Designing an ESP Course in a Bangladeshi Context: a Timely Need

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Abstract

This paper makes an attempt to suggest a learner-centered approach to developing an ESP course in the Bangladeshi context by following the language course development framework offered by Kathleen Graves (1996, 2000). It starts with defining ESP and narrating its features. It also compares and contrasts ESP and EGP. After that, it discusses the needs analysis and all other different steps, and procedures under the above framework in designing an ESP course.

Keywords: ESP, EGP, domain, discourse, genre, content, needs analysis, stakeholder, TBLT, CBI, learner-centered,

What is ESP?

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), English for specific purposes/ special purposes or "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning" (p.19). Paltridge, and Starfield, (2013.) observe that English for specific purposes (ESP) refers to the teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language where the goal of the learners is to use English in a particular domain. The teaching of English for specific purposes, in its early days, was largely motivated by the need to communicate across languages in areas such as commerce and technology. This has now expanded to include other areas such as English for academic purposes (EAP), English for occupational purposes (EOP), English for vocational purposes (EVP), English for medical purposes (EMP), English for business purposes (EBP), English for legal purposes (ELP), and English for sociocultural purposes (ESCP) and so on.

The following definition of ESP is based on Dudley-Evans & St. John, M.J.(1998, pp.4-5),

> ESP means the teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language which meets specific needs of the learners, makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves and is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre. ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines, use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English. ESP may be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level as well. Generally, ESP is designed for intermediate or advanced students and most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems.

Kate Harding et al (2007) observed that 'ESP teaches the language to get things done and that in all definitions of ESP two elements and axiomatic: the sense of purpose and sense of vocation. In ESP the practical application and the use of language overrides other aspects of language learning'' (p.6). Dudley -Evans (2001) noted that 'the key defining feature of ESP is that its teaching and materials are founded on the results needs analysis (p.131).

Is ESP different from English for General Purposes (EGP)/general English?

From the definition above, we can see that ESP can be but is not necessarily concerned with a specific discipline, nor does it have to be aimed at a certain age group or ability range. ESP should be seen simple as an 'approach' to teaching, or what Dudley-Evans describes as an 'attitude of mind'. This is a similar conclusion to the one made by Hutchinson et al. (1987) who stated that, "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning"(p.19).

Also, if we agree with the above definition, we begin to see how broad ESP really is. In fact, one may ask 'What is the difference between the ESP and General English approach?' Hutchinson et al. (1987) answered this quite simply and said that there are differences between them, "in theory nothing, in practice a great deal"(p.53). When their book was written, of course, the last statement was quite true. At the time, teachers of General English courses, while acknowledging that students had a specific purpose for studying English, would rarely conduct a needs analysis to find out what was necessary to actually achieve it. Teachers nowadays, however, are much more aware of the importance of needs analysis, and certainly materials writers think very carefully about the goals of learners at all stages of materials production. Perhaps this demonstrates the influence that the ESP approach has had on English teaching in general. In this regard Barnard and Zemach (2003) observed:

> Clearly the line between where General English courses stop and ESP courses start has become very vague indeed. In fact, the dividing line between ESP and EGP is not always clear; where do we place, for example, a course designed for a Korean businessperson who is to assume a post abroad in the near future? If the learner's proficiency level is very low, a great deal of course content will probably be of a general English type with emphasis on survival situations. Most would probably agree that the course should be classified as ESP, simply because the aims are clearly defined, and analysis of the learner's needs play an important role in deciding what to include in the course. However, we believe our example demonstrates that ESP should not be regarded as a discrete division of ELT, but simply an area (with blurred boundaries) whose courses are usually more focused in their aims and make use of a narrower range of topics (pp.306–7).

Yet it is true that while many General English teachers can be described as using an ESP approach, basing their syllabi on a learner needs analysis and their own specialist knowledge of using English for real communication, it is the majority of so-called ESP teachers that are using an approach furthest from the one described above. Instead of conducting interviews with specialists in the field, analyzing the language that is required in the profession, or even conducting students' needs analysis, many ESP teachers in Bangladesh have become much too dependent on the published textbooks available, being unable to evaluate their suitability based on personal experience, and unwilling to do the necessary analysis of difficult specialist texts to verify their contents.

Importance of Designing an ESP syllabus in the Bangladeshi context

There is no doubt that in the Bangladeshi context, as in some other contexts, English for Specific or Special Purposes (ESP) is a young and developing branch of EFL. Many teachers in Bangladesh and elsewhere liken teaching ESP to special lexicon and translating numerous texts. So for many years ESP instruction in Bangladesh has been limited to training special lexicon and translating numerous texts. Obviously, there is something wrong with this approach to teaching ESP in Bangladesh. Naturally, this approach does not seem to reflect students' interests and so, it has resulted in low learner motivation and poor participation and performance in ESP courses in Bangladesh. So ESP courses at Bangladeshi educational institutions should be designed in such a way as would seek to reflect students' interests and result in high learner motivation and participation and would result in better performance.

With the spread of the student-centered approach in ESP, now much attention is being paid to the design of ESP courses that can prepare students for effective professional communication. However, developing new courses along such lines raises the issue of training teachers. Designing a course that can best serve learners' interests and needs is an obstacle for many instructors. It is not easy for new and/or untrained teachers to know how and where they start and what can be done about students' poor motivation in the current ESP courses and how teaching materials should be selected. These are some of the problems that are often faced by many ESP teachers in Bangladesh and elsewhere; for example, Russian ESP teachers face almost the same problems (Sysoyev, 2000). Therefore, based on Graves(1996, 2000), my paper will suggest a framework for an ESP course-development process that will attempt to help Bangladeshi teachers facing the above problems in designing a new ESP course in Bangladesh.

Different Issues, Steps and Procedures in Designing the ESP Syllabus

There are different steps in designing an ESP an ESP Syllabus. Graves (1996 and 2000) suggested a systematic syllabus design consisting of six steps. Those steps are: 1. conducting students' needs assessment, followed by needs analysis (both of the processes are sometimes just called needs analysis), 2.determining the goals and objectives of the course, 3.conceptualizing

the content, 4.selecting and developing materials and activities, 5.organizing the content and activities,6.evaluating.These steps are displayed in the figure below:
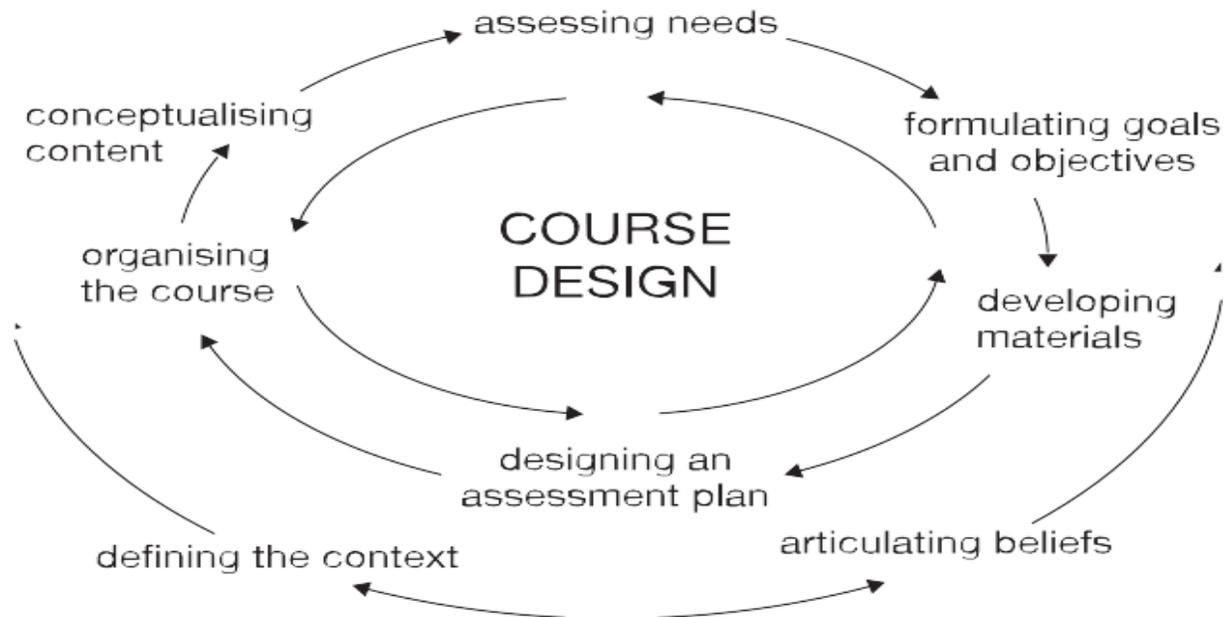

Figure 1 Graves' (2000) model of curriculum design, p.15

It is noteworthy that Graves (2000) in this regard has observed that ESP course designers do not necessarily give any of the steps any precedence over others, saying that … "there is no hierarchy in the processes and no sequences in their accomplishment. As a course designer, you can begin anywhere in the framework, so long as it makes sense to you to begin where you do" (p.15).

 Conducting Needs Analysis

Regarding needs analysis in ESP, Basturkman (2010) observes:

> Needs analysis in ESP refers to a course development process. In this process the language and skills that the learners will use in their target professional or vocational workplace or in their study areas are identified and considered in relation to the present state of knowledge of the learners, their perceptions of their needs and the practical possibilities and constraints of the teaching context. The information obtained from this process is used in determining and refining the content and method of the ESP course (p.19).

According to Hyland (2006, p. 73), "needs analysis refers to the techniques for collecting and assessing information that is relevant to course design. It is the means of establishing the how

and what of a course. It is a continuous process, since we modify our teaching as we come to learn more about our students, and in this way it actually shades into evaluation – the means of establishing the effectiveness of a course. ''

Needs analysis is neither unique to language teaching nor within language training but it is often seen as being the cornerstone of ESP and leads to a very focused course.(Dudley –Evans and St. John, 1998). According to Munby (1978), the work done in the field of ESP has generally followed the assumption that if a group of learners' English language needs can be accurately identified and specified, this can be used to determine the content of a language programme that will meet these needs. Basturkman (2010) has also observed in this regard that "needs analysis has long been argued to be the cornerstone of ESP" (p.138). Therefore, it is obvious that a thorough organizational and instructional needs assessment lies at the heart of a well-designed, effective ESP course. By conducting an organizational and instructional needs assessment, the ESP practitioner tries to discover information about the needs of his/her learners and other stakeholders. The term 'stake holder' refers to all the people who have an interest in the specific ESP course that is being developed. According to Friedenberg et al. (2003), stake holders are the people, who for different reasons want the training program to succeed and stake holders include the client or sponsor who requests that the course should be offered (a university department, company/organizational or individual) learners, the teachers, and potentially others.

In the needs assessment process, the ESP practitioners do their best to find out information about the needs of the sponsor organization, the needs and wants of the learner and the context in which learning will take place. This will involve conducting a Target Situation Analysis (TSA), a Present Situation Analysis (PSA) and Context Analysis (CA). In addition, the needs assessment process provides the opportunity to collect sample written or oral texts relevant to the learner's needs(e.g. textbook , manuals, videotapes/DVDs, business correspondence) to use in curriculum and materials design for the target course. As a result of this process, the ESP practitioners will be able to design a task-based course curriculum that meets the needs of stake holders and incorporates authentic materials and activities.

Target Situation Analysis (TSA)

According to Graves (1996) and Friedenberg et al. (2003), Hyland (2006), and Flowerdewtsa (2013), TSA would tell us about what the learners need to be able to do in the target language by the end of the course. This includes understanding the needs and expectation of the sponsoring organization. By conducting an effective TSA, the ESP practitioner is able to provide an initial listing of the target goals of the course. The TSA seeks to answer the following questions:

- What tasks do the learners need to be able to do by the end of the course?
- Why is it important for them to perform these tasks in English?
- Why do learners want or need to learn these skills?

In this respect, Friedenberg, et al, (2003) have observed that effective ESP training course providers ..." take time to consult with as many stake holders as possible, including potential program participants, their supervisors, and upper level management and executives. These providers recognize that inviting stake holder involvement in the planning stages creates a level of commitment on the part of all stake holders that is crucial to the later success of the training program."(p.27).This is also important for ESP practitioners designing effective programs in English for Academic Purposes. In this case, the stake holders include not only the current students, but also former students, content area faculty and administrators, and representatives from the larger off-campus community who will ultimately employ the program graduates.

Present Situation Analysis (PSA)

Graves (1996), Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) and Friedenberg, et al, (2003) and Hyland(2006) noted that through the PSA, the ESP practitioners describe the people who are most likely to need and take the instructional program they will develop. PSA tells us about what they are able to do now in the target language. It also informs us about their strengths and weaknesses in language and skills, and about their past language learning experiences that can affect how they learn. Questions to ask in the process include the following:

What is their current level of English? What strengths and weaknesses do they have in speaking, listening, reading, and writing? What do the learners who will use the curriculum already know about the content area or about the job? What is their background in this area? Which key job skills do they have or lack? What are their past language learning experiences and expectations? Why are they attending the course and what are their personal goals?

Gathering Information for the TSA and PSA

How ESP practitioners gather information for the TSA and PSA will depend on their specific situation. The effective ESP practitioners will gather information from a variety of sources to build a complete view of the learners' current skills and training needs and gain crucial support for the training program from key stake holders. Sources of information include the current target learners, context experts former students who have knowledge of the skills needed, sample written or oral texts relevant to the field (e.g. textbooks, training manuals, DVDs, videotapes, business correspondence), employers and supervisors, colleagues, and ESP research in the field. Data collection method includes questionnaires, examining samples of written or oral texts discussions interviews, observations

The following is a case study that highlights the process of collecting data for a TSA and PSA in a nurse training program.

Context Analysis (CA)

According to Brown (1995), Graves (1997) and Friedenberg, et al., (2003) and Hyland (2006) and, the CA (also often referred to as a Learning Situation Analysis or a Means Analysis) examines the environment in which the learners will be taught. By completing a CA, the effective ESP practitioner gains information about the resources and constraints that affect course design and learner outcomes. The CA often provides a "splash of reality" when viewing the gap between the desired learner outcomes for the course (TSA) and where the leaners are present in terms of language proficiency and skills (PSA). This can help the training provider negotiate more realistic outcomes within a given time frame or gain additional resources to achieve the desired goals.

Nunan (1985) and Friedenberg, et al, (2003) also noted that there are a number of factors to consider when researching the context in which the ESP course will be offered. Some of the information listed may be more relevant to certain contexts than to others. The information in the table below is based on Nunan (1985) and Friedenberg, et al, (2003):

Factors to Consider When Defining the Context
People • Who are the stake holders in the proposed course? Why do they want this course to be developed?
Physical setting of the course • How will the training be delivered- traditional face-to-face instruction, online, computer based or a combination • Where is the university/company located? Does this have an impact on the learners? • Describe the room used for the course: size, furniture, light, noise. • Will the course always be held in the same room?
Nature of course • Is this a new course or one to be revised? • Is learner attendance mandatory or optional? • Will the course be open to all qualified applicants or will enrolment be restricted to a certain group of people, e.g. a specific group of employees at accompany ; students who have completed a certain series of classes at the university? How will participants be recruited? • Are tests required? How will the information be used, for example, to determine promotions, readiness to participate in subsequent training opportunities, or future career assignments?
Teaching resources • What potential materials are already available to use or adapt for the course? • List the equipment available: blackboard/white board, overhead projector, CD/audio cassette player, DVD/videotape player, photocopy machine, computers (how many?), Internet access (what kind: high speed direct connection, Wi Fi connection, or a dial-up modem) printer
Time

- How many total hours will the course be offered? Over what period of time?
- How often will the class meet and for how many minutes per class?
- What day(s) of the week and at what time of day will the course are held?
- Where does the course fit into the schedule of the learners? (for example, it is held in the evening when the leaners may be tired after having been at work or at school all day? Or during the work day the learners are getting some level of release time from their jobs? Or earlier in the day before work/school?)

Action Plan (AP)

AP is the last step in the ESP needs analysis process. It includes information about attempts to improve the current needs analysis process. It involves identifying the challenges in conducting needs analysis and implementing the syllabus based on those needs. It should also suggest ways to address those challenges.

The following is a case study that highlights the process of collecting data for a TSA and PSA in a nurse training program and taken from Friedenberg, et al, (2003), page 57.

Case Study 5.4: Provider Collects Oral and Written Data on Nurses for Program in Persian Gulf Hospital

A new hospital was being built in one of the Persian Gulf states, and employees were being recruited from a variety of nationalities and language backgrounds. The official language of communication in the hospital among employees at all levels would be English. The hospital wanted to hire some experienced nurses whose English was not strong enough to assure that they would be able to communicate successfully in this environment, so a workplace language training firm was brought in to design a program for these nurses.
In the initial phase of the instructional needs assessment, the provider determined that the nurses needed to be able to talk to other nurses and physicians in English about patients and to read patient histories. In some cases, they also needed to be able to talk to patients and their families in English. The provider needed to determine which of the designated nurses already possessed the requisite English skills and which needed English language training. For the latter group, the provider also needed to ascertain whether differences in proficiency levels would warrant separate class groupings. Because assessment would be conducted by an ESOL professional rather than a medical professional, assessment tasks had to be accessible to a lay reader.
For the assessment instrument, the trainer developed a simple integrated skills task that involved retelling a story. Relatively short narrative cases were taken from technically accurate medical materials written for access by lay persons. Each potential participant was given a fixed time to read the cases and process the content. Then the potential participant returned the case to the examiner and retold the case orally. The retelling was audiotaped.

Two forms of assessment were used. While listening to the retelling, the examiner rated it for overall intelligibility on a 5-point scale with simple descriptors, with 5 being the highest. The second evaluation involved recall of idea units. Each case had been analyzed for the number of idea units, which were listed on a form. Listening to each potential participant's audiotape, the examiner checked off the idea units on the form.

The provider administered this test to several nurses whose English the hospital administrators considered satisfactorily fluent. This established the descriptors for Level 5 on the overall intelligibility rating scale and the number of idea units that made up a score of "complete" on the idea unit scale. The provider was then able to develop descriptors for the other levels on the two scales and to assess each potential participant's performance on the assessment task using these scores.

2. Determination of Goals and Objectives of the Course

A goal is something that one wants to achieve and in the case of language learning, goals are, general statements of the overall, long term purpose of the course but they are not vague. In Grave's words, 'goals are a way of putting into words the main purposes and intended outcomes of your course and if we use an analogy of a journey, the destination is the goal; the journey is the course' (2000, p.75). Goals are related to the acquisition of a job in the future or communication of the target language community (Harmer, 1991). They should not aim only at the acquisition of certain knowledge and skills but also at the development of a positive attitude towards language and culture. Goals should be realistic; otherwise the students would be de-motivated (Richards, 1990). Objectives, on the other hand, are the specific ways in which the goals will be achieved and objectives serve as a bridge between goals and needs and generally several objectives make up a goal (Graves, 2000). They may refer to 'activities, skills, language type or a combination of them all' (Harmer, 1991, p.269). Objectives should be congruent to the goals and relevant to how the teacher conceptualize the content of the course (Nunan, 1988). Formulating goals and objectives for a particular course is very important in ESP course design as it allows the ESP practitioners to create a clear picture of what the course is going to be about. Clear understanding of goals and objectives will help teachers to be sure about what material to teach, and when and how it should be taught. K. Graves has given a clear description of how one should state goals and objectives and the example below is based on her book *Designing Language Courses: A Guide for Teachers* (2000, p.79)

Goal: at the end of 12-week ESP course, ESP professionals will be able to develop scientific and technical writing skills and strategies through a variety of activities moving in sequence from simple to more complex.

Objectives: Students will be able to write:

- Amplified definitions
- Classifications
- Abstracts
- Description of a mechanism
- Description of a process
- Mini-research paper of + pages including introduction, materials and methods, results and a brief description
- Organize and draft a one page outline with main points and include 2-3 discussion questions
- Research a topic area using at least 3-4 sources
- Critique peer products in regard to content and mechanics

3. Conceptualizing the ESP Course Content

My experience says that in Bangladesh, ESP practitioners mostly use exactly the same textbooks and syllabuses while teaching different students with the same or similar majors. But students with different majors and their needs are different and with the rapid development of the ESP world, changes in students' needs and interests are inevitable. This is true of students in Bangladesh. Therefore, in establishing a learner-centered approach there should be a shift in ESP pedagogy in the selection of the content of the course and this shift should be aimed at serving the learners' interests and needs. Conceptualizing the ESP course content in a proper way could serve those interests and needs. According to Graves (1996 and 2000), conceptualizing the content means figuring out what aspects of language and language learning are included, emphasized and integrated in a course. Therefore, when taking into account information about the students, goals, and objectives, ESP teachers need to determine which aspects of ESP learning will be included, emphasized, integrated, and used as a core of the course to address students' needs and expectations.

There are different ways of conceptualizing the content. Traditional way of conceptualizing content in an ESP course, which involves teaching grammatical structures, sentence patterns and vocabulary, and which is known as syntactic approach to syllabus design has lost much of its appeal after the advent of what is known as communicative approach in ESP. Conceptualizing the content is not a context-free process. So the communicative approach should be followed in conceptualizing ESP content. According to Van Ek as cited in Graves (1996), communicative approach is based on ideas about language, and about purposes of language learning, and it has added several dimensions to conceptualizing content. It added the dimension of language functions such as greeting, apologizing and persuading and conveying information and the dimension of notions such as time, space and relationship to specific topic related such as home,

weather and personal identification. Communicative language teaching is seen as being used for communicative purposes in situations with other people, which calls on the learner to pay attention to both the content of the language and its appropriateness with respect to formality, non-verbal behavior, tone and so on. For example, a communicative situation includes such an action as ordering food in restaurant and requesting information at a bank and so on. And as the proficiency movement in language teaching gained popularity, and the development of proficiency guidelines have emphasized four skills based approach to syllabus design (Omaggio Hadley 1993). Yalden (1983, p. 124) has also suggested that different elements (linguistic forms; functional, discourse, and rhetorical components; specialized content and surface features of language) should be emphasized in different proportions at various phases of language learning and incorporated into the syllabus.

So syllabus grid made on the basis of the above approach would look as follows:

		Content	
Culture	Tasks and activities	Competencies	
Listening skills	Speaking skills	Reading skills	Writing skills
Functions	Notions and topics	Communicative situations	
Grammar	Pronunciation	Vocabulary	

Figure 2 taken from (Graves, 1996, p.34).

Thus, while conceptualizing the ESP course content, ESP teachers can aim at focusing on developing not only grammatical competence of ESP learners but also communicative competence, which encompasses grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence and discourse competence, (Canale, 1983). It should also become clear that all these skills and aspects of the language are interwoven in the real- life communication. Therefore, they should be treated, taught, and tested as one inseparable unit as suggested above.

4. Selecting and Developing ESP Materials and Activities

    In Bangladesh, for many ESP teachers, selection of teaching materials is based on their availability and materials available are mainly textbooks, many of which may not be tailored to the teacher's context and student needs. This not to say that use of textbooks when teaching students is always bad. In this respect, Nation and Macalister (2010, p. 106) have remarked:

    Once a course book has been chosen, teachers may follow the course book very closely, making only small essential changes and additions. There are several reasons why teachers may follow the course book closely:

1. Their school or Ministry of Education requires them to follow it closely. This usually is because of a wish to standardise the quantity and quality of the education that all learners get and sometimes because of a lack of trust in the skills of the teachers. 2. The teacher may be inexperienced or largely untrained and there is security in following the set course book closely. The teacher may also have no idea about how to adapt the course book.3. The teacher is convinced of the high quality of the course book. 4. The learners wish to cover every part of the course book.

Likewise, Graves (1996) has suggested that while selecting materials, ESP practitioners should take into account the following issues:

- Effectiveness in achieving the course purposes;
- Appropriateness of the materials so that the students will feel comfortable. This means that the material will be relevant to their interests and language level.
- Feasibility, so that the material will be in accordance with the students language and cognitive capabilities and the course will not prove too difficult for them.

Choosing materials may involve development of new material when teaching a course if there are no suitable materials for it; it may also involve collection of various materials or adaptation of existing ones in order for them to be tailored to the student needs and interests. That is, if an ESP teacher is pressed for time and dependent on a textbook, he/she may adopt and adapt it to the needs and interests of his/her students and use it time and again. Nation and Macalister (2010) have also suggested adopting and adapting language textbooks as per the context and needs of the learners, as required. Furthermore, ESP materials should be authentic, meaning that these materials were designed for purposes other than teaching (Nunan, 1985). Regarding the use of materials in the ESP classroom, Harding notes:

- Use contexts, texts and situations from the students' subject area. Whether they are real or simulated, they will naturally involve the language the students need.
- Exploit authentic materials that students use in their specialism or vocation –and don't be put off by the fact that it may not look like 'normal English'.
- Make the tasks authentic as well as the texts. Get the students doing things with the material that they actually need to do in their work. (Harding et al., 2007, pp.10-11).

Treating authentic materials as very important in an ESP course, Basturkmen (2010, p.63) also observes that "Authentic texts play an important role in demonstrating 'real' language use. If we aim to demonstrate to our class of nursing students the forms and features of nursing care plans, we would generally wish to show the class samples of authentic care plans." However, finding suitable authentic texts is not always easy. According to McDonough (1984), the source of teaching materials can be published materials (textbooks, journals, and magazines), real speech (lecturers, hotel communication, and seminars), specialized texts and materials that are

simplified and adapted from public materials or instances of real speech. Besides, student tasks and activities should enable the students to deal with situations related to their future employment or study. Similarly, these activities should be interesting in order to be motivating to ESP students (Xenodohidis, 2006). Simulation games and problem solving techniques should be appropriate and of interest to the students Moreover, communication situations need to involve students since they give a different dimension to language learning. In this regard, Graves (1996, p.37) notes, "such an approach may facilitate the search for materials in that emphasis is not the materials themselves but on what the students do with them." In many cases, the ESP teacher is to play a different role than that of the EGP teacher. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1988, cited in Kaur (2006), the role of the ESP teacher is a very important and controversial one. Dudley Evans et al. as cited in Gatehouse (2001) have identified five key roles for the ESP practitioner: teacher, course designer and materials provider, collaborator, researcher and evaluator. In many situations, the teacher expects or is expected, to control the class, to provide information about skills and language or to control the activities and in some cases, s/he is expected to take on the role of only a facilitator, encouraging the class to map out the type of activities they want to do. The latter role of the ESP teacher involves students more and encourages student autonomy.

5. Organization of Course Content and Activities

Organization of course content is known as sequencing or grading .It is important since it provides the teacher and the students with a clear idea of what will be taught (Xenodohidis, 2006). Grading or sequencing has been defined as the arrangement of the content of a language course or textbook so that it is presented in a helpful way. Gradation would affect the order in which words, word meanings, tenses, structures, topics, functions, skills, etc. are presented. Gradation may be based on the complexity of an item, its frequency in written or spoken English, or its importance for the learner (Richards, 2006). Regarding organizing the course content and activities, Widdowson, (1990, p. 127) cited in Robinson (2009) has remarked in this regard that the syllabus formalizes the content to be learned in a domain of knowledge or behavior, and "arranges this content in a succession of interim objectives." According to Richards (2001) and Richards and Schmidt (2010), principles on which sequencing of content in language teaching courses should be based include simple to complex (easier items occur before more difficult ones), chronology (items occur according to the order in which events naturally occur, e.g. listening before speaking) , need (items occur according to when learners are most likely to need them outside of the classroom) , prerequisite learning (an item is taught because it provides a foundation for the next step in the learning process) , whole to part or part to whole (the overall structure of an item, such as a paragraph, may be taught before its components part, or vice versa) , spiral sequencing (items are recycled but with new aspects of the item appearing with subsequent appearances).

According to Graves (1996 and 2000) there are two principles underlying the concept of sequencing material; building and recycling. Building can follow the process of the simple to the more complex, from concrete to more open ended, while recycling means that the students deal with previously taught materials in a new way "in a new skill area, in a different type of activity or with a new focus" (Graves, p.38). Another two ways to consider course organization is as a cycle and as a matrix. In a cyclical approach, the teacher introduces a cycle of activities following a consistent sequence. In a matrix approach, the teacher works with some activities and as time passes, decides with which ones to continue depending on the interests of the students and availability of the materials (Graves, 1996). All or some of above activities may be done following a content based instruction (CBI) approach, also known as Content and Language Integrated Learning(CLIL), "a method that integrates language instruction with subject matter instruction in the target language, for example, studying science, social studies or mathematics through the medium of English in a content-based ESL program." (Richards et al., 2010, p.125). In this regard, Hyland (2006, p.86) has commented:

> Content-based syllabuses are thematic, sheltered or adjunct types, differing in their orientations towards language and content. Theme-based models emphasize language competence while sheltered models attempt to help students master content material and so are more discipline-specific (Brinton et al., 1989:18). In the adjunct model the language course is linked with a content course which shares the same content base, the rationale being that students will develop strategies and skills which will transfer from one course to the other. In this type of syllabus, language is also seen as functional and is integrated with the teaching of content.

Brinton (2003) has also noted in this account that principles for CBI are include basing instructional decisions on content rather than on language criteria, integrating the four skills of writing, reading, listening and speaking into the course, involving students in all phases of the learning process, choosing content for its relevance to students' lives, interests and/or academic goals, selecting authentic texts and tasks and drawing students' obvert attention to language features of [specialized discourse], which is in fact discourse analysis meaning descriptions of the language use in a particular domain. Specialized discourse analysis is considered to be an important step in ESP course design since an ESP course would aim at offering realistic descriptions of discourse derived from empirical investigations of communication and language use in the community or specialist field. Admitting that specialized discourse analysis in ESP course design is invaluable, Basturkmen (2010, p. 36), too, has observed:

> ESP endeavours to teach the language the learners need to communicate effectively in their work or study areas. Given this central premise, it goes without saying that the language content of the course needs to be based on detailed, accurate and realistic descriptions of how language is actually used in these areas.

Dudley-Evans (2001) also suggested giving importance to text analysis, saying that the key stage after needs assessment in ESP course development and materials design is 'when the ESP teacher considers the (written or spoken) texts that the learner has to produce and/or understand, tries to identify the texts' key features and devises teaching materials that will enable learners to use the texts effectively,(p.134).

As to sequencing, the content and activities of the syllabus may also be sequenced based on the standard operational procedure (SOP) of the related job. The tasks to be performed in each stage need to be identified. Those identified tasks are then sequenced based on the operational procedure. The sequenced tasks are again analyzed to reveal the language functions and language expressions needed for those tasks. Certain information related to the cultural understanding and standard performance required for those tasks can also be assessed and analyzed. This approach is known as Task-Based language Teaching (TBALT). Task based approach to language teaching is a comparatively new approach which is based on the findings of linguists and psychologists. This approach runs counter to the principle of traditional approaches such as PPP (presentation, practice, production) model of teaching (Foster, 1999). Task based syllabus, which is the cornerstone of TBA is defined by Richards, et.al. as "a syllabus which is organised around TASKs, rather than in terms of grammar or vocabulary. For example, syllabus may suggest a variety of different kinds of task which the learner are expected to carry out in the language, such as using the telephone to obtain information; drawing maps based on oral instruction; giving orders and instruction to others, etc." (2010, p.585). TBLT takes into account the need for authentic materials. It is a more effective way of learning a language since it provides a purpose for the use and learning of a language other than simply learning language items for their own sake. It emphasizes the need for designing relevant activities for the real world language needs of the students. It suggests that the activities in which the language is used to complete meaningful tasks enhance learning. TBLT suggests teaching the real tasks necessitated in the future job or study (Nunan, 1988). Breen (2001, p.153) noted:

> Two main tasks types are identified in task-based syllabus design: a syllabus may be constituted of (1) communicative or target-like tasks or (2) metacommunicative or learning tasks. The former are those involving learners in sharing meaning in the target language about everyday tasks….the second task type is facilitative of the learner's involvement in communicative or target like tasks. Metacommunicative or learning tasks (sometimes called pedagogic tasks) involve learners in sharing meaning about how the language works or used in target situations and/or sharing meaning about students' learning processes.

Furthermore, ESP teachers sometimes find it difficult to motivate their professionally oriented students for language learning when they find themselves troubled by lack of sufficient content knowledge and when they find the textbooks to be boring. In this case TBLT with real-life tasks may raise motivation among the students.

6. Evaluation

Evaluation is the last, but not the least important stage in ESP course design. Hutchinson et al. (1987) have noted that evaluation consists of two forms: learner assessment and course evaluation, adding that learner assessment should be done in order to decide whether the desired proficiency level of students to perform the communicative tasks have been achieved and that results of this kind of evaluation helps all stake holders to 'decide whether and how much language instruction is required' (p.114). Hughes (2003) has discussed four purposes for language testing: to measure proficiency, to diagnose specific strengths and weaknesses, to place students in a course or program and to assess their achievement in a course or program. In the opinion of Hyland (2006, p.99):

> Assessment refers to the ways used to evaluate information about a learner's language ability or achievement. It is an integral aspect of the teaching–learning process and central to students' progress towards increasing control of their skills and understandings. It is also an everyday classroom practice, as teachers continually make judgments about the progress, strengths and weaknesses of their learners and communicate these to students. Assessment therefore has both a teaching and testing function, and a distinction is often made between formative and summative assessment. As a formative process, assessment is closely linked with teaching and with issues of teacher response, or feedbacks, allowing the teacher to advise students, monitor learning and fine-tune instruction. Summative assessment, on the other hand, is concerned with 'summing up' how much a student has learned at the end of a course.

However, both formative and summative assessment should be followed by ESP practitioners while assessing students and as such they should structure their classroom activities so that they can assess their students while the students are participating in a course. And the summative assessment form should be used to assess students' achievement at the end of the course.

ESP practitioners should evaluate their courses to improve and promote their effectiveness by filling the needs of the stake holders and as such, course evaluation should be conducted to find out whether the course objectives and goals are being achieved or have been achieved. Hutchinson et al. (1987, p.152) have observed in this respect:

> Since the ESP course exists to satisfy a particular educational need, evaluation helps to show how well the course is actually fulfilling the need. A sponsor may also wish to be supplied with clear information about the suitability of the course and may well base decisions as to further investment and support on the results.

Therefore, all the stake holders should be involved in the evaluation process and by using questionnaires, surveys, talks, etc., ESP practitioners may ask the students to express their opinion on the subject matter, instructional methods, activities, and teacher's role and performance and so on. Evaluation of the course is a brave step on the part of the ESP practitioner. In this regard, he/she should be open-minded in listening to and acting on the learners' comments, suggestions and criticism in planning and teaching future ESP courses.

'Development of an ESP Course is a Work in Progress'

ESP practitioners are not restricted to developing a new course just by planning a course, since course development is an on-going process. This development process is displayed in a figure below:
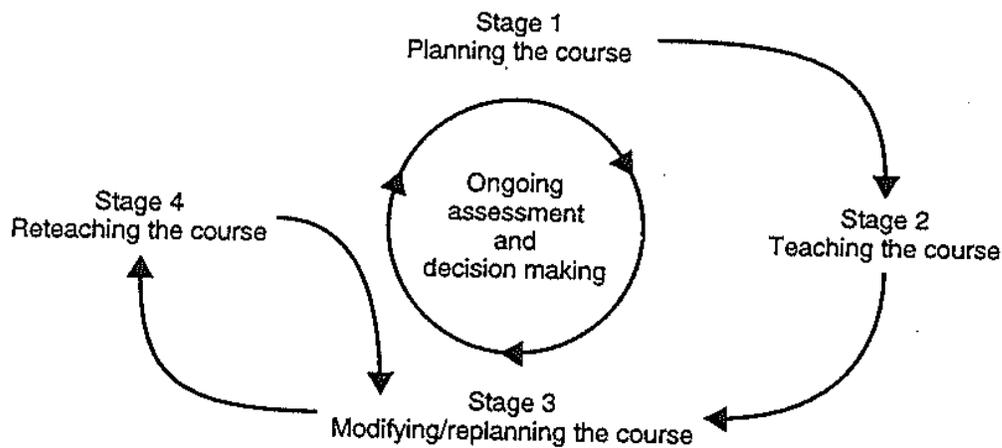

Figure 3 taken from Graves (1996)

In the words of Graves (1996), course development includes planning a course, teaching it and modifying the teaching plan, while the course is in progress and after the course is over. Graves (2000) has remarked in this respect that "teaching is an organic, unpredictable, challenging, satisfying and frustrating process and it is not an imperfect craft but a dynamic one." Quite often in the classroom things occur in an unexpected or unplanned way. So the next course objectives of the teacher will change as per what happened in an unpredictable way in the classroom. Moreover, with the new needs of the new students, the goals and objectives set by the teacher in the previous course will change. That is to say that as time passes, we may have students with different needs and backgrounds, which will inevitably make it necessary for course designers to modify every course and adjust it to the needs and interests of a particular group of students. To cope with this situation, ESP teachers have to be innovative and flexible.

According to Sysoyev (2000), flexible teachers are open to making necessary changes while teaching. They can see what can or should be modified, added, or changed to make the course reflect students' interests and needs. Additionally, in Graves's (2000) view, there may be changes in the knowledge in the field and this may necessitate changes in the course objectives. In teaching, instructors are constant learners. With their professional experience growing, teachers' views, teaching concepts, and methodological knowledge and in the case ESP practitioner, content knowledge are supposed to change. Therefore, course development can be seen as an on-going process. Graves (2000) has rightly remarked in this respect that 'designing a course is a work in progress both in their conception and in their implementation' (p.21).

Conclusion

The purpose of this article is to introduce an ESP course developing framework suggested mainly by Graves (1996 and 2000). As this paper illustrates, course-developing process may start with (1) needs assessment process (2) determining course goals and objectives, (3) conceptualizing the course content, (4) selecting and developing teaching materials, (5) organization of content and activities and (6) course evaluation. I also think that course development should be viewed as an on-going process, a process in which the ESP practitioner will make necessary changes to the course so that it is suited to students' interests and needs, even while the course is in progress. Detailed discussion on many other aspects of course design in ESP such as approaches and methods would have certainly enriched this paper if incorporated into this article. However, discussion on those aspects is beyond the purview of this paper and this researcher hopes that more research works will be conducted by ESP professionals in Bangladesh in this field.

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