

ESP for Political Sciences: The Language of Politics and the Challenges with Course Materials

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Received: 4/3/2023 Accepted: 30/1/2025 Published:11/6/2025

Abstract:

The need to learn English for a better understanding of international politics and the pursuit of careers in politics caused a demand for English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The success of any ESP course is dependent on the efficiency of the materials. Thus, it is important to examine the main issues with ESP materials to ensure their efficiency. This research employed qualitative and qualitative approaches to gather data through questionnaires and interviews. The population comprised of 32 students and 2 teachers from the faculty of political sciences at Ibn Khaldoun University, Algeria. The Sample highlighted the main issues with ESP material. The teachers provided their perspectives, identified the main challenges and offered valuable insights. This article, ultimately, suggests recommendations to help teachers and students overcome the challenges they face, and to improve the quality of the ESP material.

Keywords: ESP; Political Science; Needs Analysis; Materials; Challenges.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rise and fall of global industries and their associated professions have shaped the evolution of English for Specific Purposes (Northcott, 2013). It is a common belief among writers from different political spectrums that English and globalization are inextricably intertwined (Pennycook, 2003b). Achieving proficiency in the English language has become crucial for any successful profession, which includes learners who have, or seek to have, careers in politics. ESP programs first appeared because learners look for programs that help them acquire discipline-specific knowledge and a set of language skills over a relatively short period of time. In other words, instead of taking General English (GE) programs, they take *custom-made* programs that cover only that which they need for their academic studies or professions. Coffey (1984) mentions that students often resort to English for Academic Purposes (EAP), a branch within ESP, when their needs entail "quick and economical" use of the English language in their academic activities. Furthermore, with English establishing itself as the lingua-franca of world politics, achieving proficiency in English is a necessity.

ESP programs deal with the needs of the learners in very specific contexts, thus, the nature of the ESP program is governed by those specific needs. The characteristics of English in politics offer a ground for the development of the ESP course materials since it is a needs-based one. ESP for Politics has its own peculiarities and requirements, like any other discipline, and it is, therefore, governed by those specific needs. While needs analysis is fundamental in the process of designing an ESP program and the development and/ or selection of materials, the nature of the political language might make the task of the ESP practitioner (or teacher), a more complex one.

This paper explores the role of the English language in the world of politics and how that drives the need for ESP courses in the field of political sciences. It first defines the term ESP and explains why the process of Needs Analysis is at the heart of any ESP program. However, the main purpose of this paper is to examine and identify some of the main issues and challenges ESP students of the faculty of political sciences at the University of Ibn Khaldoun encounter when dealing with ESP material. Then, eventually, presents suggestions and recommendations for teachers and educators to improve the effectiveness of the ESP materials and enhance students' learning experience.

2. English for Specific Purposes

2.1 Definitions and Background

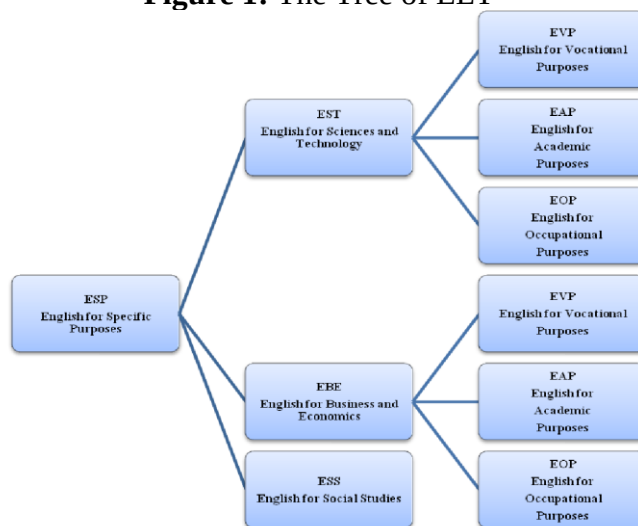
English for Specific Purposes became an established sub-discipline in the early 1960s, it moved away from English Language Teaching (ELT) trends developing its own teaching approaches and methodologies (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998). The main focus of ESP is teaching language in the context of use rather than teaching it in structures. Hutchinson and Waters

(1987) define ESP as an approach to language teaching whereby the foundation of the curriculum development is the students' reasons for learning English. They state that the premise of any ESP program is asking the simple question of "*Why does this learner need to learn a foreign language?*" (p. 19). According to Paltridge and Starfield (2013), the term ESP refers to the process of the acquisition of English, as a second or a foreign language, with the purpose of using it in a particular setting.

Though ESP branched off from the common trends of General English (GE) approaches, it always regarded practical outcomes as a top priority (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998). When developing a GE program, practitioners take into account the learners' needs in the real world, the ESP practitioner's task, however, is to make these needs narrower (Holme, 1996). Both ESP and GE rely on the learners' needs when developing a course design; nevertheless, what distinguishes ESP from GE is that in the former, all parties involved (learners, teachers, administrators, and course designers) are 'aware' of the underlying needs (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987).

The following is a classification of the main categories of ESP according to Hutchinson and Waters:

Figure 1: The Tree of ELT



Source: Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p17).

Since its inception in the early 1960s, ESP research has always been dynamic. It became one of the prominent areas of teaching in universities wherein the ESP practitioner's main task is to meet the learners' language needs for vocational purposes (Kırkgöz and Dikilitaş, 2018). Kırkgöz and Dikilitaş further elucidate that "as students advance their knowledge in their fields of study, so must they continue to acquire the English to help them understand and articulate vocational concepts, thus giving prominence to ESP" (p. 1).

In their definition of ESP, Dudley-Evan and St John (1998) point out the need to make a distinction between absolute and variable characteristics which are subsumed in:

1. Absolute characteristics

- ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learner;
- ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and the activities of the discipline it serves;
- ESP is centred on the language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities.

2. Variable characteristics

- ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines;
- ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English;
- ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be used for learners at secondary school level;
- ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students. Most ESP courses assume basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners (p. 4-5)

According to Basturkmen (2010b), the variability aspect of ESP can be traced back to multiple reasons. Primarily, the specificity of ESP courses that are developed for the learners. Some areas of ESP, by nature, require highly specified courses than others. Another reason is the underlying relation the ESP learner has with the target community, i.e. whether the learner has any knowledge related to the target area of study or an experience in the target profession or not. For example, language skills are considered variable; nonetheless, the ESP courses are not limited to one language skill exclusively but can vary depending on the requirements of the discipline. However, what remains absolute in the discussion of ESP is the issue of learners' needs and constricting them to the target language skills to be taught (Basturkmen, 2010b).

2.2 Needs Analysis

The process of needs analysis is the foundation of any effective ESP program because it identifies the needs that help the learner function efficiently in the target situation. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), we have to distinguish between the *target needs* (the language skills required from the learner in a target situation) and the *learning needs* (what the learner is required to do in order to acquire those language skills). Therefore, this incessant process of gathering and collecting information about what the learner needs to study is the essence of needs analysis. Brown (1995) mentions that the Needs Analysis process is not necessarily a new practice in the development of learning programs; nonetheless, it was given a formal and technical definition in the context of language learning just recently.

Traditionally, any type of activity that curriculum developers engage in to collect information about the target needs of a group of learners is defined as Needs Analysis (Brown, 1995). Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) define Needs Analysis as “an on-going experience of establishing the *what* and *how* of a course” (p. 121). In his book, *Syllabus Design*, Nunan (1988) defines Needs Analysis as “a family of procedures for gathering information about learners and about communication tasks for use in syllabus design” (p. 75). He explains that one of the purposes of Needs Analysis is to make learners and teachers communicate and engage in an information exchange so that each of their objectives will be compatible. On the one hand, the learners' input can be used to guide the content selection and learning activities. On the other hand, a detailed description of goals, objectives, and learning activities may greatly help learners appreciate and accept the learning experience they are undergoing or about to undergo (Nunan, 1988). Moreover, the students will be able to recognize the value of the ESP course and will be driven to study (Hartina and Syahrir, 2021).

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) further assert that the concept of 'target needs' is itself a broad term that embodies many distinctions which are: *necessities*, *lacks*, and *wants*. Necessities, which are relatively easy to identify, are determined by the demands of the target situation. In addition to the linguistic features of the said situation. Lacks, on the other hand, are decided after identifying what the learner already knows, and thus, the ESP course designer will attempt to bridge the gap between the learners' existing knowledge and target knowledge. However, what sets wants apart from necessities and lacks is that the learners take an active part in deciding those wants. As for the identification of learning needs, Hutchinson (1987) and Waters elucidate that learning needs mainly arise from our attempt to meet the learners' target needs. For example, if the learner's target need is to write professional emails, the learning need would be centered on the linguistic features of writing professional emails.

Researchers have found that approaches designed to be suitable for a wide range of groups of learners are impractical (Long, 2005). The learners are always the centerpiece of the needs analysis process, but these needs can also be decided in relation to the learners' environment (Brown, 1995). Language learners typically need to acquire specific language and skills in ESP courses. To ensure that a classroom functions well, course developers determine which features are most appropriate for each group of students (Basturkmen, 2010b). Thus, they inevitably go through a process of identifying the language skills to be used (Long, 2005).

It is worth noting that Needs Analysis, not only helps polish up the content for the ESP course but can also be used to evaluate the learners' performance and the efficiency of the teaching method (Basturkmen, 2010b). Therefore, not considering a group of learners' needs in mind before developing any teaching program will fail to serve its primary purpose (Long,

2005). The ESP philosophy emphasizes the analysis of the learners' needs before developing any course design. Hence, the main purpose of a needs analysis is to determine which knowledge and skills will be required from the students to complete their studies (Noguchi, 2020). Basturkmen (2006a), further elaborates that in order to determine and ameliorate the ESP program, we must consider factors like the learners' needs, language skills, present knowledge, their own perception of their needs, and any limitations.

The ESP practitioner must address certain questions before delving into the process of Needs Analysis in order to provide a reasoned basis for syllabus design, material writing, and classroom teaching (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). In their approach, Hutchinson and Waters used Kipling's '*honest serving men*' to outline the questions to be answered:

- Why does the student need to learn?
- Who is going to be involved in the process? This will need to cover not just the student, but all the people who may have some effect on the process: teachers, sponsors, inspectors etc.
- Where is the learning to take place. What potential does the place provide? What limitations does it impose?
- When is the learning to take place? How much time is available? How will it be distributed?
- What does the students need to learn? What aspects of language will be needed and how will they be described? What level of proficiency must be achieved? What topic areas will need to be covered? (p. 21-22)

Referencing the discussion of Basturkmen (2010b) and Long (2005), Bocanegra-Valle (2016) pinpointed the following sub-analysis:

- Target situation analysis: identifying what the learners should know and be able to do in a given situation
- Discourse analysis: defining the language to be used in a target context
- Present situation analysis: what learners do/not know and can/can't do vis-à-vis target situation
- Learner factor analysis: identifying how learners perceive their needs in relation to the course
- Teaching context analysis: identifying variables like context, time, teacher skills and so on
- Task-based analysis: identifying the tasks required in target situation (p. 563)

2.3 Materials

Typically, any systematic description of a process or technique to be used in the learning setting is referred to as teaching materials (Brown, 1995). This definition serves as an umbrella for various activities and tools the teacher can use for teaching a language. According to McGrath (2002),

materials may include realia, i.e., any tangible objects used in the teaching process, representations such as making references to a person, a thing, or a place that can be exploited to better the learning process and bring the students closer to real-world experiences (McGrath, 2002). He further explains that text materials, which are the main concern of any language program, may interest even those outside classrooms, like private tutors who will refer back to the learner's text materials to identify what the learner needs to know and consequently assess the learner's performance and progress.

Due to the fact that ESP adopts a different approach to language teaching than that of GE, it also requires implementing different types of teaching materials. ESP programs are for specific needs, GE materials will most likely be inadequate for an ESP class. The process of material development and selection is a sequential step to the needs analysis process in any ESP program. The identification and exploration of the learners' needs provide contexts and ideas for creating materials (Johns, and Dudley-Evans, 1991). Because of time constraints, ESP teachers may also need to refer students back to external resources that should be comprehensible and well-planned (Dorda, 2008).

Another crucial aspect in the development and selection of teaching materials is the issue of motivation. Many studies have established a strong link between the learner's motivation and willingness to learn. Mishan (2005) points out that most definitions of motivation revolve around the learner's attitude toward the teaching materials. However, according to Bin (2014), the ESP teacher should not always follow textbooks to the letter but rather individualize the materials based on the learners' predetermined needs. ESP courses require specific materials that are consistent with specific needs (Sari and Wirza, 2020).

3. English and Politics

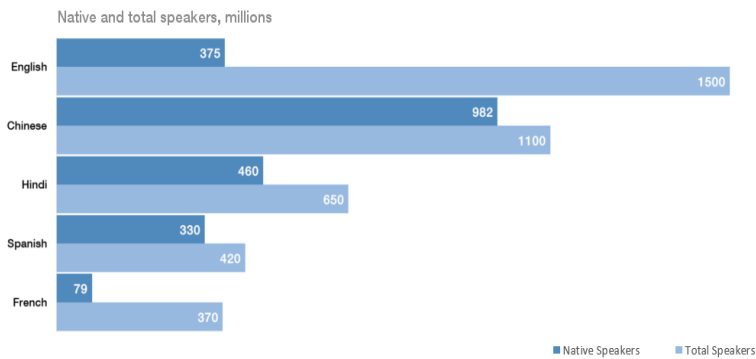
Heywood (2013) defines politics as "the activity through which people make, preserve, and amend the general rules under which they live" (p. 2). He explains that politics exists because people disagree on certain issues that concern people of the same community, organization, city, or even two or more nations. These disagreements could potentially be about the distribution of resources, how a conflict should be approached, how much power a person or a group of people should have over others, and so on. That is to say, anything that has an implication on public life or public affairs. These social interactions are generally referred to as politics (Heywood, 2013).

Since local politics can influence and be influenced by international politics, it is safe to say that the two cannot be conceived separately. With the exception of a few, all countries of the world are members of the United Nation Organization, these countries sign international treaties and agreements and comply with international law. Hence, it is imperative for

anyone involved in political activity to be well aware of the political scene on both the national and international levels.

Today, English has become not just the language of Europe, but the predominant lingua franca of the world as a whole. It is the official language of the United Nations Organization, the World Trade Organization, the International Criminal Court, NATO, and many more (Salomone, 2022). According to data gathered by World Economic Forum, it is estimated that over 1.5 billion people around the world speak the English language with only 375 million as native speakers as shown in the following graphic display:

Figure 2: Languages with the most Number of Speakers



Source: *World Economic Forum (Mayer, 2015).*

Salomone (2022) mentions that English is considered the ‘official’ language of intergovernmental organizations, international political conferences, and the common language of negotiations held between two parties or nations seeking an agreement on an international level. The English language currently holds a monopoly on knowledge, as did languages like Latin and Arabic in the past. The domination of the English language in world politics is because it is the language of countries deemed to be the superpowers in today’s world. “The rise of the United States as a world leader in the mid-twentieth century, just when the British Empire was unraveling and Europe was struggling to recover from the ravages of war, gave the global weight of English a new and more expansive life” (Salomone, 2022, p. 7). It has become the official or semi-official language of many former and current members of the Commonwealth of Nations and enjoys the same status as the native languages these nations already have.

4. Issues with ESP Materials

Languages and cultures are interdependent and “the very nature of language forbids the separation from culture” (Doyé, 1996, p. 105). Cultures have their own set of beliefs and principles communicated and propagated through a language governed by its own structures, grammar, and communicative functions. English, especially when used in a political context, is no different. The terminology within the political discourse is loaded with meanings and connotations, which the ESP student of a different

social, cultural, and political background may struggle when presented with. “The language of politics is not a neutral medium that conveys ideas independently formed; it is an institutionalized structure of meanings that channels political thought and actions in certain directions” (Connolly, 1993, p. 1). Hodge and Louie (1998) further assert that ‘political affiliations’ are often embedded within seemingly ‘*neutral*’ languages. Edelman (1985) notes that political language is often studied for its ability to reflect ideologies, mystify, and distort.

Students of political sciences enrolled in ESP classes often find themselves dealing with text materials that are very challenging because they are commonly written in a conspicuously cosmopolitan and complex language (Šulovská, 2017). “ESP has been widely adopted in many countries to better address the communicative needs of learners as students increasingly find themselves having to read, and often write, their subject papers in English” (Hyland, 2022, p. 203). Thus, the students are not only expected to understand the meaning of these texts but also know the linguistic features of English serve those meanings. In this regard, the nature of the political language is, without a doubt, the biggest challenge for the ESP learner, teacher, and even the ESP practitioner. Primarily, students of political sciences are aware of this aspect of the language of politics, but having to deal with various forms of political texts in English (as a second or foreign language), is even more challenging. It requires a certain level of understanding of the linguistic rules governing this language from the part of the student and a deep understanding of the field from the part of the teacher.

An example of that would be how a sentence, a phrase, or a word can have multi-layered meanings depending on the context of use and the linguistic code. Or how some terms holding certain connotations are susceptible to change over time and in different contexts (Horobin and Smith, 2002). Teachers and course developers should constantly be aware of these alterations vis-à-vis the language structures and take that into consideration when teaching and developing courses materials and planning lessons. To reiterate, the ESP learner is not only supposed to acquire language skills to understand the literal meaning of text materials but also be equipped with linguistic components to recognize the multifaceted messages these texts often convey.

A significant number of the materials published in English related to any discipline are, initially, directed and developed for students from English-speaking countries; and even those published for international consumption require not only a high level of language proficiency but also awareness of the ‘Western Knowledge’ through which these materials are developed (Pennycook, 2001a). The non-English speaker dealing with these textbooks does not have the same level of understanding of the culture and linguistic function of English. Because these materials do not take into account the different learning needs of the ESP student, they are of little use to the teacher and student.

A common issue in the ESP practice, regardless of the discipline, is the fact that many of the teachers assigned to ESP classes have limited knowledge of the subject or discipline they are teaching (Basturkmen, 2010b). That may very well restrict the teachers' ability to identify many of the target needs of the learners and the ability to select effective teaching materials. One way to approach this issue is by consulting field experts but the majority of teachers know very little about what their colleagues do, even at their own universities (Hartlaub and Lancaster, 2008). Moreover, even with years of cumulated experience teaching GE classes, ESP teachers still need to expand their knowledge of the discipline because any experience outside ESP contexts may be of little use in developing ESP courses and materials (Salmani-Nodoushan, 2020). ESP teachers with little knowledge of the content area will inevitably be incapable to evaluate the efficiency of their own teaching materials. The teachers' competence and ability to reflect on their teaching materials and teaching strategies are crucial to the ESP course (Alsubaie, 2016).

Contrary to past practices where the selection of materials was based on lexical and grammatical factors only, today contexts and target situations are heavily relied upon for the designing and selection of materials (Hyland, 2022). Nonetheless, when ESP teachers try to explore their options for material use outside the designated textbooks, they are bombarded with an overabundance of information. As information becomes so readily available through search engines on the Internet, calm, critical reading is being replaced with instantaneous, fast-paced, and uncritical consumption of knowledge (Thornton, 2010). Teachers with limited knowledge of the discipline will most likely be unable to decide on what classifies as useful and practical teaching material.

5. Methodology

In order to explore the main challenges in ESP courses for political science students at Tiaret University and address them, quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques were implemented in this study. Structured questionnaire were handed to 32 students from the Department of Political Sciences to gather quantitative data for this research. This questionnaire included multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions designed to capture the students' perspectives on various aspects of the ESP materials. That includes relevance, vocabulary, grammar and other specific challenges they encounter. The qualitative data, however, were obtained through semi-structured interviews with two teachers who have multiple years of experience in teaching ESP courses. The rationale for conducting the interviews was to gather more insight on the teachers' perception on the effectiveness of the ESP materials, the struggles of learners and their own input and suggestions. The use of these different methods is to make sure that there is representation of both students' and teachers' opinion.

6. Results and Analysis

6.1 Findings of the Students' Questionnaire

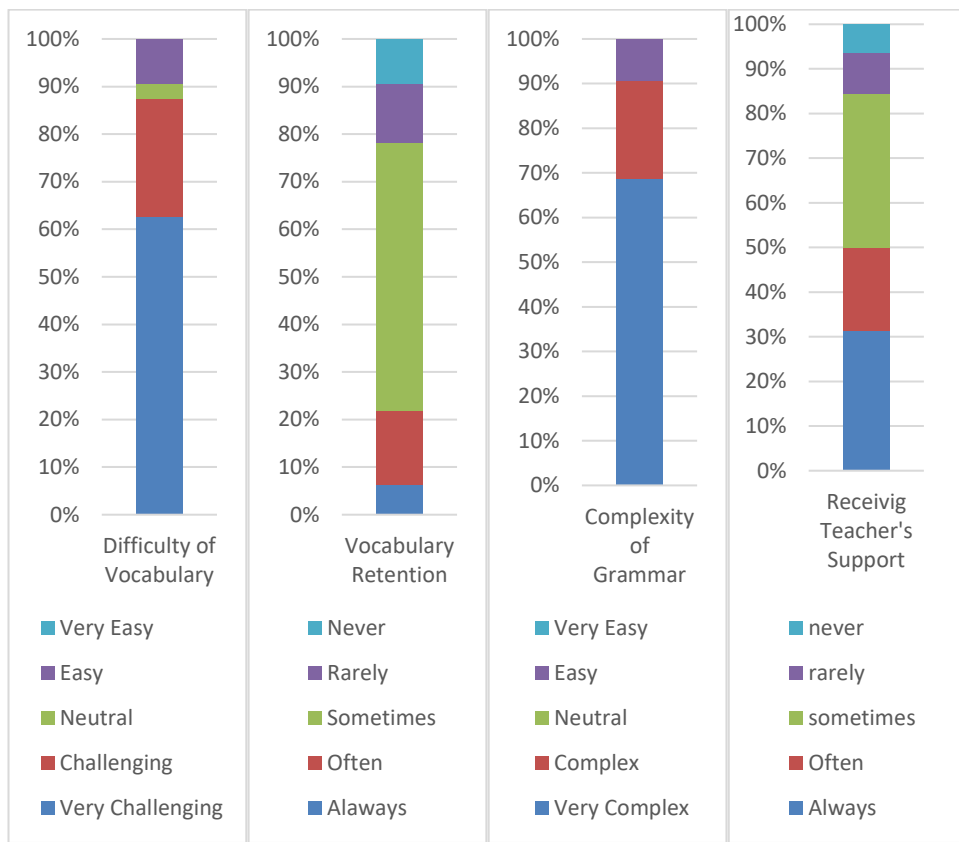
The responses collected from the questionnaires show the many challenges students in the Political Sciences department face. When it comes to their experience with vocabulary found in ESP materials, a large number of students (62.5%) perceived the political language in the ESP materials to be very challenging, and another 25% rated it as challenging. Thus, close to 88% of the students face difficulty in comprehending the specialized vocabulary, which calls for new course materials, instructional strategies, and resources to enhance the learning experience of the students.

According to the respondents' answers, 56.3% of students said that they were sometimes able to recall vocabulary they learned in class. Meanwhile, only a small number of students (6.3%) reported always remembering the specialized vocabulary learned. This suggests that the current methods used for teaching vocabulary lack effectiveness and that there is a need for more stimulating or engaging learning techniques to help with the mastery of the specialized vocabulary.

When it comes to grammar in political contexts, a whopping 90.7% of students found it to be either complex or very complex. A significant number of students expressed struggling with the grammar of the ESP materials, as the intricacy of grammatical structures used in political discourse seemed to be harder to grasp for most students.

The responses showed that the experiences of the students with teacher's support in understanding complex grammar varied from one student to another. 50.1% of students said that they have received the support they needed. The rest of the student either experienced the teacher's help only sometimes (34.4%), or had never experienced any support from their teachers (15.7%) regarding vocabulary, grammar, and content they find difficult.

Figure 3: Students' Attitude towards ESP Material



These findings point to an urgent and a compelling need for practical teaching strategies and resources to deal with the specific difficulties and challenges students face in understanding and retaining political terminology and grammar within ESP materials. More involvement on the part of the teacher and incorporating practical exercises and contextual examples would likely alleviate these challenges and improve the students' learning experience.

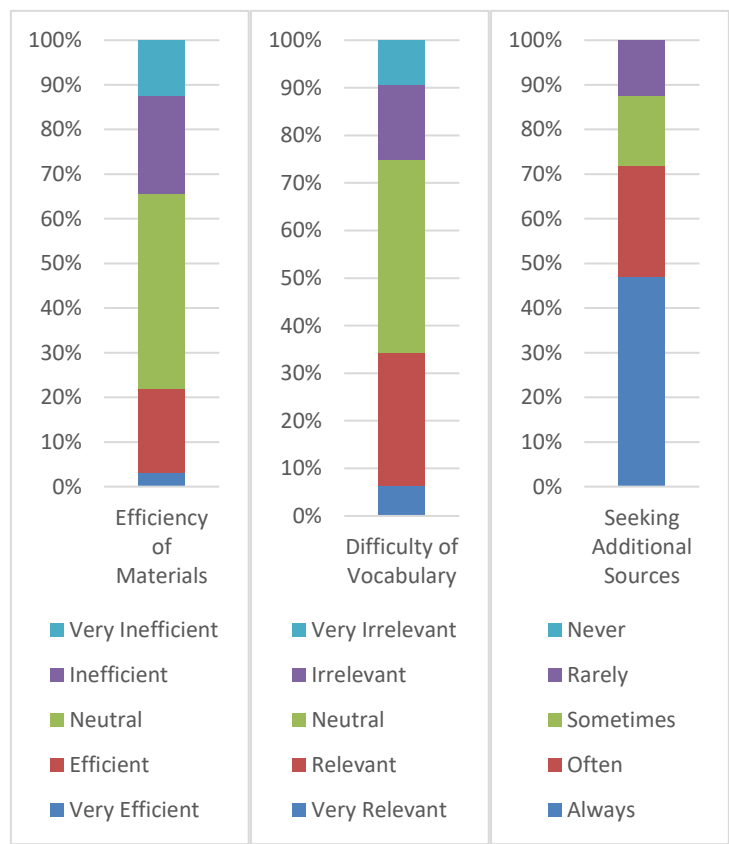
Regarding the effectiveness and relevance of ESP materials, the results of the questionnaires show that the students had different views on the subject. When asked whether the ESP materials addressed their needs, only 21.9% agreed that the ESP materials met their needs. Nonetheless, 43.8% of the respondent expressed neutrality, while the remaining 34.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed. As it happens, only some students found the ESP materials adequate, whilst the rest were either impartial or dissatisfied with the materials.

When asked about the relevance of the ESP materials to their field of study, 34.4% of the students considered them to be relevant or very relevant, while 40.6% remained neutral. The rest of the students (25%) said that the materials were either irrelevant or very irrelevant. These results indicates the

existence of a gap between the course materials and the students’ needs and expectations.

Additionally, the number of students who resorted to resources outside the provided materials was significantly higher than those who believed the materials to be relevant to their field of study. This indicates how these materials lacked adequacy and relevancy. Most of the students (71.9%) expressed always, or often, seeking additional resources, meaning they deem the provided materials as insufficient for their learning needs. A small number of students (12.5%) stated they rarely or never needed additional resources.

Figure 4: Relevance of Materials



Based on these findings, it is evident that ESP materials need to be enhanced and developed according to the specific needs of the students. Adding interesting and quality material would enhance student attitude towards the ESP materials, thereby enhancing students’ overall experience and motivation.

When asked to identify the areas they struggle with the most, many students marked multiple areas. A substantial majority (68.75%) marked the lack of contexts in the materials as their number one obstacle. This means that

the absence of relevant and practical examples makes it difficult for them to grasp political language. Another 40.63% of the students reported finding it challenging to understand cultural references, proving, again, the need for clearer and more accessible cultural content in the ESP materials. An overwhelming majority of 81.25% reported difficulty in relating language to culture, further confirming how the absence of cultural contexts makes it challenging for students to deal with the ESP materials. To address these challenges, the ESP materials should contain contextual as well as cultural components to bolster the students' understanding.

Furthermore, 62.5% of the students reported that the ambiguity of the political language and its vagueness is another difficult feature of the political discourse. Another 40.63% considered the bias nature of the political language a hindrance when dealing with the ESP materials, and for 87.5% of them the challenge was the use of symbolism and metaphors. Their responses suggest that they struggle with the unclear and imprecise nature of political language, recognizing and interpreting biased discourse, as well as, the use of figurative expressions. To remediate this, the ESP materials should provide clear definitions, contextual examples, and instructional strategies that help the students with complex, biased and figurative expressions to increase their comprehension and engagement.

Table 1. Common Challenges among Students

Specific Challenges		Percentage/ N° of Students
In terms of context	Lack of contexts	68,6% (22)
	Misunderstanding cultural references	40,6% (13)
	Difficulty in relating language to culture	81,3% (26)
In terms of terminology	Vague and ambiguous language	62,5% (20)
	Biased and subtle	40,6% (13)
	The use of symbolism and metaphors	87,5% (28)

When asked about their input as to how the effectiveness and relevance of the ESP materials can be increased, a significant majority (87.5%) remarked that including real-life political case studies would improve the relevance of ESP materials. 59.4% of the students expressed the need for incorporating examples from the real world, especially those which are familiar to them. This would make students appreciate the engaging content of the ESP materials. 28.1% of students reported that adding more practical exercises improves relevance. Thus, without dismissing the importance of exercises, the students believe that relevant context is a priority.

Regarding the accessibility of vocabulary, and how to make political terminology in ESP materials easier to grasp, most students (78.1%) preferred including examples to solidify meanings. This implies that learners have better understanding of complex terminology when the political language is presented in context. Furthermore, 53.1% of students believed that the use of visual aids would be more effective in learning new and specialized vocabulary, while 25% of students were of the opinion that follow-up activities and exercises help in making the vocabulary easier to understand and remember.

Table 2. Students' Perspectives on Improving the ESP Materials

Students' Perspectives		Percentage/ N° of Students
In terms of improving the relevance of materials	Including real-life contexts	78,5% (28)
	Incorporating local political contexts	59,4% (19)
	Adding more practical exercises	28,1% (09)
In terms of making the materials' terminology accessible	Including contextual examples	78,1% (25)
	Providing visual aids	53,1% (17)
	Follow up activities and exercises	25% (08)

6.2 Findings of the Teachers' Interviews

Semi structured interviews conducted with two teachers helped in highlighting their views on the difficulties and possible improvements regarding the ESP materials for students. The teachers' answers emphasized several important concerns, which include, cultural implications, grammar, pertinence of materials, vocabulary, approaches to teaching, learners' involvement, and suggestions towards enhancing ESP materials.

Both teachers identified cultural differences as a major challenge to the students when accessing ESP materials. They pointed out that most students did not have cultural background to enable them to deal with the materials in class effectively, attributing this to the complexity of political discourse. As for vocabulary and terminology, both teachers agreed that although ESP materials offer explanation and practice to some degree, it was still not enough. Thus, comprehensive approaches must be employed in order to ensure students' ability to understand and use specialized terminology confidently. Additionally, they pointed out that because of the complexity of grammar, there were many rules that had to be explained, which slowed down the learning process. This indicates that ESP materials should be contextualized and made to fit students' language level, including cultural settings to achieve more engagement in class.

Another crucial point of discussion was how relevant the ESP materials to the needs of the students. They argued that the learning materials addressed only some aspects of the students' needs; therefore, they required

more improvements. They also focused on the challenge of evaluating how suitable the teaching materials were because of the lack of information regarding students' curriculum. Another concern they raised was that most of the materials were designed by native speakers, and that they may likely not be for fit the ESP learners. They emphasized that ESP materials should not be standardize and that they should consider the students' first language and social background when developing them.

They reported relying on using books, newspapers, the internet, and group work as methods to help students with difficulties they face in class with the ESP materials. Nonetheless, the teachers also confessed not being able to capture the interests of students in class sometimes. Therefore, they also stressed the need to involve the learners in the material and content development process so as to ensure their needs are met.

6.3 Discussion

The results from the student questionnaire underscore the significant challenges these students faced with their ESP materials. They expressed a notable struggle with the understanding political discourse and its terminology and complex grammar. Wierzbicka, (1988) argues "...The idea that grammar encodes meanings, and that, moreover, it provides a network of privileged meanings, seems to me indubitable" (p. 562). This begs the need for resources and materials that are contextually and linguistically tailored to the learners' specific needs so they can better relate language to culture and struggle less with understanding the content of the course materials.

The results further indicated that the provision of contextual examples and visual aids would make the vocabulary more accessible and easier to understand. This suggests that students would benefit more from comprehensive explanations and practical exercises. Hence, teachers should always find ways to couple theory with practice using the collected information about the learners' needs (Basturkmen, 2006a).

The teachers' insights shed the light on several critical areas for improvement regarding ESP materials. Addressing the issue of cultural contexts, providing comprehensive vocabulary, ensuring the relevance of materials, and employing engaging teaching strategies are essential measures to increase the effectiveness of ESP materials. Moreover, the learning activities should be challenging and stimulating in nature to boost the students' critical thinking skills and equip them with the linguistic knowledge to understand texts with technical and subject-related terminologies. By incorporating these suggestions, educators can create a more engaging learning environment that better meets the needs of political science students. The teachers acknowledged the lack of cooperation and overall input about the students' field of study. Therefore, the ESP teacher is advised to be constantly in contact with the discipline experts of the department; as they can provide the teacher with insights to help identify the target needs of the learners

5. Conclusion

The interdependency of nations in the modern world will only increase the demand for ESP for Political Sciences. This demand, in turn, should spark more research to construct feasible approaches which are necessary to help improve the learners' communicative and language skills and prepare them for future occupations. This paper sheds light on some of the issues the nature of political language may have on the development of ESP materials for political science students. Nonetheless, identifying and recognizing those issues are the stepping-stones on the road to a successful ESP program.

ESP practitioners must always view the ESP program as an approach not as a product since it is centered on the learners' needs which are variables (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). Therefore, when dealing with the teaching material, teachers are encouraged to employ practical strategies in materials adaptation like adding, deleting, simplifying, or changing. ESP textbooks may have limitations because even within the same group of learners the needs may vary from one learner to another. These discrepancies call for immediate measures to be taken on the part of the teacher.

A successful ESP program for the students of political sciences should consider all aspects of political discourse and its nuances when identifying the learners' needs and outlining the course's objectives. Exploring the identified needs will then guide the ESP practitioner and the teacher in their material development and selection respectively. The Needs Analysis must include all parties involved for an accurate identification of the learners' needs. If the Needs Analysis process, be it the formal one conducted by the ESP course designers and practitioners or the indirect one carried out by the teacher during class, fails to gather information about the learners' target needs, the teaching materials are bound to be inefficient. Moreover, the learning activities should be challenging and stimulating in nature to boost the students' critical thinking skills and equip them with the linguistic knowledge to understand texts with technical and subject-related terminologies.

It is not always the case that the ESP teacher is well versed in the subject-matter they are teaching. To compensate for this, the teacher is advised to constantly be in contact with the discipline experts of the department; as they can provide the teacher with insights to help identify the target needs of the student and help with the material selection and development. Eventually, the shared expertise will add to the ESP teacher's professional growth. ESP teachers who have little to no knowledge of the target discipline, will not only fail to identify the students' needs and lacks in class, but will also be unable to develop relevant courses and materials to meet the course's final objectives.

Students' feedback, which is often neglected, enhances the quality of the learning and serves as a reference for assessing the learners' progress in the short and the long terms. This is especially true in an ESP class where the

learners enjoy equal status to the teacher. Their knowledge of the discipline may exceed that of the teacher, thus, their input is as equally valuable. The ESP teacher should make the learners aware of their status in class and push for a more learner-centered approach by encouraging them to be engaged in the teaching-learning process. The healthy and purposeful communication ESP teachers have with the students and experts in the subject-matter will manifest itself into successful learning.

Undeniably, in academic and professional settings, ESP is of particular importance. The new teaching trends that take every aspect of the learning process into account provide teachers with a wide range of methods to develop courses and materials. Notwithstanding, ESP courses are unique in the sense that the learners' needs vary greatly and are contingent on absolute and variable characteristics. Therefore, the ESP programs should be dynamic and continuously revised.

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