

DESIGNING AN ESP COURSE FOR MIDWIFERY STUDENTS IN STIKES PRIMA JAMBI

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ABSTRACT

Designing teaching material is the process of selecting, adapting and evaluating of teaching based on specific terms of reference. Need Analysis is very important before designing teaching materials for English for Specific Purpose. Much attention should be drawn to the design of ESP courses which can help to prepare learners for future professional in workplaces. The study aims at exploring the learning needs of 36 midwifery students in STIKes Prima Jambi, and designing ESP materials for midwife based on Need Analysis. 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.

Key words: *ESP, Course Design, Needs Analysis, Midwifery Students.*

INTRODUCTION

Materials play an important role in teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and materials writing is an indispensable element of ESP practice. With the adoption of English as the international language for communication and its wide use all over the world, more and more colleges and universities place an emphasis on running different kinds of English courses for their students to enable them to become competitive and competent enough in their future career.

ESP courses have become popular recently in Indonesia, and many institutions and universities offer ESP courses for midwifery students, for years the instruction has been limited to specialized lexicon and sentence structures, an approach which fundamentally ignores the learners' personal interests. This often leads to low motivation in their English studies and, in turn, poor performance later when they use English in their future profession in their workplaces.

The availability of ESP teaching materials designed for such a range of contexts of language study is limited and conditioned by marketing interests and predicted sales, currency or import restrictions. As a result, ESP teachers are frequently confronted with the task of either designing needs-specific materials

or adapting commercially produced ones to fit various needs and goals. Also, in many cases, ESP course materials are either completely replaced or only partly complemented with Web-based language lessons. These classes offer a great potential for developing foreign language proficiency since they allow teachers to exploit authentic and motivating language input and engage learners in interesting and pedagogically sound tasks (Krajka, 2007).

In response to these problems, it is important to help students adapt to today's competitive society, meaning that colleges need to design ESP courses that can best prepare learners for future professional communication, not just presenting general English for the sake of passing the exam on the English subject. Designing a new ESP course involves issues such as what to teach, how to teach or where to start. Based on an integrated approach, this paper puts forward a sample ESP course framework and critically analyses the core elements of ESP course design: needs analysis; course goals and objectives; course details; materials design; and finally, assessment and evaluation.

At this time, there are few ESP books for Midwives in Indonesia. From this book, there is no book that contains material that is really needed by the midwives to support their professional

career in the medical field in the future. To overcome this, the author decided to design materials based on ESP Needs Analysis.

Assessment and evaluation are also two important issues that should be included in the course design process. Assessment is a process of measuring what learners know and what they can do, whereas evaluation reveals how well the ESP course works with emphasis not only on successful factors but also on modifying less successful aspects (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998).

METHODOLOGY

Thirty six midwifery students (36 females) aging 19-20 at first grade students at STIKes Prima Jambi became participants in this study. To ensure validity and reliability of the results, data

were collected from multiple sources including midwifery students, ESP lecturers that provide different viewpoints, which enables researchers to look at something from a variety of perspectives. The instruments used to collect data were tests, questionnaire and interview. The data collected from the needs analysis were combined to design the new materials and experts evaluation served to improve it.

The instruments used to elicit compliments responses were firstly, questionnaires and secondly interview with ESP Lecturers. A combination of pre-course, mid-course and post-course analysis is conducted in order to see what students need to learn and improve upon through this course. The following (Table 1) shows the structure of the needs analysis:

Table 1. The Structure of the Needs Analysis

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questionnaire - Interview - Informal Discussion
Mid-course Needs Analysis	Feedback from learners' performance and assignments Mid-term Test Results
Post-course Need Analysis	Final Test Result

THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Pre-course Needs Analysis

The use of questionnaires can produce a large amount of information about many different issues such as communication difficulties, preferred learning styles, preferred classroom activities, attitudes and beliefs (Richards, 2001). In this particular research context, questionnaires are initially used to elicit information about learners' attitudes towards this course, and what they want to learn in this Medical English course before the semester commences. Moreover, informal discussion allows students to convey their ideas and thoughts spontaneously and does not take much time to plan or prepare.

Interviewing the teachers who taught the general English course in the previous year enables the course designer to gain insights into the learners' current English proficiency, their specific weaknesses and strengths in the four skills.

Mid-course Needs Analysis & Post-course Needs Analysis

Assessing learners' performances and assignments during the course can be an effective means in ascertaining their real problems during this course. After analysing the feedback, readjustment in the subsequent course is useful for both teachers and learners.

Furthermore, a mid-term test and end of semester examination are also important to check their progress, since this shows what they already know as well as what they do not know.

Course framework

After getting information from questionnaire and interview, the next step is to design learning materials of ESP for midwives based on Need Analysis. A course framework is useful as a guide for ESP teachers in presenting materials relevant to the students' needs in relation to workplaces. For the sake of ease, the

following table is a course grid for Medical English course. The guide is very useful

for team teachers in case of addition while the course is in progress.

Table 2. Course Grid for Medical English Course

	Rhetorical awareness and skill areas	Language usage		Functions	Topics	Materials
		Grammar	Vocab			
Writing patient summary, pain report and symptom report	Structuring paragraphs, describing symptom and pain	Tenses	Positive action verbs, modal verbs	Enquiring, apologizing, questioning	Patient summary, pain report, symptom report	Mainly textbooks, visuals
Introduction, telephoning, patient examination and giving instruction	Taking and leaving messages, making offers and request, agreeing and disagreeing, instruction, assessing a patient	Tenses	Phone numbers, spelling names, propositions, modal verbs	Turn-taking, describing, comparing	Admitting a patient, accidents and emergencies	Mainly textbooks, visuals, copies of authentic materials
Reading medical materials	Skimming for gist, scanning for information, guessing words from contexts	Tenses	Medical vocabulary (verbs, nouns), first aid		Pregnancy	Mainly textbooks, visuals, copies of authentic materials
Understanding the conversation and patient record	Listening for specific information and gist	Tenses and Sentence Pattern	Medical vocabulary (verbs, nouns, adjectives)		Medication, monitoring the patient, job interview	Mainly textbooks, visuals, copies of authentic materials

The starting point for this Medical English course framework are the target events in the four language skills in which the midwifery students need to perform in their future professions. These target events are broken down into rhetorical awareness and related skill areas, along with associated functions. The framework also considers linguistic aspects-grammar and vocabulary involved in each target event, because those linguistic aspects are involved in each context. However, the course does not simply concern linguistic items and micro skills, but also materials

and career content topics for each individual class.

Assessment

Self-assessment and peer assessment result in increased motivation, autonomy, direct involvement through the implementation of the following: oral production (student self-checklist; peer checklist; listening to tape-recorded oral production to detect pronunciation or grammar mistakes); self-revision or peer editing; and listening comprehension (Brown, 2001). Dudley-Evans and St John

(1998) also state that peer assessment is greatly effective as a learning aid which is beneficial in large classes because teachers are frequently burdened with grading assignments. A range of class activities focusing on achievement, involvement and progress can be provided for assessment such as asking them to grade their efforts made in class and attitude to learning. Students can also be requested to reflect upon how well they use the target language to fulfil tasks, and identify what they are not able to do (Graves, 2001).

Achievement assessment can be used to examine the extent to which learners have learned what has been taught. Furthermore, the result of the assessment can inform teachers about individual learner's achievement of the learning objectives as well as provide the feedback on the effectiveness and quality of this course (Brown, 1996).

Course evaluation

Observation

Robinson (1991) points out that observing past students who are working may be an effective means in seeing to what extent the ESP course has fully prepared them for workplace needs. After such observation, the course designer is then able to reorganize the course materials for the following year students.

Mid-course and end-of-course evaluation

Since this course lasts 1 academic semesters, a mid-course evaluation questionnaire in the semester can be given to learners in order to fine-tune the course before it finishes (Feez, 1998). End-of-course evaluation can be achieved through analysing learners' outcomes, particularly, their final examination results and performance. They can also be asked to review their work and keep diaries of what they think easy/hard, interesting/uninteresting. The findings from such diary input can be analysed periodically (Hedge, 2000).

Student feedback and teacher self-evaluation

After each class, it is helpful to ask the learners to evaluate the class to provide feedback to the teacher (Hedge, 2000). However, informal discussion with individual students could be a more appropriate and spontaneous means for students to express what they really think about the course because in a more formal situation such as interviewing a group of students may feel inhibited. It could also be valuable for teachers to evaluate themselves by filling in a self-assessment sheet or keeping a log book (Hedge, 2000).

CONCLUSIONS

In almost all college all over Indonesia, there is a compulsory subject in General English. Especially, in STIKes Prima Jambi, the students have to take Medical English. The purpose is to raise their English proficiency in medical settings as well as to prepare them for successful communication in their future profession. This paper has investigated the ESP course design development. ESP course design start from analysing learners' particular needs and wants. Based on learners' needs and their future language use, goals and objectives of the course can be determined, a process which involves consideration of specific grammatical functions, terminology comprehension, and the abilities required for future workplace communication. Last but not least, assessment and evaluation should also be integrated into the design process to ensure that these goals and objectives are achievable. This article finally puts forward a proposal for an ESP course framework targeted to the midwifery students. It is hoped that this study may bring benefits to other ESP course designers in Indonesian colleges in facing the competition era.

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