language needs of learners.

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1. Target Situation Analysis (TSA) Target Situation Analysis (TSA) refers to form of needs analysis, which centers on identifying the learners' language requirements in the occupational or academic setting. "The earliest TSA procedures were designed to determine 'how much English' was used".

2. Learning Situation Analysis (LSA) Learning Situation Analysis (LSA) refers to subjective, felt and process-oriented needs [5]. LSA also directs what learners want to learn. Dudley-Evans and St. John state that LSA means effective ways of learning the skills and language.

3. Present Situation Analysis (PSA) Robinson delineates that PSA (Present Situation Analysis) seeks to ascertain what the students are akin to at the start of their language course, looking into their strengths and weaknesses. Dudley-Evans & St. John state that PSA estimates strengths and weaknesses in language, skills and learning experiences.

4. Means Analysis Holliday and Cook assert that means analysis can be considered as an adjunct to needs analysis to establish a workable course design. Dudley-Evans & St John state that means analysis directs the environment in which a course will be run or the environment in which a project will take root, grow healthily and survive. Means analysis involves information of the local situation (e.g., the teachers, teaching methods, management, students facilities, etc) to see how a language course may be implemented. Mountford (1988) and Swales (1989) have developed the scope of means analysis further by suggesting other factors which need to be considered by curriculum specialist if they want to the courses to have the possibility to succeed in an 'alien' learning environment. Swales list five factors:

1. Classroom culture

2. EAP staff profiles

- Pilot target-situation analysis

- Status of service operations

Study of change agents Swales (1989) argues that based on the data collected, means analysis can be carried out and decisions can be made of the approach and content to the specific programs. He also reasons that means analysis aims to reduce the probability of providing/teaching something that is not directly related to students' learning needs in ESP/EAP contexts.

CONCLUSION

Generally speaking where there is no needs analysis, there is no ESP course. In summary, a language needs analysis is a process that must be conducted prior to a

language course and syllabus design, materials selection, teaching and learning methodology and evaluation. The ESP practitioners should be able to utilize the results of needs analysis research which they conduct to develop a language course or training program that is suitable, practical and successful for a particular context. The main instruments for executing language needs analysis study are questionnaire, structured interviews, observations, analysis of authentic spoken and written texts, discussions and assessments.

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