

A Preliminary Study of the ESP LMD Evaluation at the Department of Psychology

Awicha BENABDALLAH
Université Abou Bakar Belkaid Tlemcen.

Abstract

Cet article est une tentative de jeter un peu de lumières sur les problèmes des enseignants d'ESP au département de psychologie sont confrontés avec. Par conséquent, et en raison du processus de la mondialisation, le système d'un monde de l'éducation est censée être progressivement mis en œuvre en Algérie. Ce système LMD est censé fournir une importance apparente de l'enseignement ESP que ce dernier est offert dans presque toutes les spécialités. Le système LMD de l'évaluation est souvent perçue comme une plus grande attention au progrès des étudiants par l'administration des contrôles ou des essais tout au long de l'ensemble du semestre. Toutefois, il convient de préciser que l'évaluation de l'anglais dans le système LMD au département de psychologie semble retenir l'attention des petits comme requis par ce système. Il est souvent considéré comme un cours visant à fournir une connaissance générale linguistique sur la structure du langage. À cet égard, la problématique principale serait: Comment un en tant que professeur d'ESP peut gérer une évaluation LMD aux exigences de nos étudiants ESP?

It seems that people around the world are, increasingly, becoming aware of the necessity and the requisite of learning this language having some specific objectives in minds such as reading materials and abstracts, carrying out communication for their social, economic and educational purposes.

This importance of English as global language has led the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Algeria to offer ESP courses in its universities and institutions. Therefore, different ESP courses have been administered in almost all departments. The rationale behind them is to help learners, considering as a subject-specialists, to become communicatively competent in using such a language to function effectively in their target environments. In this vein, Basterkmen (2006: 6) states that *“ESP has functioned to help learners cope with the features of language or to develop the competencies needed to function in a discipline, profession or workplace.”*

On the other hand, this objective seems to be, most of the time, neglected in the department of psychology as the students have the choice between the French and English course. As a result, it should be stated at this point that the ESP classes often consist of heterogeneous learners in which the ESP teachers are faced with the dilemma of what to teach and what and how to evaluate. They, thus, rely in their courses on imparting their students with the general English language focusing mainly on reinforcing their linguistic knowledge.

Owing to the process of globalization, one-world educational system, notably as LMD, has been progressively ‘adopted’ in Algeria. This latter has offered a remarkable change not only in evaluation but also, and most importantly, in giving an apparent importance to the implementation of ESP courses in different departments

that have been once deprived from, the case in point is English for Law.

To put it differently, this educational reform, namely the LMD system started, in the Era of Change, by placing the ESP course under different labels, namely 'EST'; 'ESS'; and 'EBE', and restructuring them according to a prospective vision that bear in mind the main part they have to play in pedagogical and evaluation objectives.

This LMD system is believed to provide an apparent importance to the learners' progress by submitting controls throughout their semesters; an evaluation which is regarded to be ignored in the traditional one. To achieve this end, the following enquiry should be addressed: *How one -as an ESP teacher- may manage an LMD evaluation with our ESP learners' requirements?*

Dealing with this query, the researcher went through a preliminary study in an attempt to better diagnose the target situation. Therefore, the sample population selected in this investigation was both ESP teachers and learners at the department of psychology at Abu Bekr University, Tlemcen using with the two research instruments, namely tests and semi-structured interview.

Thus, at first and in the pre-training phase, the researcher opted for teachers' interview for the purpose of eliciting useful information concerning the learners' reading habits as far as reading comprehension and strategies. The pre-test was used as a placement test aiming at

depicting and assessing the learners' reading comprehension, general language and specialized terminology.

The training phase aimed, in fact, at offering ESP reading courses through the application of *content-familiarity* along with strategy-training mainly those of activating background knowledge. The post-training phase, on the other hand, was used as an evaluation step aiming at assessing the effects of the planned action which included strategy-awareness to approach psychology-based themes. This was undergone through the submission of two former evaluation research tools.

In the light of the results obtained in this pre-training test, one would say that the students' low performance in the first assessment lied significantly to their poor application of reading strategies. They seemed to use a bottom-up model while reading, focusing on the text as a separate process.

Raising their awareness to the range of strategies as well as providing content-familiarity resulted in their improvements of reading comprehension. Thus, after the strategy training, displayed a better performance and, thus, become able to understand the psychology-based themes by drawing up on a number of different reading strategies depending on their linguistic and cognitive ability. The most commonly used reading strategy, among all, the advanced, intermediate and weak learners' language proficiency was that of activating their content schemata through previewing.

Moreover, one which seems to dominate the students' interview answers was devoting an idea for each paragraph. They believed that this enables them to

enhance their comprehension little by little. They seem to focus on the part to have access to the whole and taking into account what they generally know rather than stressing on the meaning of each word of each sentence. For the sake of comparing the students' performance in both tests, a t-test was used to evaluate whether they improved their reading comprehension. The paired-test displayed the result (-3.037) , bearing in mind that it is negative; this indicates that the pre-test scores were lower than the students' post-test performance which means that they highly achieved the test and were able to manage their reading strategies to better approach ESP reading courses.

Based on the results and conclusions drawn previously, a set of activities were recommended for the purpose, of not only, developing the rank of ESP courses but also adapting the LMD system of evaluation:

1. To start with, and for the aim of testing the students' levels before the administration of any ESP course, a needs analysis has to be conducted in the form of proficiency or placement test.
2. The focus should be put on content-familiarity through the use of interesting texts and purposeful tasks.
3. Raising their awareness to the range of strategies that better help them treating the texts through the use of comprehension questions.
4. Reinforcing and consolidating their linguistic knowledge while reading.

To conclude, I want to come back to the findings obtained as a result of the *continuous evaluation*, students were able to succeed in the comprehension of the test through the application of previewing. The results revealed that the

majority of the learners' post-test scores are higher, this signifies that they have been aware of the effective strategies, that is to say they have been developed in mainly all the strategies put planned and acted in the training sessions. Moreover, nearly all of them have been able to relate the text to their background knowledge. The results also suggested that though the majority of them exhibit an intermediate level of language proficiency, they which enabled them to compensate for their language proficiency.

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Awicha BENABDALLAH
Section d'Anglais
Université de Tlemcen
E-mail: awicha333@live.fr