

Work Shadowing, a Back From the Future Technique?

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Abstract:

English has long reigned uncontested as a lingua franca. Its utter dominance over sensitive domains like technology, finance, and politics, to name but a few, made it irresistibly appealing in the eyes of many. Algeria, in response to popular demand, and wary of being left out of the equation for success, recently launched an initiative designed to give prominence to the language, grant it its rightful status, and widen its usage. This overdue project, as grand and visionary as it is, implied that much was awaited in terms of needs' fulfilment from teachers and ESP practitioners. The latter are specifically expected to be in for a challenge in light of their learners' narrow as well as individualist needs. However, if one were to contemplate the sub-par work conditions under which they operate, one would be wise to worry about their ability to realize the said aspirations. Ergo, this investigation attempted to assess the precision of needs analyses carried out by business teachers in particular. Moreover, it took interest in the impact of using the work shadowing technique would have on the accuracy of those analyses. To accomplish these aims, a jump in time was mimicked by selecting two distinct locations as research contexts, namely, the finance and international commerce department located within the economics faculty at Djillali Liabes university, and ENIE's solar manufactory. The intent was to examine how language training received in the university would benefit the students once in the target situation. Therefore, the participation of one hundred master students, ten teachers, and former learners currently ENIE's employees was just as welcomed as it was warranted. Four data collection tools were utilized to see this research through, including two distinct questionnaires, an interview, and the work shadowing technique. The results demonstrate serious flaws in the conducted needs analyses, more precisely a disregard towards the Target Situation Analysis along with the necessities. They also confirm the positive effect that the work shadowing can have on the exactitude of needs analyses.

Keywords: ESP, needs analysis, Target Situation Analysis, Work-shadowing.

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1.Introduction:

The surge of interest in English that Algeria has been experiencing during the recent years has yet to reach its peak. Indeed, the Algerian people, not oblivious to the prestigious and utilitarian status that the language holds worldwide, see it as synonymous with modernity as well as prosperity, and, therefore, have long been requesting its adoption as the first foreign language at the detriment of French. Their demands, growing ever so loudly, did not fall on deaf ears, as the government, in a form of indulgence, commenced to take praised actions. Its initial deed, and a highly anticipated one for that matter, was to implement English at the level of elementary schools. Its latest motion on the other hand, was certainly much grander in scale and significance, as the ministry of higher education announced its decision to train university teachers in English starting the next academic year, in what many deemed a clear move towards the establishment of the language as that of instruction. This newly discovered affinity for English, while indubitably commendable, sets high expectations for ESP practitioners, who are solicited more than ever before, as well as entrusted with the duties of catering to their learners' needs, however diversified or unique they may be, and linguistically preparing them for their upcoming responsibilities. Fulfilling such obligations rests nearly entirely on the professors' capability to identify the aforementioned needs, both accurately and comprehensively. However, in light of the teaching circumstances that teachers are subjected to, which remain afar from the ideal standards of ESP practice, a concern over their ability to succeed at that chore becomes legitimate, if not imperative. That is why, this research paper endeavoured to investigate the precision of needs analyses conducted by ESP practitioners in general, and Business English teachers in particular. In addition, it explored the effect of using the work-shadowing technique to hone the accuracy of those analyses. To achieve these objectives, a cross-contextual approach was a must, seeing how in order to determine the exactitude of a carried-out needs analysis, one should gauge the usability as well as practicality of the course built based upon it to learners once they join the professional field. Ergo, the department of finance and international commerce located at the economics faculty of Djillali Liabes university was selected as a research context, along with the solar unit within ENIE's headquarters. These two settings housed the hundred master students of finance and international commerce, the ten Business English university professors, and the employees who graciously participated in the study. Additionally, they witnessed the use of four data collection tools, namely, a students' questionnaire, a teachers' questionnaire, an interview with an ENIE's employee, and a work-shadowing session, all of which, revolved around addressing the following research questions:

- To what extent are the Business English teachers successful at fully capturing their learners' needs?
- How lavish are the Business English teachers in their use of the available arsenal of needs analysis techniques?
- To what extent is the work shadowing technique useful at maximizing the accuracy of conducted needs analyses?

For these research inquiries, the subsequent hypotheses were suggested:

- Business English teachers are partially successful at capturing their students' needs.
- Business English teachers are not taking full advantage of the available array of needs analysis tools.
- The work shadowing technique is significantly useful at maximizing the accuracy of conducted needs analyses.

The present research paper was divided into two main sections, a theoretical one, and a methodological one. The theoretical segment, a literature review, examined the tried-and-tested ESP process, focusing more specifically on one key stage, needs analysis, its components as well as procedures. Moreover, it gave preferential attention to one particular needs analysis tool, the work shadowing technique. The methodological part on the other hand, provided a candid description of the methodology followed throughout the investigative journey, including details about the utilized sampling process and data gathering instruments. Furthermore, it offered interpretive analyses of the generated results.

2.Literature review:

English's unrivalled stature as a lingua franca, coupled with globalization, made ESP highly coveted. Its inclination towards purposiveness, focus on the learner, flexibility, and customizability are merely few of the selling points behind its incessant rise in popularity. However, while there is an undisputed agreement over its usefulness, consensus among scholars regarding its definition has proven to be far from within reach, a disaccord that many attribute to the complex as well as multifaceted nature of the discipline. To some, like Mackay and Mountford (1978:2), ESP simply referred to the **"teaching of English for a clearly utilitarian purpose"**. To others, such as Hutchinson and Waters (1987:19), it represented **"an approach to language teaching in which all the decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning"**. Those with a penchant for deepness and prominence, attempted to distance themselves from their peers, and add more profoundness to their explications by concentrating on specificities of the discipline. Robinson (1991:2) for example, opted to highlight the uniqueness of ESP learners vis-à-vis the rest by pointing out that those who engage in ESP courses do so **"not because they are interested in the English language or English culture as such, but because they need English for study or work purposes"**. Her viewpoint was on par with that of Basturkmen (2006:18), whose explanatory strategy involved contrasting ESP with general English, and drawing attention to how language in the former's case **"is learnt not for its own sake or for the sake of gaining a general education, but to smooth the path to entry or greater linguistic efficiency, professional or workplace environments"**. Crystal (1995) on the other hand, chose to lay emphasis on the produced courses themselves, more particularly their contexts, which, he asserted, are always harmonious with the learner's professional needs.

In ESP, as in any other field of study, tendencies towards certain modi operandi and conventions are developed. Named after the discipline itself, the ESP process, initially introduced by Dudley-Evans and St. John in 1998, swiftly became heavily recommended and analogous with good practice. Its coiners described it as a set of interconnected as well as complementary stages that should in no way be considered as linear. These phases include needs analysis, course design, teaching-learning, assessment, and evaluation. Despite the incitement to view the aforementioned stages as equally important, one in particular, needs analysis, has long been viewed by the ESP milieu as the cornerstone upon which ESP courses are made. Its conceptual emergence preceded that of ESP according to West (1994), who insisted that the term first appeared in India in 1920, but gained traction later on during the 1960s as a result of the shift towards the focalization on the learner. Richards and Pratt (1992:242) construed it as **"the process of determining the needs for which a learner or a group of learners acquires a language and arranges the needs according to priorities"**, a depiction that resonated well with Graves (2000:98), who still found imperative to stress that it is **"an ongoing process"**. This trait of continuousness was most definitely not lost on Brown (1995) either, as was made evident by his delineation of needs analysis, which portrayed it as

a systematic venture to capture the data required for the development of a course that would not only consider, but also accommodate, the learners' individual differences. In the same vein, Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998:126) also subscribed to the notion that needs analysis could allow for the discovery of learners' uniqueness, and expressed regarding it as an opportunity "**to know learners as people, as language users and as language learners**".

In their quest to elucidate needs analysis, some savants thought wise to channel their energy into interpreting its core concept, needs. However, due to the latter being, as declared by Richterich (1983:2), "**at best ambiguous**", a convoluted conflict of opinions over their exact meaning, quite similar to the one ESP fell victim to, emerged among the various involved parties, resulting in the production of a multitude of needs taxonomies. These classifications, numerous as they were, often overlapped conceptually, and flirted with the risk of being redundant, with the exception of two categorizations, namely, the one put forward by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), and the one generated by Brindley (1984), the former of which, eclipsed its counterpart in terms of popularity as the years went by. It broke down needs into two main categories, the target needs, and the learning needs. The target needs refer to, in the words of Hutchinson and Waters (1987:54), "**what the learner needs to do in the target situation**". That is to say, they pertain to the linguistic as well as communicative requirements of the target environment, and the learners' ability to meet those prerequisites. The two erudites pushed for this category to be viewed as an umbrella class under which lie three distinct types of needs, videlicet the necessities, the lacks, and the wants. The necessities were clarified as the linguistic competencies that the learner is expected, if not mandated, to possess so as to be able to adequately and fluently carry out his/her duties in the target context, whatever they may be. To put it differently, they epitomize the end goal, the level of language mastery and command that the disciple aspires for whilst at the course's dawn, and should reach once at its dusk. The lacks on the other hand, essentially symbolize the gap between the learner's initial linguistic proficiency, explained by Hutchinson and Waters (1987:55) in layman's terms as "**what the learner knows already**", and the targeted one, embodied by the aforementioned necessities. As for the wants, or as Colpaert (2010) termed them, "learners' personal goals", they encapsulate the learners' subjective linguistic ambitions, meaning the language areas, skills, and abilities in which they deem themselves to be lacking, and that they wish to better. Yet, since these desires rarely line up with the necessities, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) shared their concern over them being neglected in favour of the latter, and urged ESP practitioners to try, as best as they could, to find a compromise between the two. Apropos the learning needs, referred to as the "instructional logistical needs" by Savage and Storer (2001:141), they constituted another source of worry in the eyes of Hutchinson and Waters (1987:54), who, upon delineating them as "**what the learner needs to do in order to learn**", cautioned fellow ESP devotees against deprioritizing them for the sake of the target needs. They compared whoever does so to a traveller who, whilst planning for his/her journey, concentrates solely as well as merely on the depart and destination points, thus leaving out the road between the two to be taken.

The variety of the proposed needs typologies translated into an imperative for diverse analytical approaches that would keep up with, as well as guarantee the identification of, each and every one of those needs. The scholars did not disappoint, and delivered a myriad of approaches in hopes of satisfying that need. The submitted approaches included the Target Situation Analysis (TSA), the Present Situation Analysis (PSA), the Pedagogic Needs Analysis (PNA), and language audits. However, since perfection is seldom achieved, and any approach is bound to suffer from certain shortcomings, Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) advocated strongly for eclecticism, arguing it is the only way to compensate for each approach's flaws and narrow scope. In fact, they went as far as presenting a comprehensive

framework of their own that combined the entirety of the abovementioned approaches, thus proffering the ultimate, most exhaustive, needs analysis. Still, due to miscellaneous influential factors, time being the most recurrent of which, the majority of ESP practitioners tend to abstain from adopting the previously stated model, and resolve, instead, to merge only two approaches, with the combination of TSA and PSA, massively endorsed by Robinson (1991), being the most widespread one. TSA is devoted to the revelation of the linguistic mastery necessary for one's proper functioning in the target atmosphere. In other words, it strives to pinpoint the necessities, and define, as claimed by Robinson (1991:8), "***students' needs at the end of a language course***". However, its utter dedication to the establishment of the necessities, while unparalleled in its efficacy, does not exempt it from requiring complementary assistance from other approaches to target the types of needs it overlooks or is oblivious towards, such as the lacks, hence the need for PSA. A product of Richterich and Chancerel (1980), PSA exerts, as maintained by Robinson (1991) as well as Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), to supply an accurate evaluative report of the learners' current linguistic level by shedding light on their deficiencies, i.e., their lacks, and pointing out their potencies, if existent. It conventionally calls for both the use of assessment tools like placement tests and/or diagnostic tests for the collection of objective data about the learners' linguistic status, and the employment of means such as questionnaires for the capture of the learners' subjective opinion regarding their linguistic mastery, among other crucial parameters. Being the successor to TSA has often put PSA in comparison with its predecessor. Songhori (2008:10), quoted in Sierocka (2014:46), did his best to explicate the relationship that binds the two by indicating that while TSA "***tries to establish what the learners are expected to be like at the end of the course***", PSA "***attempts to identify what they are like at the beginning of it***". Therefore, the renown of the TSA-PSA combo is owed to the balanced, inclusive data package it produces, which suffices, in most cases, for the development of a well-rounded course.

To bare the above-listed types of needs, and conduct the discussed procedures, ESP practitioners are presented with a wide assortment of tools as well techniques that vary in their suitability and targetability, one of which is the work shadowing technique. It first emerged, if one were to believe Wellington (1993) and Harris (1997), cited in Mortimore (1999:155), as a career counselling tool designed to aid, advise, and direct learners in general, and high school pupils in particular, whilst choosing a professional trajectory to embark on, in order to ensure that they select one that is in line with both their ambitions and their faculties. Its modus operandi entailed, as elucidated by Needham and Dransfield (1994:748), "***keeping in step with an employee, observing the tasks performed and learning about the employee's role***". The tool made its entry to the ESP milieu, according to Frendo (2005), once needs analysts picked up on its potentiality as a needs' identification device. He attested that its introduction to the ESP practice did not at all alter its methodology, which still centred around meticulously observing a person's actions during a predetermined duration of time. Its advertised advantage over the rest of the needs analysis apparatus lies in the unmatched closeness to the subject whilst in his/her professional habitat that it offers, which assures the establishment of the necessities while leaving no room for guesswork or uncertainty. Moreover, many profusely praised the work shadowing technique for taking into account the contextuality of jobs, and how the same job can be different depending on its setting, which allows the instrument to surpass its competitors by determining the linguistic requisites of a particular position in a particular firm, thus adding an appreciated layer of specificity to needs analysis.

3. Research methodology:

The transcendent nature of the tackled problem, both in time and space, imposed that the investigation be conducted across two separate contexts, namely, the department of finance and international commerce situated at the economics faculty of Djillali Liabes, and ENIE's solar factory. Furthermore, it also called for the participation of one hundred master students of finance and international commerce, their business English teachers, and three of ENIE's employees, one of whom was particularly more solicited than her colleagues. In the spirit of triangulation, four data collection tools were used to gather facts about, and extract information from, the informants, including a closed-ended questionnaire, a mixed one, a structured interview, and a work shadowing session.

3.1 The sampling process:

Out of determination to provide equal participatory chances to all those willing to take part in the study, the simple random sampling techniques, renowned for their egalitarianism, were put to use while selecting the participant students. They yielded a divergent sample of one hundred master students of finance and international commerce that foreshadowed an amalgamation of perspectives and linguistic opinions.

In regards to the teachers, their small count represented a golden opportunity for utter inclusiveness and representation that was too good to pass, and which rendered sampling absolutely futile. Fortunately, the entirety of the teaching staff at the finance and international commerce department, all ten of them, responded favourably to the researcher's request for participation. Their varying professional experiences and diverse viewpoints were certainly a welcomed addition to the set of collected data.

As for ENIE's employees, their involvement in the research was contingent on, in addition to their willingness, their availability. However, by good luck, a sandstorm had hit the city the day the work shadowing session and the interview were scheduled to be conducted, which put the manufactory at a halt, freeing most of the personnel's agendas. As a result, all the supply agents accepted to be shadowed, one of whom in particular was kind enough to grant an interview at the end of the shadowing session. Additionally, the head of engineering and an accountant expressed their disposition to be shadowed as well, an offer that the researcher gladly took.

3.2 The data collection tools:

To leave no stones unturned, and come at the problem from every possible angle, a parallel mixed methods approach was followed throughout the investigation. It, being an eclectic approach, incorporated the use of one quantitative tool, a closed-ended questionnaire, and three qualitative ones, including a mixed questionnaire, a structured interview, and the work shadowing technique, for the production of convergent data.

3.3 The students' questionnaire:

Consisting entirely of closed-ended questions, the questionnaire was designed as such to ensure the ease of response for the participants, thus securing their engagement, and reducing the likelihood of them skipping over certain questions or leaving blank answers. It had, to the researcher's delight, the added as well as undeniable benefit of facilitating the codification of the obtained responses. The seventeen questions that comprised the questionnaire combined Likert scale and multiple-choice questions. They were unevenly spread across four distinct sections, namely, "background information", "necessities", "lacks", and "wants". Despite

each having a specific purpose, the segments were intended to collectively serve the questionnaire's grander aim of inciting the participant students to draw a subjective linguistic profile of their own needs.

3.4 The teachers' questionnaire:

An originally structured interview that had to be morphed into a mixed questionnaire to better accommodate the informants' busy schedules, and attain a wider participation on their end. It encompassed twelve questions that populated its two main sections, entitled "background information", and "ESP mindset". The questionnaire's aims were manifold, and centred around enquiring into the participants' conversance with, as well as abidance by, certain concepts that are congruent with good ESP practice, faithfully portraying their teaching routines, reporting their familiarity, or lack of, with the work shadowing technique, along with their stance regarding it. Also queued, was an attempt to incite the informants towards devising the rationale behind the inclination among ESP practitioners to teach general English instead of ESP.

3.5 The work shadowing technique:

The session occurred on Tuesday the 15th of March, 2022, upon receiving the green light from ENIE's management. It precisely took place at the solar industrial unit, one of ENIE's four major establishments, and lasted a whole day. This gave the researcher ample time to accomplish the set objective of becoming acquainted with the shadowed subjects' various positions, surprisingly complex duties, as well as varying degrees of English usage, and, by extension, their necessities.

3.6 The ENIE's employee's interview:

A structured interview that lasted for 45 minutes, and had as interviewee one of ENIE's supply agents. It constituted of five milestones, including "verbal consent", "background information", "English within ENIE", "the linguistic requirements for ENIE", and "English training". Each stage focused on an area of interest that pertained to the language's use or status within the company. In the same fashion as the others, this tool was multipurposed as well, however, its first and foremost goal was by far to corroborate as well as bring validity to the findings of the work shadowing results.

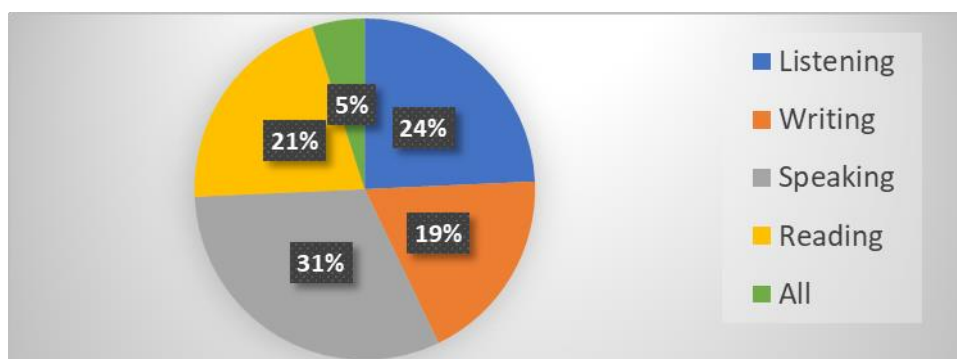
3.7 The findings of the students' questionnaire:

While each posed question served a well-determined purpose, and helped secure another valued piece of the puzzle, certain questions were definitely more informative regarding the situation at hand, as well as more impactful in addressing the tackled research questions. The first section of the questionnaire delivered, via its seven inquiries, a myriad of insightful information about the participants. It not only shed light on the disciples' solid conviction in English's usefulness for one's academic and/or professional career, but also established their dependence on the language for future jobs as the primary motive behind their learning endeavours. In addition, its results revealed a widespread dissatisfaction among the students in regards to their current English level, and documented their attempts to ameliorate their language proficiency by seeking, albeit only occasionally, additional contact with the target language via extensive activities.

The second section of the questionnaire on the other hand, despite merely enveloping two inquiries, held unparalleled importance, for it endeavoured to vividly communicate the

necessities as subjectively perceived by the participants. Its initial question called the latter to select out of the four language skills, the one or the ones that they deemed to be the most practical and useful for their future academic or professional career. One must state that the informants were also granted the option to select all the skills at once if they wished to. The speaking skill landed the lion's share of the casted votes, with 31% of the informants designating it as the most beneficial of the bunch. Coming in second was none other than the listening skill, which 24% of the participants deemed it to be the most paramount. As for the reading and writing skills, they were favoured by, respectively, 21% and 19% of the sample, whereas only 5% saw indispensable the acquisition of all the said four skills.

Figure 1. The necessities as hierarchized by the learners



For more insight into what the disciples deemed important and whatnot, the participants were next solicited to rank a set of 26 linguistic sub-skills based on their cruciality for their future metier. To facilitate the task, the sub-skills were aggregated according to the language skill they pertain to, which engendered four separate groups. Of consistent mindset, the informants, once again, made apparent the high opinion they hold regarding the speaking and listening skill by categorizing their pertinent sub-skills as moderately to very necessary. The same cannot be stated about the writing and reading sub-skills, whose importance in the participants' eyes ranged between slight to moderate at most.

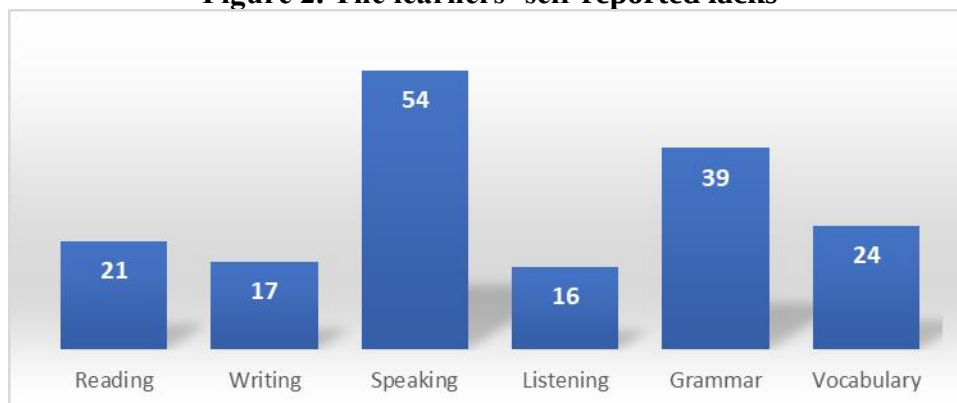
Table 1. The language skills and subskills as prioritized by the learners

Sub-skill	Not at all necessary	Slightly necessary	Moderately necessary	Very necessary	Extremely necessary
Reading scientific publications	6	32	38	18	6
Reading financial reports	8	24	37	28	3
Reading office correspondence	9	25	35	19	12
Reading office memos	13	36	30	17	4
Reading meeting agendas	24	34	20	15	7
Reading brochures	10	43	26	18	3
Interpreting infographics	17	28	25	23	7
Writing scientific publications	17	27	27	21	8
Writing financial reports	12	16	30	26	16
Writing office correspondence	10	25	25	23	17
Writing office memos	19	32	28	17	4
Writing meeting agendas	28	30	26	11	5
Making brochures	23	34	30	9	4
Making infographics	31	31	28	7	3
Hold fluent conversations	12	16	40	16	16
Make small talk	10	13	28	34	15
Make phone calls	11	16	32	31	10
Negotiate deals	15	18	27	31	9
Make quality presentations	10	29	29	20	12
Give effective briefings	24	27	24	16	9
Cooperate with foreign peers	13	15	28	30	14
Speak comfortably at international	10	5	32	32	21
Understand instructions	7	11	30	31	21
Benefit from scientific gathering	5	13	35	28	19
Keep up with daily interactions	6	16	33	31	14
Understand verbal cues	7	15	34	27	17

Moving on to the third instalment, entitled "the lacks", the participants were invited to disclose the language aspect/s they struggled with the most. Six choices were suggested to the participants, including the four language skills, along with grammar and vocabulary. The

speaking skill emerged as the vulnerability from which 54 informants, the majority, suffered from. Nearly as serious, were the troubles that 39 disciples acknowledged facing with grammar, and the hardships that 24 informants recognized experiencing with vocabulary.

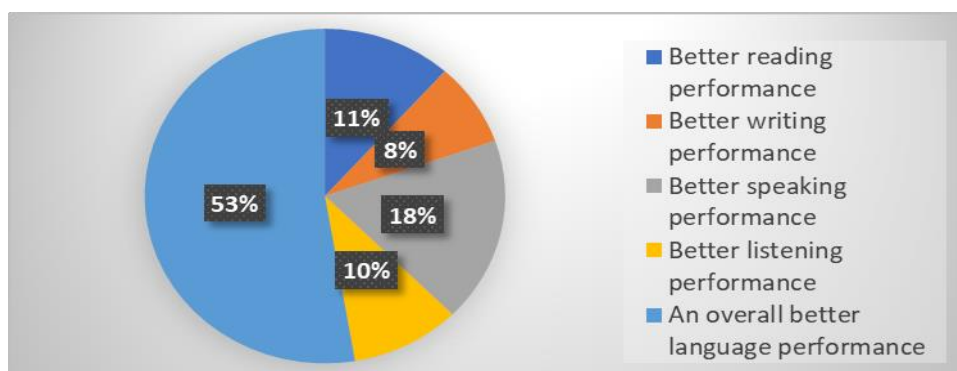
Figure 2. The learners' self-reported lacks



A carte blanche to candidly express their wishes awaited the participants as they transitioned to the fourth segment called “the wants”. Right out of the gate, the informants were forthright about where their desires lie. They made evident their belief in the sufficiency of the current hourly weekly volume dedicated for the teaching of English, set at one hour and a half. Moreover, they massively conveyed their openness to online courses, as well as their preference for regular courses, outlined as paced but long, over the intensive ones, depicted as short but packed.

A matter of cardinal significance that often goes unconsidered, the learners' expectations from the courses they undertake were also addressed by this section, as the participants were probed about what linguistic improvement they aspired or predicted to achieve from joining an English course. 53% of the participators imparted that they long for an overall betterment of their linguistic performance, while 18% ensured that they would settle for an enhancement of their speaking skill. An amelioration in one's reading capabilities epitomized the end goal for 11% of the informants, whereas 10% maintained they would be contented to see their reading skill flourish. As for the remaining 8%, a greater writing skill was all what they were after.

Figure 3. The learners' expectations from an English course



3.8 Discussion of the findings of the students' questionnaire:

Of manifold benefits, the first portion of the questionnaire evidenced the positive attitude that the learners bear towards English, a result of their extrinsic motivation rooted in their

necessity for the language, and their firm belief in the additional, nearly unmatched, value that it brings to their employability. This section was also testimonial of the participants' metalinguistic awareness, and their ability to show objectivity, humility, and honesty while self-evaluating their linguistic proficiency, a sign of maturity befitting of ESP learners. Their pursuit of extracurricular activities and courses, while not as frequent as one would hope, is nothing if not indicative of their mindfulness regarding the existing room for improvement

Despite having few questions in its quiver, the second segment of the questionnaire succeeded at being extremely revelatory. It determined with great precision that left no shadow of doubt what qualified as necessary to the learners, and documented their selection of the oral skills as well as sub-skills, both the productive and receptive ones, as the prerequisites for the target situation that are worthy of attention. While undeniably valuable, their input remains presumptive at this stage, and in need of further validation, hopefully by the results of the work shadowing session.

No lesser important was the third section, which warranted a great level of transparency and candidness on the participants' end as they unveiled their linguistic insecurities. Its initial inquiry highlighted the informants' frustrating predicament, as the speaking skill, the one which they ranked at the top of their necessities' list, represented, along with grammar, their Achilles' heels. In doing so, this question had narrowed down the language aspects to allocate abundant attention for, if the learners' suppositions ever came to be corroborated, and this linguistic disparity was consequently confirmed.

The informants' contentment with English's current weekly hourly volume and penchant for paced courses should under no circumstances be regarded as a sign of laziness on their part, given that the participants had previously made evident their esteem for the language as well as their willingness to engage in extraneous efforts. Instead, it should be thought of as symptomatic of their inclination for conservatism, their desire to play it safe, and their habituation to their comfort zone. This penchant was also plainly manifested in their affinity for regular courses. As for their receptivity for online learning, it should come as no surprise in light of their reputation as technophiles.

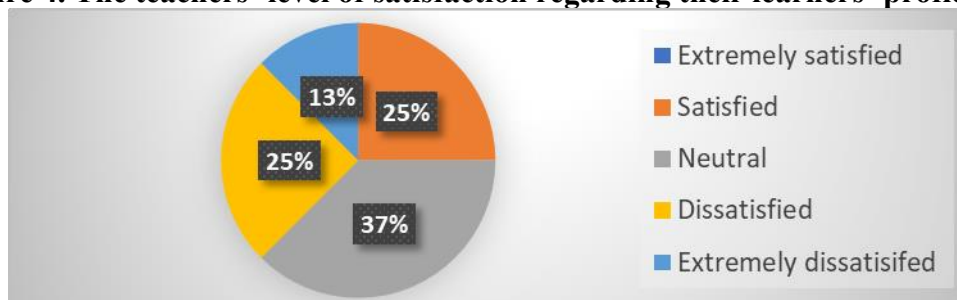
Having their pick among a variety of potential advancements, the informants exhibited once again their inclination for safety, and surrendered to basic human acquisitiveness, by designating an overall superior language performance as their expectation from an English course. This, in spite of having previously singled out the speaking skill as both the most crucial language aspect to master, as well as the one most troublesome one. In a best-case scenario, their wish ought to be honoured, as it would entail enhancing the learners' linguistic proficiency across all fronts, therefore future proofing them. Otherwise, focus should instead be pivoted towards fostering the speaking skill, if ever proven a necessity.

3.9 The findings of the teachers' questionnaire:

Much like the students' questionnaire, certain inquiries were more directly linked than others to the posed research questions. The opening section of the questionnaire was devoted to the collection of miscellaneous, yet relevant, pieces of information about the participants. It brought to light the fact that the majority of the informants did not hold degrees in ESP, a lack, they argued, did not hinder their teaching experience. The latter, according to them, was mostly impeded by the demotivation of the students, which they attributed to their ignorance vis-à-vis the language's stature and utility. Another hinderance that the pedagogues insisted on calling attention to was the heterogeneous classes that they are entrusted with, and the substantial linguistic disparity that separates the skilful learners from the strugglers. Other cited obstacles that the participants regularly face included the deplored absence of pre-

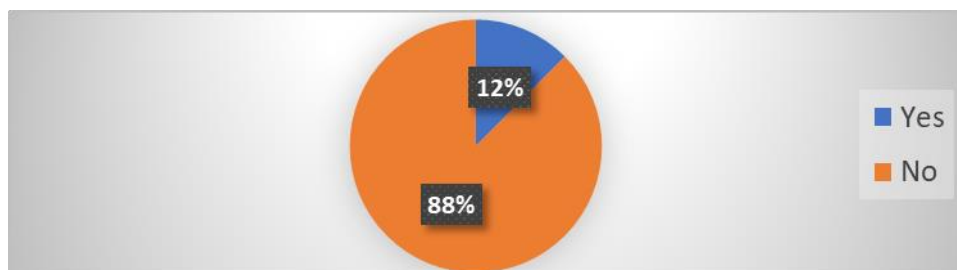
service training, the inexistence of official curricula and ready-made courses, the scarcity of teaching materials, and the lack of collaboration from field experts. However, this portion's biggest accomplishment was by far juxtaposing the tutors' opinions with their disciples' on two separate occasions. The first instance pertained to how contented the participants were with their learners' linguistic competence. A divergence of viewpoints marked the received feedback, as no one reported being extremely satisfied, while the preponderance of the participants, which totalled up to 37%, opted for neutrality. Those satisfied equalled those dissatisfied, representing each a quarter of the selected sample, while the remnants imparted their extreme dissatisfaction.

Figure 4. The teachers' level of satisfaction regarding their learners' proficiency



The second occurrence of apposition on the other hand, had the participants divulge whether or not they found the time allocated for English classes to be sufficient. A crushing majority of 88% believed the hourly volume dedicated to English was insufficient. Their numerousness rendered the opinion of the remnant 12%, who viewed the dedicated time as ample, nearly trivial.

Figure 5. The teachers' stance about the sufficiency of English's weekly hourly volume



The second section of the questionnaire, called "ESP mindset", took interest, via its twelve questions, in the participants' ESP practice. Its leading question asked the informants, point blank, whether they were familiar with the ESP process. Three quarters of the sample asserted their familiarity with the concept, while 25% confessed their obliviousness regarding it.

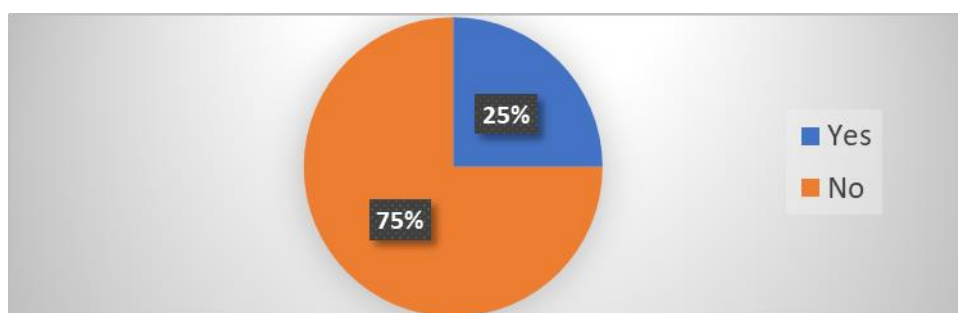
Along the same vein, the informants were subsequently questioned about whether or not they abided by the aforementioned process while designing their courses. A strikingly equal polarization labelled the harvested feedback, as merely one in two participants declared adhering to the said process.

ESP teachers, much like any other practitioner, are inevitably bound to develop professional rituals, as well as a proclivity for the use of certain tools. That is why, the participants were kindly solicited to specify their go-to needs analysis. The results indicated that the informants gravitated heavily towards the utilization of diagnostic and placement tests. Also listed, was the occasional dependence on the learners' reactions, captured via observation or classroom interaction, throughout the preliminary lectures. It is noteworthy

that a number of the participants attempted to dodge this inquiry by providing bland answers. These included the reiteration of the cruciality of needs analysis, as well as the puzzling citation of “ESP terminology”, “learning methodology”, and the disposition of modern learning tools as needs analysis techniques.

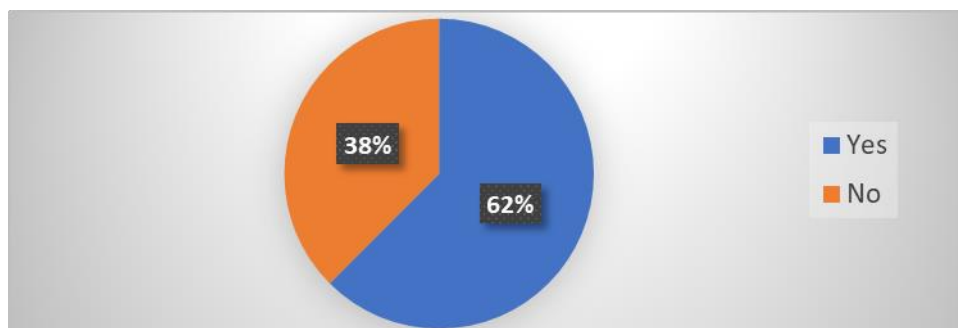
An indispensable milestone in needs analysis, the target situation analysis embodied the essence of an ensuing inquiry, which sought to confirm whether or not the participants incorporated it within their course design routine. Shockingly, only 25% of the sample maintained that they integrate this stage as part of their *modus operandi*, while the remaining 75%, the majority by a large margin, denied doing so.

Figure 6. The teachers’ incorporation of TSA in their course design routine



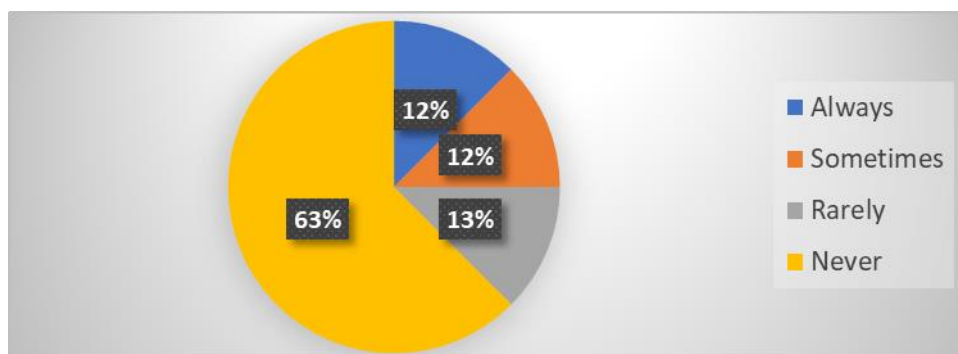
As logic dictates, the present situation analysis was tackled next, and an attempt to expose whether it, too, was absent from the participants’ customary routine was undertaken. The larger part of those selected, 63% to be precise, ensured being in the habit of conducting the said analysis, while 37% could not, in all candidness, make such a claim.

Figure 7. The teachers’ incorporation of PSA in their course design routine



Given that it is highly recommended for ESP practitioners to cooperate with field experts to offset any illiteracy regarding the target discipline they may suffer from, a question was devoted to determine the frequency with which the participants collaborated with business experts. 63%, the majority of the informants, admitted having never teamed up with a subject specialist before, while merely 12% affirmed working consistently with one. Equally numbered where those who sometimes pursued partnership, whereas 13%, the rest, acknowledged rarely engaging in such professional relationships.

Figure 8. The frequency of teachers’ collaboration with field experts



3.10 Discussion of the findings of the teachers' questionnaire:

Revelatory, the results of the initial portion of the questionnaire exposed a variety of informative, and at times intriguing, data about the participants. Its exhibition of the fact that the informants were majorly non-ESP alumni mirrored the alarming leniency with which universities treat the English teaching position, and may have alluded to the true status that the language is granted, one that certainly does not concur with the higher education ministry's vision. It goes without saying that in light of these discoveries, more scrutiny was exercised on the participants' subsequent responses, starting with their list of recurrently encountered hinderances. The informants' allegation that the perceived demotivation of the learners is rooted in the latter's ignorance about English's importance lacks validity, as the findings of the students' questionnaire had previously plainly proved. This unsubstantiated assumption was alarming, for it was indicative of the participants' reliance on guesswork rather than empiricism, and perhaps suggestive of an inability to pursue validity, or an insouciance towards it, as such conjecture could have easily been disproved had they used a questionnaire for example. Moreover, the participators' complaint about heterogenous classes was well-founded, as they represent a deviation from sound ESP practice, which encourages the categorization of learners into groups based on their linguistic proficiency for added customizability, and in order not to present all of them with the same course. Also warranted, was the participants' outcry regarding field specialists' reluctance to cooperation, which may stem from a mere disinclination for team-work, or a latent condescendence towards the module. On the other hand, the informants' grumble about the lack of pre-service training, official syllabi, ready-made courses, and teaching materials was puzzling, if not worrisome, as it was unbecoming of ESP practitioners whose very duties entail designing and developing those. Through this explicit, odd request, the participants had demonstrated that their previous claim of being unburdened by the lack of an ESP degree did not hold much water. Furthermore, the initial point of analogy between the learners' perspectives and their teachers', which revolved around the former's linguistic prowess, generated more concurrence than meets the eye. If one were to look past the neutrality that marked the preponderance of the answers, one would be quick to notice that the number of those dissatisfied, combined, equalled that of the majority, thus matching the learners' very own discontentment about their level, and further highlighting the need for betterment. Au contraire, the second juxtaposition of perspectives, which centred around the sufficiency of the current weekly hourly volume for the English class, engendered less accord between the two parties. The teachers' explicit yearning for more class hours painted them as motivated individuals who still bear passion for their profession.

In light of their prior confession to lacking an ESP degree, and their previously proven weak claim that this lack did not interfere with their professional duties, the participants' assertion of familiarity with the ESP process was destined to undergo rigorous review.

Peculiar, the decision made by half the sample to refrain from abiding by the ESP process in spite of its numerous merits and renowned practicality gave pause for thought. This entailed that apart from the quarter of the sample who had formerly divulged their obliviousness towards the process, over a third of those familiar with it intentionally opt not to follow it. Several reasons could lie behind this decision, including, at best, an incapability to adhere to the procedure as a result of pedagogical restrictions, and at worst, a nonchalance towards the learners' needs.

A practitioner's favourite tools tell tales about where his/her priorities lie. The participants' recurrent resort to evaluative means, like the placement and diagnostic tests, reflected a fixation on the accurate determination of the learners' proficiency. The casualness, borderline informality, with which the informants described their capture of their students' input on the other hand, implied that a much lesser importance was granted to the latter in comparison to the disciples' linguistic level. Apropos the participants' troubling elusive attempts, they could only be interpreted as a sign of their unfamiliarity with ESP practice as well as unawareness about its array of tools, and a collateral ramification of their lack of an ESP diploma. This, of course, further damaged the credibility of the participants' reassurance that their professional functions remained unscathed by this shortcoming.

Enigmatic and confusing, the participants' decision to skip over the target situation analysis was a baffling one, as it insinuated a genuine disregard for the identification of a key type of learners' needs, the necessities. This negligence constitutes a grave methodological error on the teachers' end, unbecoming of an ESP practitioner, as it deprives the disciples from their north star, and sets them on either an aimless learning venture, or a journey towards a fictitious destination.

The informants' affirmation of conduct of present situation analyses should come as no surprise seeing how their previous list of frequently used needs analysis tools brimmed with evaluative means. Their preoccupation with the determination of the learners' lacks, despite being both applaudable and synonymous with good ESP practice, remains a futile endeavour in the absence of a target situation analysis, and a set of necessities to compare with, as well as validate the pinpointed deficiencies.

As expected, the scarcity of collaboration with field specialists that the participants priorly brought up as a complaint, and cited as a regular adversity, was consonant with the inadequate frequency of cooperation with business experts that the findings revealed. Such deficit, while unquestionably beyond the informants' control, certainly does not help their case, as it further complicates their teaching experience, already subpar as it is.

The participants' preferential focus on the establishment of the lacks at the expense of the other needs, their neglect of the target situation analysis, their notable albeit nearly vain conduct of the present situation analysis, and their unquenched need for consistent collaboration with business connoisseurs, all pointed to defects in their practice. These blemishes, which varied in their severity, prevented the participants from having the full picture, and obstructed their ability to identify the entirety of their learners' needs, causing them to merely settle, in a best-case scenario, for the unsubstantiated diagnosis of their deficiencies. Therefore, in light of the aforementioned, it could be stated with confidence that the first research question, which enquired about the extent to which the business English teachers were successful at fully capturing their learners' needs was put to rest, and that the validity of the first hypothesis, which suggested that the teachers were partially successful at capturing their students' needs, was secured.

Furthermore, the participants' narrow scope of use of the needs analysis tools, which came to light once they listed their recurrent instruments, held the answer to the second research question, which explored how lavish the business English teachers were in their use of the available arsenal of needs analysis tools. Indeed, the informants' settlement, either voluntary or involuntary, for the use of evaluative means, and their disregard for the rest of the disponible tools, despite the superior suitability of some for certain scenarios, objectives, and types of needs, addressed the said question, and corroborated the second posed hypothesis. The latter, postulated that the teachers were not taking full advantage of the available array of needs analysis tools.

3.11 The findings of the work shadowing session:

The initial portion of the session had as subjects the supply agents. They were the ones entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring the continuous flow of the raw materials required for the production of the solar panels by guaranteeing their unproblematic transit from their native country to Algeria. Deceptively simple in appearance, their *devoir* enveloped a myriad of sub-duties. These included maintaining constant, fluent communication with the foreign economic partners, incarnating the role of a financial liaison between the partnering companies and ENIE's accounting department, serving as the technical emissary between them and the engineering department, as well as keeping tracks of the logistical whereabouts of the purchased merchandise till it reaches its destination.

To see that their tasks are met, the supply agents remained continuously connected on the internet, and more specifically to Google's mail service, Gmail. They were constantly either responding to emails they had just received, or sending ones of their own to seek information regarding the progress of pending purchases, transmit deposit receipts, elucidate or request elucidations about uncertainties, and coordinating international conferences, all of which using solely English. In addition, they were frequently tasked with filling in English pre-drafted records that contained the specificities of bought materials, which required a non-negligeable level of language proficiency so as not to leave room for mishaps or potential legal loopholes. It must be highlighted that throughout the session, no instances of international phone calls that involved the use of the English tongue occurred.

The accountant was next in line. His obligations were typical of an employee in his position, and had nothing extraordinary if not for the necessity to translate documents from English to Arabic prior to sending them to the Algerian External Bank (BEA). Failure to do so properly and rapidly would result, according to him, in a cornucopia of issues, ranging from deferred payments to rejected requests for currency exchange. Such pressure weighted heavily on the subject's shoulders, as he made sure to impart. The challenge, he explained, lied in the disparity between the language training that he had received whilst at the university and the complex rhetoric of those documents. In order to conquer this adversity, the subject confessed to reflexively resorting to literal translation, a solution he admitted was a hit and a miss.

The closing moments of the session were spent in the company of the head of engineering. He kindly demonstrated via a tour of the production line the ubiquity of English across all the machines' instructive and cautionary labels. His occasional, yet perfect, use of English throughout the guided visit was characterized by a noticeable accent, which inevitably incited inquisitiveness on our end. Its origin, as the subject indulgently revealed, was Bostonian, a by-product of his former studies at Massachusetts university. He accredited the survival of his accent, as well as his language mastery, to the recurrent, acute use of English that his overseas

missions impose. These expeditions, as he explicated, are ordinarily conducted alongside his team of engineers, and may serve different purposes, including receipt of training, attendance at international meetings, and negotiation of deals.

3.12 Discussion of the findings of the work shadowing session:

Shadowing the subjects did certainly not disappoint, as it brought to light the versatility of certain positions, as well as the unexpected sophistication of others, all of which allowed for the satisfaction of the intended objective, and the identification of each function's necessities. The supply agents, for starters, have exhibited a dire need for the reading and writing skills. Moreover, their polyvalent job made imperative for them to be adequately familiar with technical as well as financial terminologies, be comfortable with technology, and possess a variety of secretarial, organizational, logistical, and collaborative skills that pertain to, and are usually required by, the business milieu. On the other hand, their disuse of oral English utterly removed the oral skills from the equation.

As for the accountants, their duties called, much like their compeers, for a large technical repertoire, and demanded a good command of the reading skill, both of which are necessary for the deep and accurate comprehension of the source materials to be translated. Furthermore, in order to guarantee the correctness, cohesion, and fidelity of the generated translations, a grammatical prowess ought to be possessed as well.

Apropos the engineers, the entrepreneurial notion that characterized their chores compelled them to be in possession of business *savoir-faire* in addition to technical knowledge. Therefore, it necessitated that they be comfortably familiar with the intricacies of the deal-making process, and well-versed in the formalities, customs, as well as implicit rules of the business world. Additionally, and taking into account the variety of scenarios that the engineers will surely run into, a good command of the listening, reading, and writing skills would be greatly appreciated, if not required.

3.13 The findings of ENIE's employee's interview:

Principally designed to authenticate the necessities accentuated by the work shadowing session, the interview probed the informant about anything and everything germane to the English language requirements within ENIE. It first invited the interviewee to list the positions that rely on English, and indicate which of those could be occupied by finance and international commerce graduates. The supply agents, the accountants, and the engineers were designated by the informant as the personnel who make use, to a degree or another, of English. Moreover, she explained that the supply agents' and accountants' posts are within the reach of finance and international commerce graduates, but insisted on pointing out that in the event of a contest for the latter position, accounting graduates would certainly have precedence.

Subsequently, the interviewee was asked to briefly impersonate the role of an ESP practitioner, and surmise, to the best of her ability, the linguistic necessities of the aforementioned positions. In order to cater for the informant's potential unaccustomedness to such task, and ensure a coherent feedback, she was encouraged to highlight the language skills she reckoned were the most practical, mention the language abilities she thought newcomers found most troublesome, point out whether the employees were more in need of academic or occupational English, and italicize the most frequent English related scenarios. The interviewee graciously obliged, and commenced by first featuring the language skills relevant to her people, which she asserted were limited to the writing and reading skills. She then proceeded to discuss those pertinent to the accountants and the engineers, but not without

putting on record her dubiety regarding those. She presumed that a good reading skill could really come in handy for the accountants in light of their recurrent dealings with complex documents, and that a good speaking skill might be of great use to the engineers on the account of their regular business trips. The informant did however express her certitude that both parties could benefit from being at ease with technicalities, and possessing a wide terminological repertoire, both of which, she declared, represented the language capabilities that rookies struggle with the most. Furthermore, and upon inquiring about the differences between academic and occupational English, the interviewee felt confident enough to point the latter as the one most needed by the staff. As for the most recurrent English scenarios, she stated that in the supply agents' case, they often implicate electronic correspondence, but was uncertain about her co-workers'. That said, she did surmise that the accountants' routine encounters with the language would involve translation, while the engineers' would entail informal conversations, negotiations, and networking.

3.14 Discussion of the findings of ENIE's employee's interview:

Fruitful as one would hope, the interview succeeded at securing its intended objective. Its first feat was procuring the informant's confirmation of the work shadowing session's subjects as the English users within the company. This in it of itself represented an achievement, albeit a modest one, for the aforementioned technique, as it entailed that no English use or users went unobserved. The interview's second exploit on the other hand, was the validation of the necessities diagnosed during the session. The latter was accomplished as a result of the interviewee's identified necessities, which tremendously corresponded those previously brought to light by the work shadowing technique. Thus, via its results, the interview had attested to the precision of the technique, and indirectly called attention to its role in particular, and that of TSA in general, as the missing elements in the formerly investigated teachers' needs analyses. These overlooked components are the ones that act as points of reference to, as well as validators for, determined lacks. Besides, their presence is indispensable if one were to pursue the recommended equilibrium between them and the learners' wants. Therefore, it can be argued with confidence that the herein discussed findings further validated the first and second hypotheses. Moreover, they made it safe to state that the third research question, which examined the extent to which the work shadowing technique was useful at maximizing the accuracy of conducted needs analyses, was tackled, and the proposed hypothesis that the said technique is significantly useful at maximizing the accuracy of conducted needs analyses was endorsed.

4.Conclusion:

This research strove to audit the accuracy of carried out needs analyses, and investigate how introducing the work shadowing technique would affect the aforementioned precision. It took place across two distinct locations, the finance and international commerce department situated within the economics faculty at Djillali Liabes university, and ENIE's solar factory. Furthermore, it enlisted the participation of one hundred master students, ten business English teachers, and all the English-using employees from the said settings. Over and above that, it solicited the use of four data collection tools, including two separate questionnaires, the work shadowing technique, and an interview. The emergent data were analysed as well as interpreted while bearing in mind the extended research questions and the posited hypotheses.

The results revealed severe shortcomings in the investigated ESP practices in general and the conducted needs analyses in particular. They pointed towards a most worrisome heedlessness of the Target Situation Analysis and the necessities. Such remissness, regardless

of its source, not only contradicts the recommendations drafted and agreed upon by the pioneers, but it also threatens the practicality, customizability, and overall relevance of the offered courses. In addition, the findings bore witness to the tremendously beneficial effect that the work shadowing can have on the accuracy of needs analysis.

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