Need Analysis and Course Design Implications of ESP Learning Needs

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Introduction:

ESP learning refers to English for Specific Purposes. It is applied in places where users are not native speakers, but the ability to write and speak English is a basic requirement of their professional or occupational endeavors. For example, China is gaining rapid fame due to the impact of internationalization. However, expatriates who move there to work face difficulties because the Chinese population is not very open to the English language. When another person or expatriate has no knowledge of English or the local language, the implications or consequences become far more serious. In such a state, developing an ESP course plan with a viable implementation strategy could serve the purpose. The present study will explore this concern by performing a needs analysis and examining the course-design implications of ESP learning needs. The explanatory research mode will be adopted to study the multiple aspects under consideration with an in-depth overview.

Analysis

The application of ESP ensures that users' professional and occupational requirements are addressed by marking their specific needs. It covers the scope of the ESL Foreign/Second Language branch (EFL/ESL). Various factors segregate the ESP branch from normal English. Although there is no difference between the two languages by genre, the adoption and purpose of acquiring the language are the elements of difference (Amirian and Tavakoli). Likewise, the expectation of general English is also distinct from the expectation of ESP, which is for training purposes only. The terms, formats, language, and sentence structure are the core focus of the ESP course plan, allowing one to create the scope of application and evolve in the professional arena over the referred grounds (Hossain).

The ESP's impact and outcome greatly depend on its course's efficacy and the rationale of the design, which is planned to serve the user's specific needs (Brunton). The course design of the ESP plan is the fundamental tool that determines the success of its implementation. The methodologies applied to build users' language and skill levels should match their profiles and competency levels. In present times of globalization, the international workforce and language barriers are managed with strategies that balance communication with learning and development objectives with the support of ESP plans. The tutors who execute this plan are called instructors. Online and offline options are available for

support, making implementation and evaluation far easier.

Various theories determine the need and process of designing an ESP course for practical implementation. All of these theories revolve around the needs analysis, which forms the basis of the course and makes it effective. For this purpose, the target population and procedures are explored to identify the extent of language used within the marked horizon. The attitude and behavior of the learners are also important parts that must be focused on when designing the methodology of the application. Hence, a training plan is developed with the basics of the end users and the learning material in mind. The three most popular theories addressing the course design methodology of ESP are based on language-centered approaches in which English teachers speak to make the learner familiar with the use of language. The second is the skill-centered approach, built on aligning the user's requirements in a particular scenario with the language through defined learning material (Songhori). Basic theoretical design and pragmatic basis are the core principles of this theory. Basic theoretical design is an inverted behavioral approach to the learner and the language. Pragmatic basis theory states that language complexity and the limited skills of users are likely to make it difficult to achieve the desired results (Basturkmen).

The third approach, seemingly the most rational, explains that participants' learning and the achievement of course objectives rely greatly on the efficacy of the learners, who are the stakeholders best able to judge whether the course targets have been achieved. All the illustrated approaches focus on the viability and accuracy of need analysis, which is the fundamental factor determining the course plan's success. Wrong predictions made in the needs analysis will likely result in false assumptions and unsuitable material that will not benefit the user (Hutchinson and Waters). Thus, the course outline has to be developed carefully, considering the plan's situational factors and objectives. Identifying users' skill and competency levels is essential for developing an outline that takes their strengths and weaknesses into account while maintaining a core focus on learning. Identifying weaknesses will enable us to mark the areas that are to be stressed more and vice versa. The language structure, format, and written materials are investigated to draw the scope regarding grammar, words, sentence structure, and written formats. Hence, an individual's language needs are explored by observing the official role and responsibilities of the individual. Thus, complete data collection and exploration of behavioral and learning attributes through interaction with participants are core factors that allow an individual to design a suitable ESP course for learners.

Conclusion:

An overview of the observations makes it obvious that ESP learning is urgently needed because of rapid globalization. However, the course design of the plan is the fundamental element that establishes the plan's efficiency. If the basics of the course plan are left unattended during the needs analysis, then the ESP plan would be of no value. Hence, sticking to the purpose and objective of the learning need and marking the essentials of the course plan with a designed schedule is essential for the plan's success. Considering the various natures of ESP learners, this factor is a critically important

subject that numerous scholars have addressed. Adopting the right approach for the right situation is the trick that marks the success of an ESP plan. This situation-analysis and ESP-planning equation cannot be standardized with a single formula or equation. Hence, the knowledge and skills of the planners are of particular significance in this context. The study details make it evident that apart from the design and implementation purpose, researchers should focus on the evaluation and monitoring framework to allow the learners to gauge their learning using specific metrics. Not only would this action help raise users' motivation, but regular improvement and modification of the plan would also help assure success and achievement for stakeholders.

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