KASDI MERBAH UNIVERSITY – OUARGLA

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of Foreign Languages

English Section

Dissertation:

Academic Master

Domain: Letters and Foreign Languages

Field: English Language and Literature and Civilization

Specialty: Applied Linguistics and English for Specific Purposes

Prepared by: Laghrab Zineb

Title:

The Impact of Learners' Heterogeneity in the Class on the Performance of the ESP Practitioner

The Case of Algerian ESP Practitioners

Publically defended

On: 17/06/2013

Before the Jury:

Dr. Djamal Goui	Supervisor	UKM-Ouargla
Ms. Fouzia Bahri	President	UKM-Ouargla
Mrs. Farida Saadoune	Examiner	UKM-Ouargla

Academic Year: 2012-2013

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Dedication

I dedicate this modest work to the candels that light my way, to my beloved parents for their love, patience, encouragement and support may god bless them

To the fllowers of my family, my sisters Ahlem and Nadjet and my brothers Ahmed, Abd Allah and Abd el Fadil for their unconditional support and encouragements to pursue my interests.

To the soul of my best friend Radia .. I hope I made our dream come true.

To all my friends specially Madjda and Ahlem.

And to all those who believed in me and pried for my success.

Zineb

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Finally, I humbly and gratefully acknowledge the continual and enduring love and emotional support given by my parents and my family. I could never acknowledge or thank my parents enough.

List of Abbreviations

MT: Mother Tongue

SL: Second Language

FL: Foreign Language

ESP: English for Specific / Special Purposes

ELT: English Language Teaching

GE: General English

SD: Syllabus Design.

NA: Needs Analysis

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Introduction

1. Background

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is teaching or learning a variety of the English language that has specific goals and objectives. This variety it taught to or learnt by specific learners who have special needs. ESP is newborn in the field of language teaching and learning. Although it has emerged in the recent four decades, it has witnessed a great progress in both the theoretical and the practical sides. Teaching ESP aims at developing students' skills of professional communication in English depending on the area of their professional field.

ESP courses have many characteristics that distinguish and differentiate it from teaching and learning General English or what is called English for no Specific Purposes. Among those criteria developed by Dudley-Evens and St John (1998). They claim that ESP is characterized by being for specific learners, and having a particular syllabus and methodology. Also needs analysis is considered to be a vital element in ESP due to the importance of the results that the syllabus and the methodology are based on. ESP is not a matter of vocabulary or grammar but it exceeds that, as well as it needs specific materials that are chosen on the basis of needs analysis.

It is unquestionable that the ESP practitioner is considered as one of the most important pillars for a successful ESP course. He plays different roles at the classroom such as monitoring, guiding, and giving feedback and so on. Due to the recency of the ESP, not enough qualified practitioner do have the required experience in the field especially in Algeria. Despite the fact that the ESP practitioner does not differentiate from the general English one in great extent, the ESP practitioner reverses the special nature of ESP.

Many problems face ESP classes more than those of general English. These issues are supposed to be related to the specialism it serves. Some of these issues can be summarized in the lack of inexperienced instructors. This can be a serious problem for the learners due to lack of programs that help in presenting teachers who can carry the responsibility of teaching ESP courses. In addition, materials can be an issue because of the insufficiency of materials specialized in each field; this makes the responsibility of creating and having those materials falls on the teachers. Another problem, which can be noticed, is the non-limitation of the class size and its effects on the performance of the learners and the response of the teacher with his learners. The last and not the least is heterogeneity. This issue is not related to ESP classes

only, in fact this can be noticed also in general English classes. However, its impact can be more obvious in ESP classes and on the performance of ESP practitioner. And that is what shall be subject to our discussion in the following.

2. Statement of purpose

Throughout our own experience as learners, our heterogeneity in the classroom creates a serious problem for us to integrate, and is the suitable context for creativeness and renovation. The main objective of this study is to investigate the existence of relationship between heterogeneity in the class and ESP practitioner performance. Studying the reasons of the heterogeneity is considered one of the main elements to base the syllabus on. Moreover, this study provides characteristics of the heterogeneous classes. As well as the impact of lack of homogeneity on the learners themselves and for the most on the performance of the ESP practitioner, and how to decrease the level of heterogeneity in ESP classes and use it as a push forward force, rather than a backward one.

3. Statement of the Problem

Several hypotheses have been already formulated about learning and teaching ESP in a good manner. Also other hypotheses have been devised in order to show the main problems that might affect the process of learning and teaching ESP. Thus, the main question of this research is:

To what extent can heterogeneity have an impact on the performance of the practitioner of the English for specific purposes?

Based on the assumption that heterogeneity of learners has an impact on the learners themselves on the amount of their linguistic input as well as their output. We hypothesize that the effect of the learners' heterogeneity is not related solely to the learners. Thus, the following hypothesis has been formulated.

The heterogeneity has a great impact on the performance of the ESP practitioner.

4. Means of research

In order to have the sufficient outcomes, the hypothesis of this research will be applied on a sample of (25) teachers of English for specific purposes from some different Algerian universities. To investigate the rightness of the research's hypothesis that is, the heterogeneity of the classroom has an impact on the performance of the ESP practitioner. A questionnaire will be formulated of open-ended questions and administered to the sample mentioned who are asked to answer by putting a tick (√) in the appropriate box(es) or making full statements whenever necessary.

5. Structure of dissertation

This research is divided into two chapters. The first is devoted to the review of literature, whereas the second chapter is devoted to the practical one. Chapter one, shall deal with two parts. Part one explores the heterogeneity of the class, and spots light on the homogeneous class as well as studying some factors that serves heterogeneity at the classroom at the end of this chapter there will be a quick look on the effect of the heterogeneity of the classroom on ESP learners. part two deals with the ESP practitioner, the characteristics that differentiate the ESP practitioner from the one of general English then the most important roles that the ESP practitioner would play at the classroom, last not the least element would be ESP components.

The second chapter comprises the analysis and the interpretation of the questionnaire devoted to investigate the impact of learners' heterogeneity on the ESP practitioner's performance. Finally, some pedagogical recommendations are suggested, which we think will help in improving the learning / teaching process.

Chapter one: Heterogeneity of the Classroom

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Heterogeneity of the Class

I.1. Introduction:

The second/ foreign language contexts have always been a very complex task for experts to understand the settings under which teaching and learning a language process takes place. During the last decades, various studies have been done to vulgarize the facts. They prove that several factors control and manipulate the class environment as well as the teaching and learning process. These aspects are related mostly to learners' individual differences and their distribution as well as teachers' performance and their management of the class.

Along this chapter, there will be a discussion about the heterogeneity of learners, which is supposed to be an essential factor that affects the learning and teaching process. In addition to that, we shall review a number of differences between learners in heterogeneous classes and we shall try to give and over look on the backwash and the wash-back effects of heterogeneity on the learners.

I. 2. Definition of heterogeneity:

Heterogeneity is defined by many academics as the state of being different. Ur notes (1998) that "a heterogeneous class is one that has different kinds of learners in it" (p. 302). According to Ur a heterogeneous classroom is the one that contains varied types of learners who are different from each other due to the individual differences between them. The heterogeneity of the classroom is a result of many factors internal as the personality, confidence, intelligence … and external ones such as the background, learning style …It should be pointed out that lack of homogeneity is a natural environment in each class because there is no such a homogeneous class or learners that share the same characteristics. Therefore, all classes of more than one learner are in fact heterogeneous.

I. 3. Heterogeneity Vs. Homogeneity

According to the definition of homogeneity proposed by Faris (2009), it is grouping of learners who are similar in one class. Having a homogeneous class is a matter of gathering learners who share some similarities. Specialists confirm that homogeneity is about defining the age and the mother tongue of the learners and controlling these two variables. Ur (ibid) says that homogeneity is the opposite of heterogeneity. He states on the other side that " a heterogeneous class is one that has different kinds of learners in it, as opposed to a homogeneous class where the learners are similar" (p.302). Some academics define the homogeneous class as having a classroom of gifted learners. However, the majority of scholars believe that even in such a class (gifted learners) there is a level of heterogeneity among learners taking into consideration age, background, personality… of the learners.

I. 4.Factors of heterogeneity

Academics relate heterogeneity to many aspects and marked differences. Among all the works about this particular point, we can mention Ur's detailed list about heterogeneity's factors, which we are going to be discussed in this paper.

I.4.1. Biological characteristics

Biological factors are the characteristics that have to do with biology and genetics lineage. In other words, they are the aspects that are closely related to the physical changes that occur on the human body and which have a lot of implications on the mental processes and that account for variation in performance and behavior. According to Neurobiology of Aging Journal, The main ones are gender and age (977-980).

I.4.1.1. Age

Age is considered to be of a great importance in language acquisition and learning, which creates a great deal controversy among researchers. A class sometimes is a mixture of ages, which can be a factor that differentiates learners, and can make teaching a difficult operation. In a general English class, the distribution of learners is pretty of the same age in other words these learners should have somehow similar views of the world and their knowledge. Whereas, in ESP classroom, for instance age is clearly a factor of heterogeneity, where age difference among learners is clearly noticed; adolescents, young adults, and adults. This can cause a strong foundation for different views as well as a suitable context that lead to the lost in the class control (Dudley-evens and waters, 1997)

I.4.1.2.Gender

Gender is as well an important element among the individual differences between learners that the teacher may face at the classroom. Boys and girls are not the same when speaking about their needs, ways of studying, and even their objectives. When dealing with gender we are going to speak about the natural and the biological factors that determine the way of thinking, solving problems, activating the brain and many other processes. In addition to that, girls and boys act and react differently at the classroom. Moreover, the teachers do not treat them in the same way. According to Davies (2006), girls are more self motivated to study and they are more interested with languages and arts… on the other hand, boys are less self-motivated and they are attracted to what requires mental skills such as math and physics.

I. 4. 2. Internal capacities

Interior capacities are related to the inner factors that affect the learner. These aspects such as personality, intelligence, motivation … have a great impact on the way on which the

language is learnt. In addition to that, these capacities could play a key role in the process of language acquisition since they control the possibility of encouraging or discouraging the learner to learn the language in general.

I. 4. 2. 1. Personality

Personality is that complex area in human beings, whom try from ancient times to understand it and its relation to other processes. Dornyei (2005) states that "personality, representing the complex of all attributes that characterize a unique individual" (p.11). Personality is the array of characteristics that differentiate the individuals such as extraversion, introversion, inhibition, risk-taking, self-esteem. Some scholars believe that personality has not a direct impact on the second language learning, however, it affects other learner individual differences as learning strategies and motivation (Trawinski, 2005). Many studies were done under the purpose of clarifying the effect of personality on the second language learning. These researches have shown that personality has a strong impact solely on the learning of conversational skills (oral communication abilities), not on the learning of literacy skills (reading and writing).

I. 4. 2. 2. Self-confidence

Confidence is supposed to be an effective factor for learner's general achievement and in FLL due to its tight relation to all aspects of learning. There is a close relationship between self-confidence and the learning process as suggested by Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) who clearly mention that "the self-confidence, secure person is a more successful language learner" (p.75). It is the fact of feeling sheltered and confident about oneself. Self-confidence is related tightly to operation of learning language whether the first or second/foreign language and is considered one of the factors that affect the learner's personality such as anxiety and self-esteem. Although, the great role of family, teacher and the surrounding environment of the learner in influencing his self-confidence whether in increasing or decreasing it, this never keeps him away from holding the responsibility toward himself.

I. 4. 2. 3. Motivation

Motivation is that decisive force that stimulates humans to do a certain task. According to Littlwood (1984), motivation is

> *A complex phenomenon and includes many components: the individual's derive, need for achievement and success, curiosity, desire for stimulation*

> *and new experience, and so on. These factors play a role in every kind of learning* situation. (p. 53).

Motivation is the axis to learn any language whether a MT or 2L / FL. Numbers of researches have held this concept due to the strong belief of its great impact on the learning process. Several types of motivation that catalyze learners have been identified; in one hand, there is a categorization according to the objectives of the learning process, in which there is the instrumental and the integrative motivation. On the other hand, there is a classification related to the source of motivation, which includes the intrinsic motivation (self-motivation) and the extrinsic (external) motivation (Gardner, 1985).

I. 4. 2. 4. Learning style

People have different ways to live as well as different styles to learn. In fact, Learners differ in the ways they learn in accordance with the preference. The point is that although learners face the same stimuli, they respond and react to them in different learning styles. Reid (1995) defines learning style as "an individual's natural, habitual, and preferred way(s) of absorbing, processing, and retaining new information and skills". Basing on this, learning styles are methods or techniques that the learner prefers to perceive and process information with. Through several studies in the field of second language acquisition (2LA), different types of learning approaches were recognized among which the most known and the most investigated styles; behavioral, mental and kinaesthetic ones (Ellis, 1997). Scholars have claimed that learners develop their learning styles and sometimes change their approaches to learning under various circumstances throughout the development of the learning process. In addition, recent researches concluded that some learning styles are acquired from the mother tongue, in other words some learners develop and adopt the same learning approaches of acquiring the 1L to learn the 2L.

I. 4. 2. 5. Intelligence

Is an internal capacity that helps in learning anything not just the language. Although, it has a direct impact on the way of learning (learning style) choice, learner would choose the strategy that it seems to be the most successful and effective to him/her. Each learner has this capacity, as it is a natural ability however; it differs in its extent from one learner to another. Therefore, intelligence is considered as an individual difference and a factor that facilitate the 2LL and not as a confirmed feature for its success. According to Ellis (1985), intelligence is "a general academic or reasoning ability" (p.110). Accordingly, it is a capacity that facilitates

the learning process by helping in analyzing, comparing and synthesizing the input. Studies and especially the ones proposed by Gardner (1983) “the multiple intelligences” claims that there are different types of intelligence including the linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, the last and not the least intrapersonal intelligence.

I. 4. 3. Learning capacities

These abilities are concerned with all kinds of previous knowledge of the learner and that can help largely in acquisition and improvement of the second language. Teacher should be aware of these capacities to facilitate the leaning/teaching process and to manage the amount of the language input and the output in a good manner.

I. 4. 3. 1. Background knowledge

A large body of findings shows that teachers and educators focus on the input information as a result neglecting learners ‘background knowledge. There is a widespread agreement that prior knowledge is primarily preceded and the then the presented input in the learning process. Stevens (1980) defines the prior knowledge as “…what one already knows about a subject” (p.151). Background knowledge is in itself a parent term for many more specific knowledge dimensions such as the Language Knowledge that is to say the language aspects, skills and linguistic features. Furthermore, there is the world knowledge or so-called Universal Culture. Last and not the least the knowledge of other languages, numerous research studies prove that even the not mastered languages do have an influence on the process of learning as well as on the learner himself.

I. 4. 3. 2. Cultural knowledge

Research studies demonstrate the impossibility of divorcing culture from the language due to its tight relation to all aspects of life in society. Culture has an impact on the way people communicate. Hence, clashes in cultural orientation can have a major influence on the success or failure of the learner. Learners have different cultural backgrounds because of their different affiliations, and the use of language reflects largely their cultural aspects. Trompenaar (1993) identifies it as” social interaction, or meaningful communication, presupposed common ways of processing information among the people interacting” (p.20). Culture is transmitted beliefs, behaviors, and values that are shared by a group of people (society). The inherent cultural values influence the effectiveness of the learning process and ensure the uniqueness of the learner’ personality and they can even manipulate his motivation and self-confidence.

I. 4. 3. 3. Mother tongue

While there are many factors involved in the heterogeneity of the classroom, the mother tongue captures a great extent of attention seeing that there is a reference to related aspect that lines with, which is culture. MT is the first language an individual exposes to in his immediate environment. There is consensus about the fact that the mother tongue or so called the native/arterial language is the language that the child learners in his critical period. The impact of the mother tongue is well recognized on the learning of the second language when speaking about the learning styles the strategies pursued (Carless, 2008: 331). Thus, some researchers claim that the successful first language learner guarantees a successful second/foreign learning.

I. 5. The Effect of Heterogeneity on the Learners

Actually teaching a large and heterogeneous class with learners, who vary in those features mentioned above, is the exact context that creates serious problems for the learners themselves. Different learners mean different concerns and interests, which can be hard for the teacher to provide and serve in terms of topics and materials. Thus, it naturally outcomes lack of interest as well as an ineffective learning for all learners. Learners may find themselves lost and not given well attention from the part of their teachers likewise the suitable feedback. In addition to that, such an environment of an uncontrolled freedom can cause real problems for the learners while the absence of discipline, which cannot be prevailed on the classroom (Ur, 1991). This is on one hand; on the other hand, heterogeneity of the class can be useful and helpful for the sake of learners when speaking about variety of topics, materials, interests, and cultures, which can open doors for many fresh and effective learning strategies and approaches.

I.6. Conclusion

Learners are different in their nature and heterogeneity is a standard state in the classroom. Many features differentiate Learners from one another in all ways that affect how they learn and need to be taught. For the last decades, Homogeneous classrooms have been growing the attention of academics to understand the surrounding circumstances of such classrooms. The fact that the impact of heterogeneity is not related solely to learners also teachers are affected by it, and that is what the second chapter will discuss.

Chapter Two: ESP Practitioner

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II. 1. Introduction:

The study of classroom contexts has a long tradition in understanding the process of teaching and learning 2L / FL. The increased learning and teaching of English throughout the world during recent years due to many perspectives, led in a way or another to the appearance of ESP. Many studies and theories were established and number of linguists and scientists devote their bolt to understand the nature of ESP and all the aspects related to it. ESP is studying English for specific / special purposes and objectives. Regardless of its specialism, there are many factors which affect its teaching and learning process, and this is what will be the core of the second chapter.

For that, throughout this chapter, there will be a discussion about the nature of ESP and a comparison between the ESP practitioner and the general English teacher. Also, we shall investigate the main roles that the ESP practitioner plays. Then we shall conclude this chapter with an overlook on the basic ESP components.

II. 2. ESP

With the ongoing increase of international communication in various fields and the impact of the globalization, the requirement for English for Specific Purposes is growing, especially in societies where English is taught as 2L/FL. ESP (English for specific/special purposes) is referred to by Hutchinson and waters (1987) as identifying the reasons behind which the English language is learnt when they state that "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning" (p.19). Up till now, no clear definition is formulated for the notion of ESP as vast Controversy surrounds it. Dudley-evens (1997) determined number of absolute and variable characteristics trying to give a comprehensive definition of ESP. Nevertheless, experts do agree that ESP is an approach of teaching English as a 2L/FL that aims to improve learners' English according to their needs.

II. 3. ESP Practitioner vs. General English Teacher

One of the most issues related to ESP is where lies the difference between ESP and GE, Hutchinson & Waters (ibid) answer quite clear by stating " in theory nothing, in practice a great deal" (p.53). Dudley-Evans (1997) determines the differences between ESP and GE teacher by stating the following

> *It will already be clear that we regard ESP teaching as extremely varied, and for this reason we use the term 'practitioner' rather than 'teacher' to emphasize that ESP work involves much more than teaching.(p.13).*

He claims that the job of the ESP practitioner does not revolve on the teaching solely rather he believes that it covers more areas than the one of the GE teacher. As well to the teaching, the ESP practitioner is presupposed to handle administrative personnel roles, in addition to face different issues such as cross-cultural, interdisciplinary, curricular, and pedagogical ones which may not be usual roles for GE teacher (Hutchinson & Waters, ibid).

II. 4. The Roles of ESP Practitioner in the Classroom

As previously mentioned the ESP practitioner's role exceeds teaching in the matter of fact he fulfills other roles as Dudley-Evans and Waters mention (1997).

II. 4. 1. Course Designer and Material Provider

Teaching ESP varies in great extent from that of GE. In fact the teacher is tighten to his learners' needs when speaking about course design. ESP practitioner has to keep in his mind the objectives of the course and the analysis of his learners' needs while planning for the course. The teacher is also responsible of selecting and providing the course with the suitable published, adapting or even self-produced materials which closely match the requirements of the course. The materials provided should neither be too easy that makes learners underestimate it, nor too difficult that demotivate them, they should include some challenges which can stimulate the professional comprehension of the students.

II. 4. 2. Researcher

ESP is a developing area in language. Nowadays ESP is experiencing a numerous researches in order to clarify the surrounding ambiguity, that the ESP practitioner should be aware of as well as being a part of it. In addition, he ought to investigate about the approaches and the strategies that may help in an effective learning and teaching process. The ESP practitioner should have an ongoing analysis to the needs of his/ her learners and the objectives that were set for the course; also he ought to identify the main skills needed to achieve those objectives. The ESP practitioner should find the appropriate bridge between the ESP theory and the practice to use in his/her own classroom.

II. 4. 3. Collaborator

There is no grantee that the ESP practitioner is well familiar with the subject nature of the ESP or the specialty of his/her learners. ELT provides ESP practitioner with ideal background of language competencies, whereas, content area proficiency is totally missing. Thus s/he needs to be able to corporate with specialists of such subject to understand the contents and use the maximum resources to simplify the materials for him/her and for the learners. ESP exceeds the need for learning a set of vocabularies or grammar to communicate appropriately in specialty area, the core of ESP is the skills needed for the specialty that can be transferred by the appropriate collaboration of the specialist and the ESP practitioner.

II. 4. 4. Evaluator

Evaluation is a necessary procedure in the learning process, as it is no longer considered as a separate step from the leaning process. Like for GE, ESP contexts need to be evaluated in all its learning stages. All aspects of learning/teaching process are to be evaluated. Unlike GE teachers, ESP practitioner's evaluation should cover much more areas such as the materials used and their efficiency extent as well as the progress of the course and its effectiveness to achieve the set objectives. Due to the nature of the ESP courses and the fact that they cannot be generalized, at variance to the GE courses, the evaluation should be continuous and constant (formative and summative).

II. 4. 5. Teacher

Fulfilling the role of the facilitator and coordinator in the teaching / learning process is applied in all kinds of teaching/learning contexts. In ESP situations, the teacher in more flexible due to his dealings with adult learners, and the relationship with his/her learners is more like to be a partnership, both sides are recognized as experts; the learners as experts in their particular field and the teacher as an expert in the field of language teaching and a source of linguistic information, rather than a teacher (the primer knower) and a learner (the passive receiver) relationship. The main role of the ESP practitioner as a teacher is in creating a space for an ongoing learning to deal effectively with learner's needs, wants, lacks and course objectives. Also he is responsible on generating real and genuine communication contexts on the basis of his/her learners' knowledge about the materials' content.

II. 5. ESP Components

Teaching ESP depends on 6 elements that are considered to be the cornerstones for a successful and effective teaching process. Maintaining on theses constituents forms the strong foundation for the efficient ESP course.

II. 5. 1. Needs Analysis

It is the most important element to consider in teaching, mostly for ESP contexts. According to Iwai et al (1990), NA is a set of tests conducted to determine the lacks between the existing knowledge and learner's abilities and skills and those are needed to be owned to achieve a particular level. These analyses are to be a strong basis on which the syllabus and course content can be established. The maturity of ESP learners makes the analysis more realistic and reasonable as they do know what they want and the objectives they try to achieve. NA offers a great help for the teacher to identify the skills, the knowledge that the learners' needs, the competencies that need developing, and the objectives and the goals want achieving. In addition, it provides the teacher with any obstacles or difficulties which may arise during the learning/teaching process.NA is a continuous process; the teacher should keep in mind the renewal of his learners' needs throughout ESP courses.

II. 5. 2. Methodology

The methodology followed in each ESP course is not exact the same due to the different needs of learners and the objectives set to achieve, that directs to the most important things which are the course material and syllabus which must be designed very carefully to match the methodology selected. Hutchinson and waters (ibid) believe that theoretically the methodology of ESP courses do not differ from that of GE however in practice the methodology changes in accordance to what servers the course and its objectives. The ESP practitioner should determine the methodology that activates hid/her learners' skills, motivate them, facilitate the learning process and that approximate the real world.

II. 5. 3. Syllabus Design

Syllabus is a guideline that specifies what is to be learnt. It carries the units and activities which are to be taught that matches the needs of ESP learners. Dublin and Olshtain (1997) define it as:

> *A syllabus is a more detailed and operational statement of teaching and learning elements which translates the philosophy of the curriculum into a series of planned steps leading towards more narrowly defined objectives at each level.(p.23)*

The syllabus is a device or a support that facilitates the learning/teaching process. The fact of relating it so tightly to the concept of curriculum or even using them interchangeably by some educators creates an actual confusion and makes the clarification of the concept of Syllabus extremely challenging (Hutchinson, 1987). The syllabus is a framework for teaching that the ESP practitioner should plane to effectively, in accordance with his/her learners' needs. Moreover, it should transmit an integration between the real world needs needed, the learners ability of the effective use of language knowledge together with the usage of acquired skills in real life communication, the 3 important elements that forms the successful syllabus design.

II. 5. 4. Course Design

Hutchinson and Waters (ibid) define it as "the process by which the raw data about a learning need is interpreted in order to produce an integrated series of teaching-learning experience" (p.65). Course design is an operation in which the ESP practitioner determines the content of a language program that will meet his/her learners' needs. The experience of designing the appropriate course that effectively covers all the needs of ESP learners can be a confrontation to the ESP practitioner. The effective analysis of learners' needs would provide a great help to achieve the parameters needed for designing the appropriate course. According to the recent researches related to the field of ESP, scholars claim that the ESP practitioner should bear in mind the three types of course design; language-centred course design, skills-centred course design and learning-centred approach, and that the only clue that determines the type used in a particular ESP course is learners' needs and course objectives.

II. 5. 5. Material Selection

Dudley-Evans and waters (ibid) argue that" it has often been noted that ESP is a materials-led movement" (p.185). There is an urgent need for using materials in ESP contexts because rarely the ESP practitioner finds that textbook servers his objectives and his/her learners' needs. Materials are all possible well chosen devices, instruments or tools whether published or self-produced ones that provide the course with extra practices and used to facilitate and accomplish the process of learning/teaching (Tomlinson, 1998). Typically, when

speaking about ESP materials, there is a kind of fear of using authentic materials especially for 2L learners by risking and exposing the learners to genuine materials that may carry a more developed level of language, however, authenticity is a necessary element to consider while teaching.

II. 5. 6. Evaluation

Evaluation is used as an observing instrument which provides the evaluator with information about the progress of the course as well as the achievements. It is to be considered as a part of the whole learning / teaching process rather than an ending stage of it. Moreover, the evaluation ought to be continuous so it can be more effective for the teaching process. Alderson (1992) believes that the content and the result of the evaluation depend on the purpose behind which the evaluation is set. The method used in the evaluation relies on what to be evaluated, consequently, the relationship between the content of evaluation and the method used is logical. Evaluation in whole is a process that starts with identifying the data to collect and ends with realizing the modifications needed on current or even upcoming practices of the syllabus.

II. 6. Conclusion

With the recent researches and the current adaptations to the teaching field make the ESP teaching not that much different from ELT. Nevertheless, the most important difference is that of purpose that guides the teaching process of ESP learners. As a matter of fact, English is not taught as a subject separated from the students' real world and the ESP practitioner is required to motivate learners to apply those instructions in their main field of study. The specificity of ESP in combining the subject matter and English language teaching makes the role of ESP practitioner more effective and surpasses the role of teaching and facilitating the learning process.

Chapter Three: the Analysis of the Questionnaire

III. 1. Introduction

III. 2. The sample

III. 3. The Description of the Questionnaire

III. 4. The Analysis of the Questionnaire

III. 5. Conclusion

1. Introduction

The previous chapters were meant to be a theoretical foundation which sheds light on the heterogeneity and the ESP practitioner. On the basis of what has been discussed so far, this chapter is practical and it is concerned with the affirmation of the impact of heterogeneity of learners on the performance of the ESP practitioner.

2. The sample

ESP practitioners from different universities in Algeria were supposed to be the best corpus for this dissertation. (25) ESP practitioners at some Algerian universities (Ghardaia Ouargla, Adrar, Oran, Annaba, Constantine, Jijel, Tlemcen…) were chosen randomly to be the sample group to confirm or refute the hypothesis of this study.

3. Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire given to the sampling group consists of 17 items (open-ended questions). They were asked to answer by putting a cross in the right box(es) or making full statements whenever necessary and more than one answer was possible for them. The first and second question were for general information about the gender and period of the ESP career of the candidates.

4. Analysis of the Questionnaire

Item 1: Gender?

Items	BN	%
Male	7	28%
Female	18	72%

Table 1: the gender of the ESP practitioner in the sample

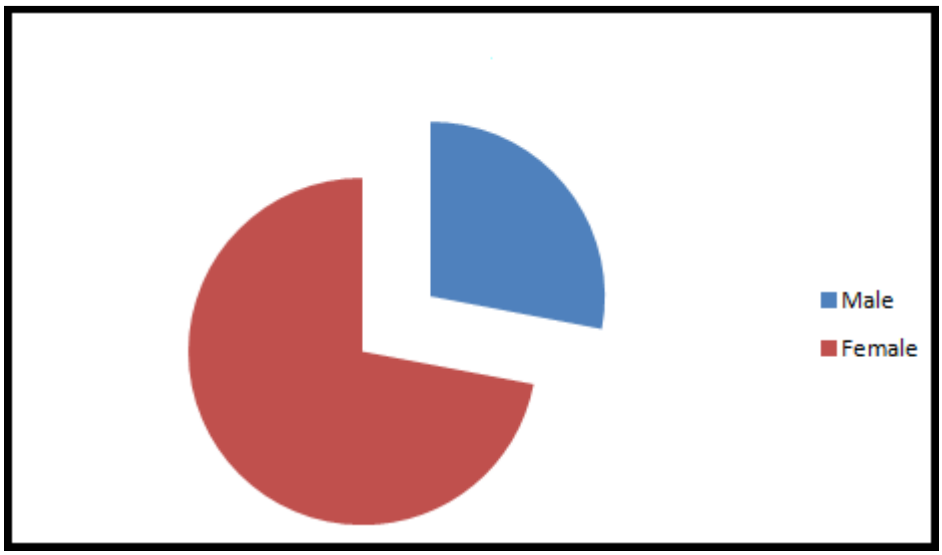

Figure 1: The gender of the ESP practitioner in the sample

From the table above, it can be easily noticed that the majority of teachers (72%) are females, while (28%) represents males. These results reveal that in this last decade, females are more successful than males, and are more interested in teaching than males are.

Item 2: How long have you been teaching ESP?

a) One (1) to five (5) years
b) Five (5) to ten (10) years
c) More than ten (10) years

Items	NB	%
a	8	32%
b	14	56%
c	3	12%

Table 2: years of teaching for the ESP teachers

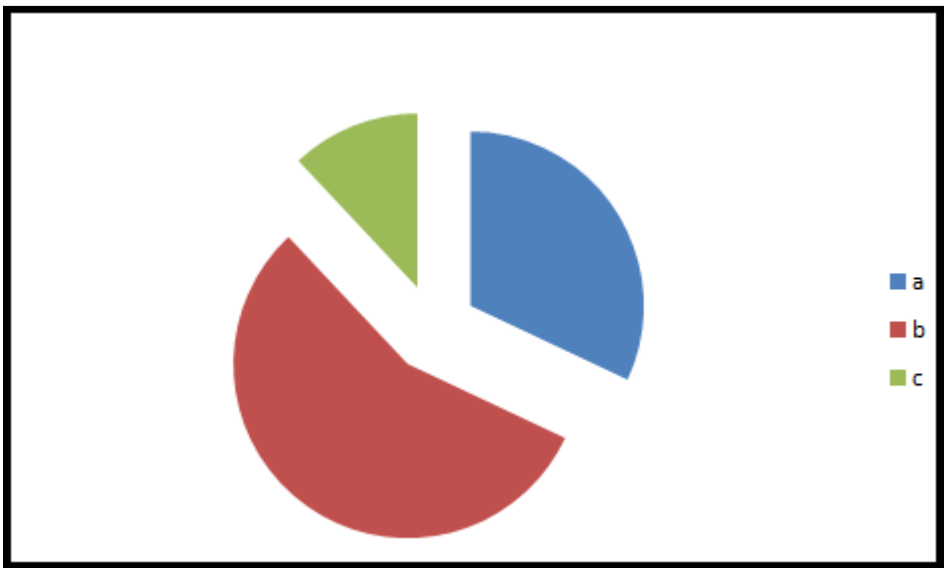

Figure 2: Years of teaching for the ESP teachers

A quick glimpse at the table above, we notice that (56%) makes up the majority of teachers who have experienced teaching for few years ago. (32%) of the participants affirmed that they have been teaching for more than five years. Whereas (12%) of the participants noted that they have started early their teaching career and they have been teaching for more than ten years. This can only prove that ESP is a fresh new born baby approach to language that witnesses wild attention all over the world especially here in Algeria.

Item 3: According to you ESP is?

a) An approach of language teaching based on teaching lists of English technical vocabularies
b) An approach to language teaching based on learners' needs
c) Both

Items	NB	%
a	2	8%
b	3	12%
c	20	80%

Table 3: The significance of ESP to the ESP practitioners.

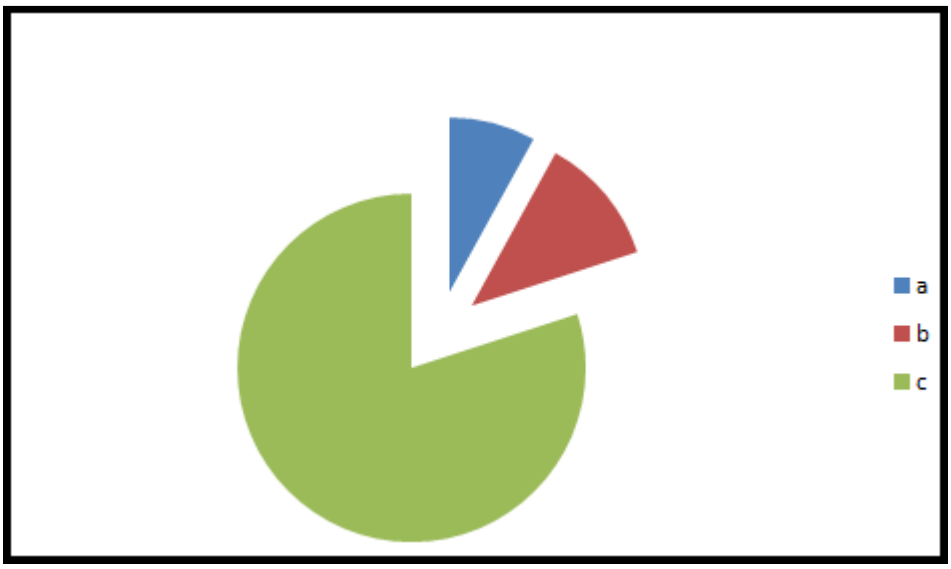

Figure 3: The significance of ESP to the ESP practitioners.

A vast majority of teachers stated that they understand the real signification of ESP which focuses on learners' needs and how they can achieve them without overlooking the importance of teaching English technical vocabularies that learners need in their career. However, (12%) of them believed that ESP is an approach of teaching based on learners' needs. Where the rest (8%) stated that for them ESP is based only on teaching lists of technical vocabularies that learners need to succeed in their career.

Item 4: In your ESP courses the most influential biological factors of heterogeneity is?

a) Age
b) gender

Items	BN	%
a	8	32%
b	17	68%

Table 4: The most influential biological factor of heterogeneity.

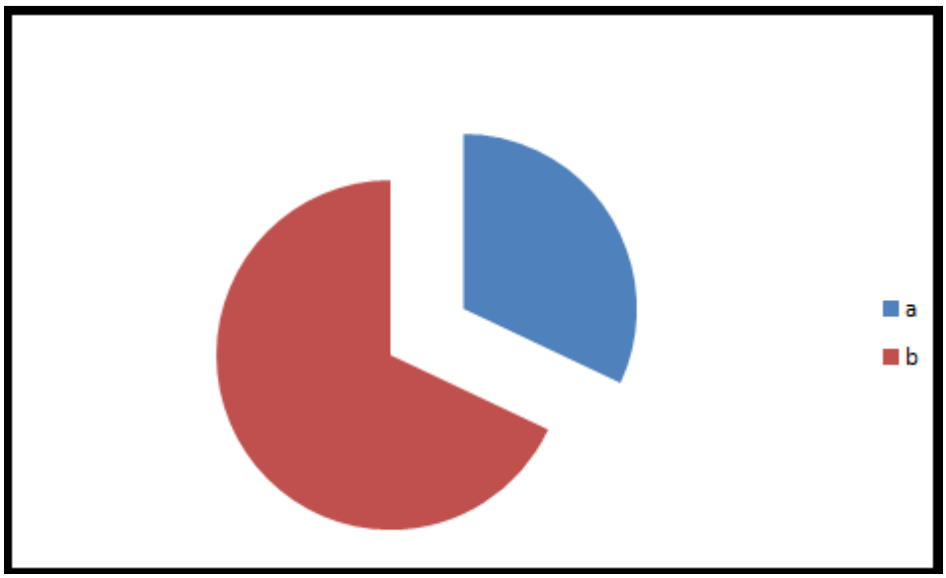

Figure 4: The most influential biological factor of heterogeneity.

(68%) of the results point out that in most of the time gender is the obvious difference among ESP learners due to many reasons related to the way of thinking, preferred styles of learning and so on. And (32%) of teachers declared that age is a vital difference among their learners. however the fact that in almost all cases, ESP learners are adults and mature enough, this makes the age factor less influential.

Item 5: Which gender is more motivated in your ESP courses?

a) Male
b) Female

Items	NB	%
a	18	72%
b	7	28%

Table 5: The most motivated gender in ESP classrooms

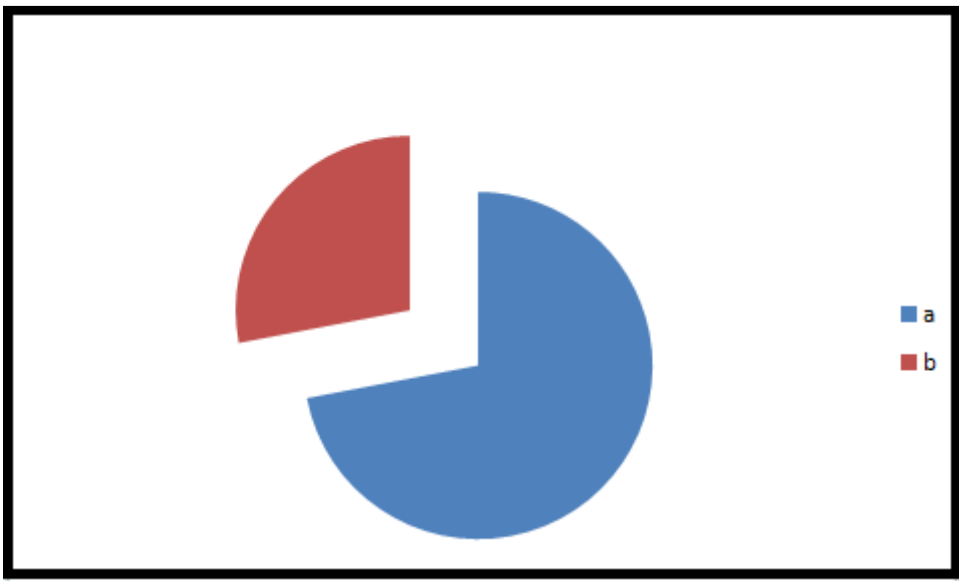

Figure 5: The most motivated gender in ESP classrooms

The findings refer to the fact that males are much more motivated toward ESP courses than girls are, which was noted by (72%) of the sample. Relating it to the fact that ESP is not for general subjects as literature and arts where can easily notice the females high motivation level. The nature of ESP (limited time, specific subjects according to the needs) works more with males Preference. However the other (28%) stated that girls are motivated in great extend in their ESP courses.

Item 6: How does the age difference between your ESP learners affect your teaching process?

a) Positively
b) Negatively

Items	NB	%
a	16	64%
b	9	36%

Table 6: The effect of the age difference on the teaching process.

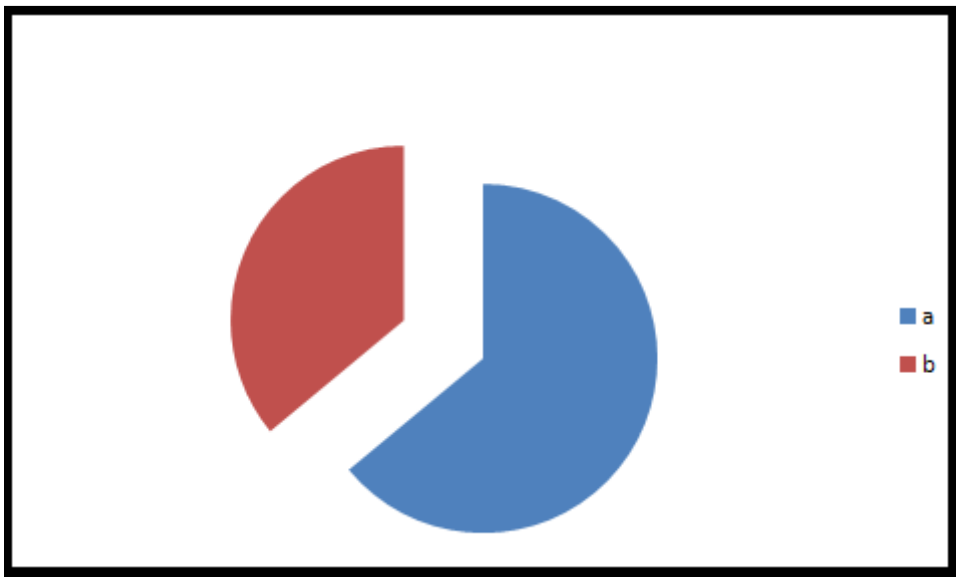

Figure 6: The effect of the age difference on the teaching process.

By this question we wanted the teachers to evaluate the effect of age difference frequency on their learners. The outcomes show that (64%) of teachers believed that the age difference has much positive effects than negative ones on the process of teaching in ESP courses. Some teachers referred the matter to the effect of adult learners (motivation, experience) on the younger learners. While (36%) of them stated the opposite.

Item 7: Do you use different styles of teaching?

a) Yes
b) No

Items	NB	%
a	18	72%
b	7	28%

Table 7: The use of different teaching styles.

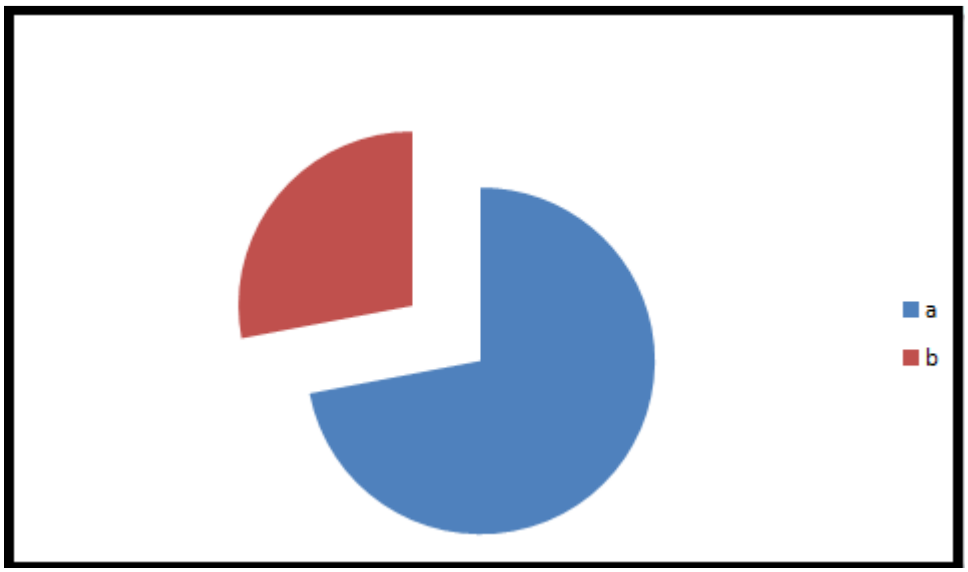

Figure 7: The use of different teaching styles.

According to the results in our hands, the vast majority of teachers (72%) do use different styles of teaching. The responses of the teachers on this question indicate that the use of different strategies of learning by the learners generates the urgent need to do the same with teaching. Where, (28%) of the informants declared that they never change or use different styles of teaching under any circumstances.

Item 8: Do you repeat the explanation of the courses?

a) Always
b) When needed
c) Never

Items	NB	%
a	7	28%
b	15	60%
c	3	12%

Table 8: The frequency of the explanation course repetition

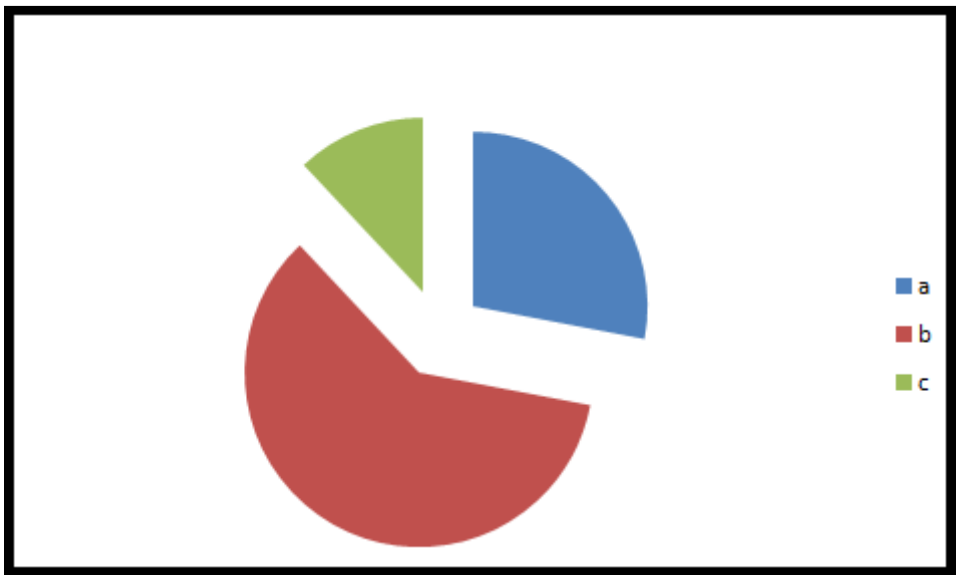

Figure 8: The frequency of the explanation course repetition

This question is a follow up to the previous one. According to what have been noticed, (60%) of results indicates that teachers need to repeat some or the whole content of the ESP course only when it is required by the learners themselves, linking that to their learners' comprehension. Whereas (12%) of the sample noted that they always repeat the explanation to insure the learners' understanding. While (28%) of them admitted that they never repeat the explanation in all cases

Item 9: Being unspecialized in the field creates serious problems when designing and teaching ESP course with whom you collaborate to overcome them?

a) To outsider collaborators
b) To your learners
c) Both

Items	NB	%
a	4	16%
b	13	52%
c	8	32%

Table 9: Teachers' collaboration during ESP teaching

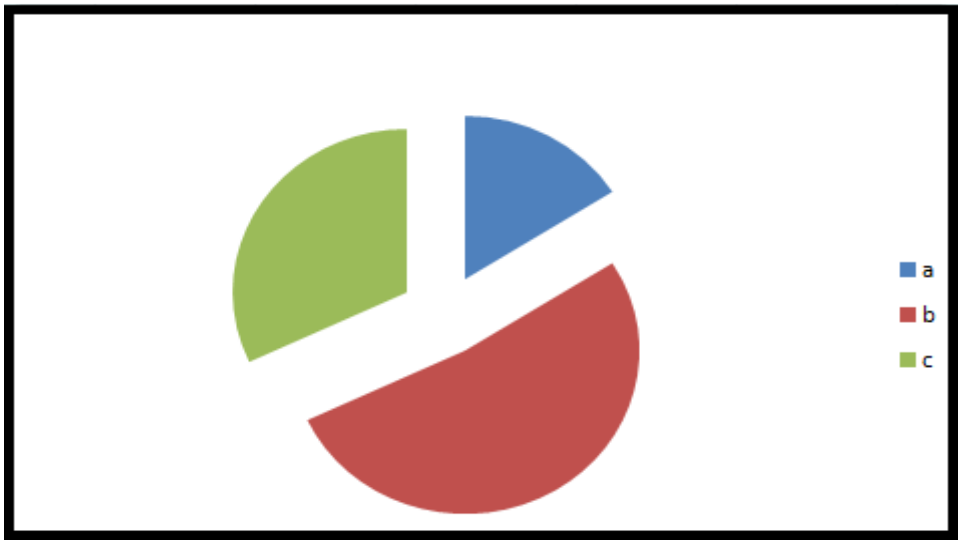

Figure 9: Teachers' collaboration during ESP teaching

The fact that teachers are not well knower of their learners' specialty calls for an urgent outside collaboration. Whether a collaboration with their learners which seems to happen all the time for (52%) of the sample or outsider collaborators as specialists in the domain or administrators for (16%) of the teachers. However the rest (32%) of the informants stated that they collaborate with both of them.

Item 10: Do you analyze your learners' needs before you design an ESP course?

a) Always
b) Often
c) Sometimes
d) Rarely
e) Never

Items	NB	%
a	3	12%
b	12	48%
c	8	32%
d	0	0%
e	2	8%

Table 10: The frequency of analyzing learners' needs.

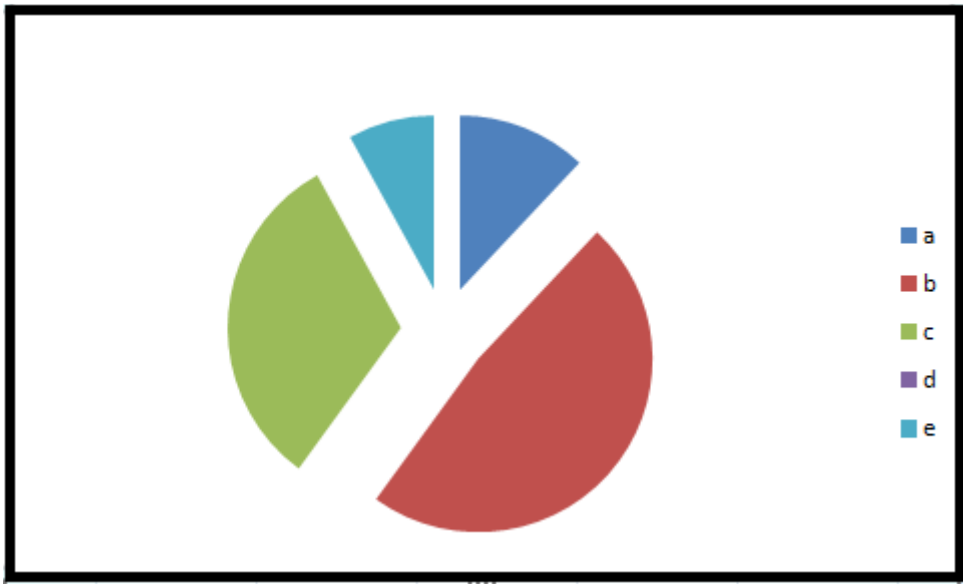

Figure 10: The frequency of analyzing learners' needs.

(12%) of the teachers agreed that the core of ESP courses is about learners' needs the thing that pushes them forward to analyze their learners' needs all the time . while the remain percentage is divided between the other frequencies as the following; (48%) for "often", (32%) for "sometimes", (0%) for "rarely" and (8%) for "never".

Item 11: What type of assessment do you use with your ESP courses?

a) Formative
b) Summative
c) Both

Items	NB	%
a	4	16%
b	3	12%
c	18	72%

Table 11: Types of assessment used in ESP teaching.

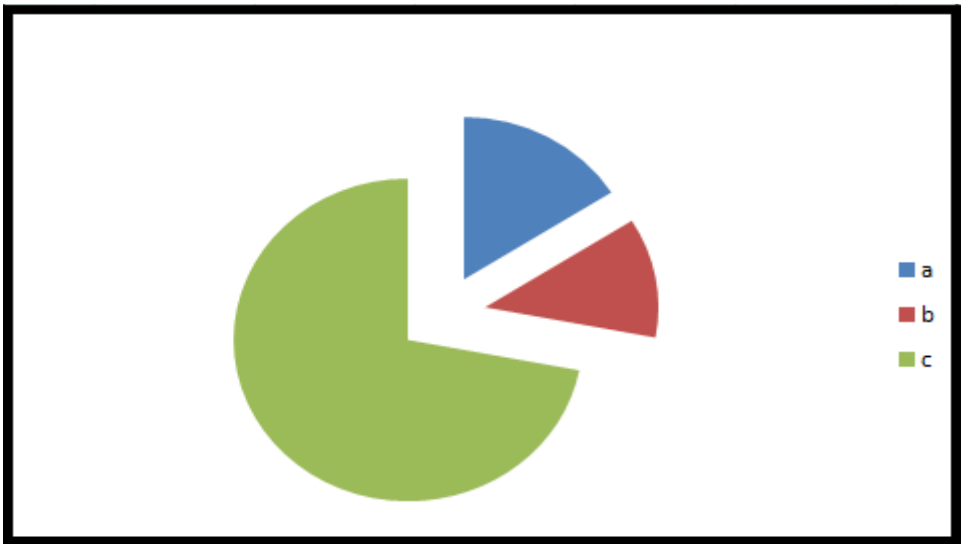

Figure 10: The frequency of analyzing learners' needs.

The majority of ESP teachers (72%) believed that assessment is a natural step in the teaching process and they realize that assessing their learners ought to be fair enough to have both formative and summative assessment during the teaching process. However, (16%) of the informants signified that they use the formative assessment to evaluate their learners, while the (12%) of them affirmed that they depend on the summative one to assess their teaching process.

Item 12: Which one of these roles do you usually play in your ESP courses?

a) Teacher
b) Researcher
c) Course designer and material provider
d) Collaborator
e) Evaluator

Items	NB	%
a	25	100%
b	1	4%
c	13	52%
d	6	24%
e	12	48%

Table 12: The teacher' roles

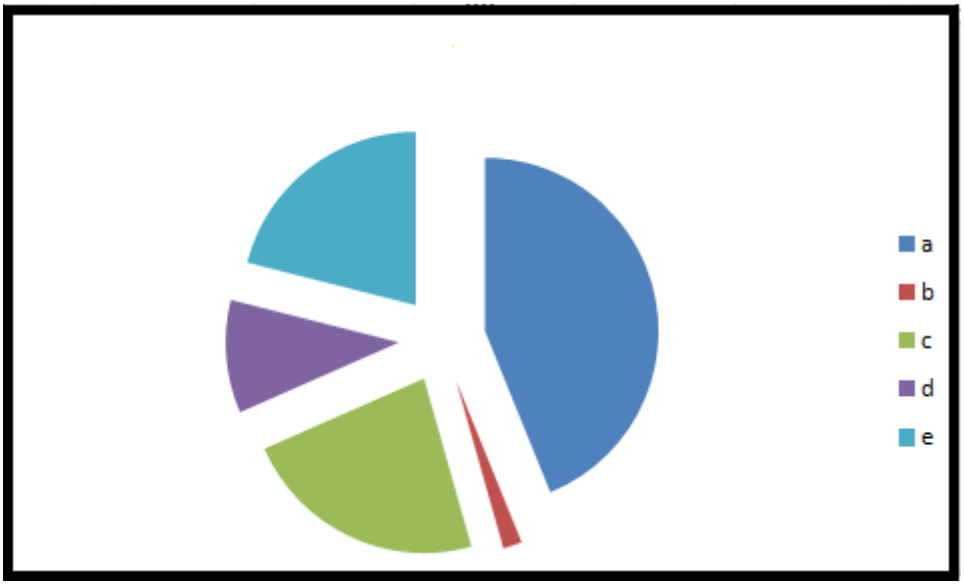

Figure 12: The teacher' roles

In the actual fact, no one can question in the role of the ESP practitioner as a teacher or information provider and that is what the entire sample (100%) without exception agreed on. However, the other roles which they ought to carry out, seem to be absent in the scene especially in the Algerian ESP context. Where (52%) of the informants declared that they design their own ESP course and provide materials for it, and (48%) of them noted that they act as evaluators. However, (24%) of the sample affirmed that they do collaborate so they can succeed in their ESP teaching. whereas the last (4%) stated that they do search in the ESP field.

Item 13: Your ESP classroom is?

a) Homogeneous
b) Heterogeneous to some extent
c) Heterogeneous to a great extent

Items	NB	%
a	2	8%
b	15	60%
c	8	32%

Table 13: the state of ESP classroom

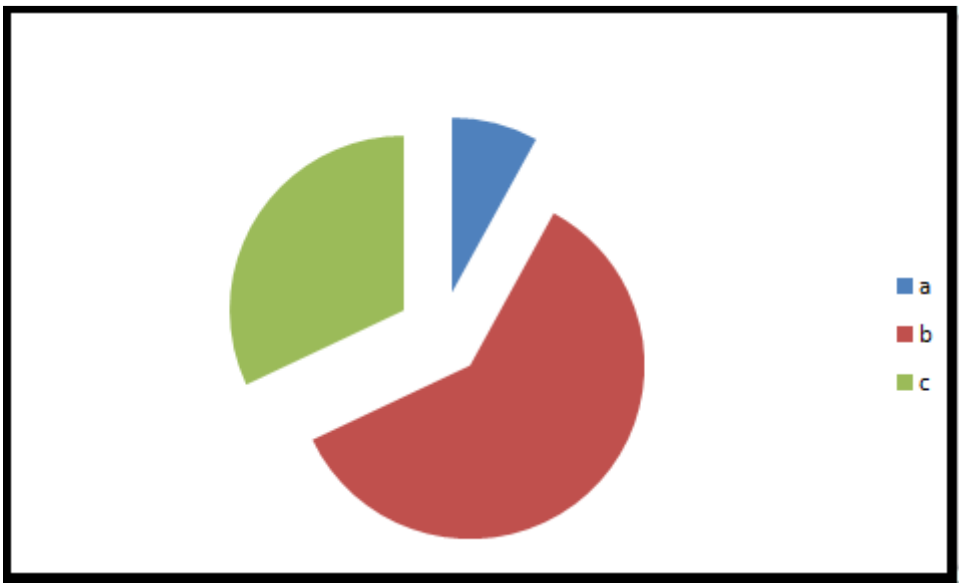

Figure 13: The state of ESP classroom

(32%) of the informants affirmed that their classes are so heterogeneous. While (60%) of the teachers described their ESP learners to be heterogeneous to some extent, however, only (8%) of the sample declared the homogeneity of their classrooms.

Item 14: Does heterogeneity of your ESP classroom affect your learners' performance?

a) Yes
b) No

Items	NB	%
a	25	100%
b	0	0%

Table 14: The effect of heterogeneity on the learners

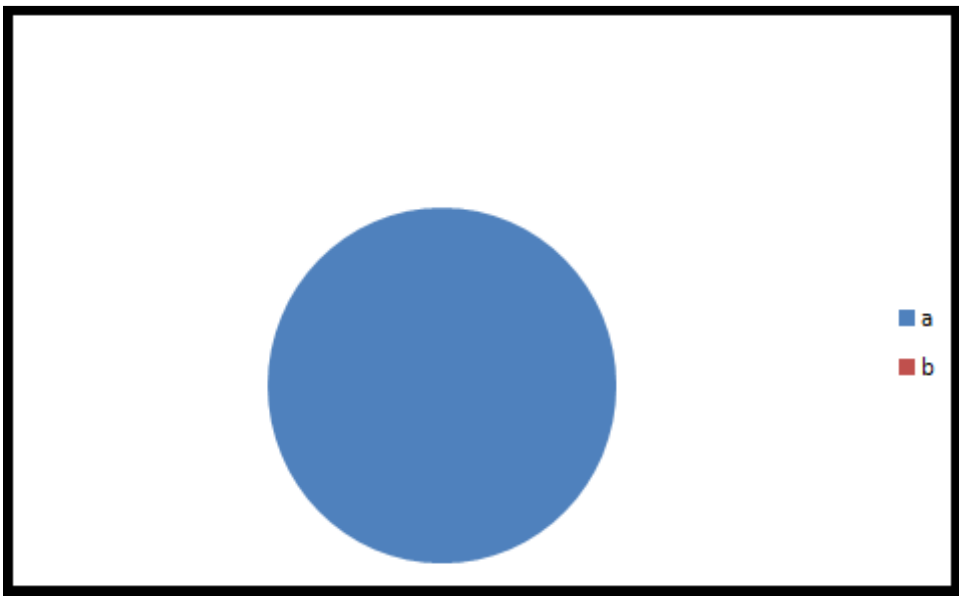

Figure 14: The effect of heterogeneity on the learners

A quick glimpse at the table above, we notice that (100%) makes up the whole the sample believe in the effect that heterogeneity have on their learners.

Item 15: The effect of the class's heterogeneity is?

a) Positive
b) Negative

Items	NB	%
a	11	44%
b	18	72%

Table 15: The way affecting the learners

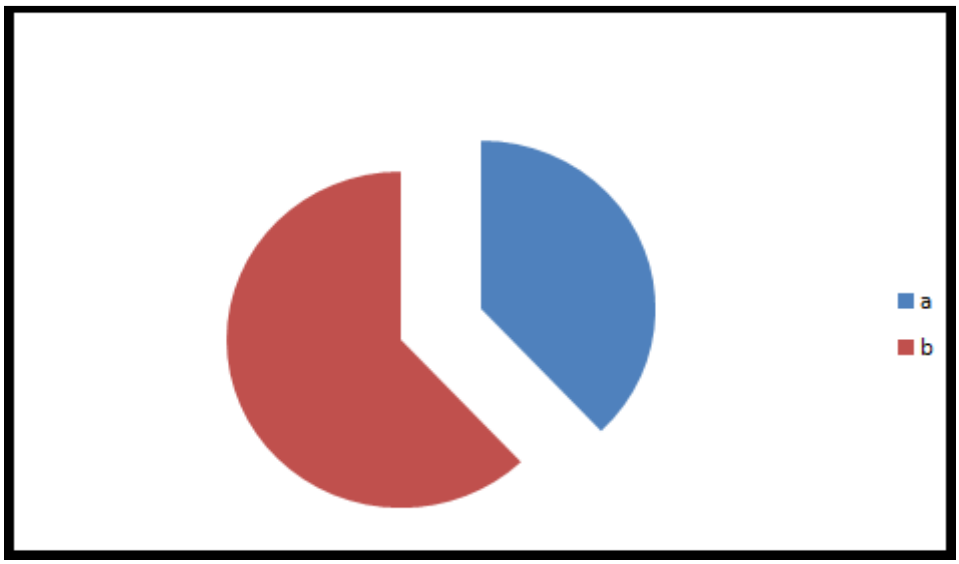

Figure 15: The way affecting the learners

This question is a follow up to the previous one. The effect of heterogeneity is too apparent on the performance of the learners as (44%) stated that its effect is positive on them in increasing the motivation level of learners by their classmates and learning from each others' experiences. Whereas, (72%) of them admitted that the negative effect of heterogeneity is dominating on their learners relating that to difficulty that learners find to understand and keep pace with the level of their classmates.

Item 16: Does heterogeneity of your ESP classroom affect your performance?

a) Yes
b) No

Items	NB	%
a	22	88%
b	3	12%

Table 16: The effect of heterogeneity on the ESP practitioner

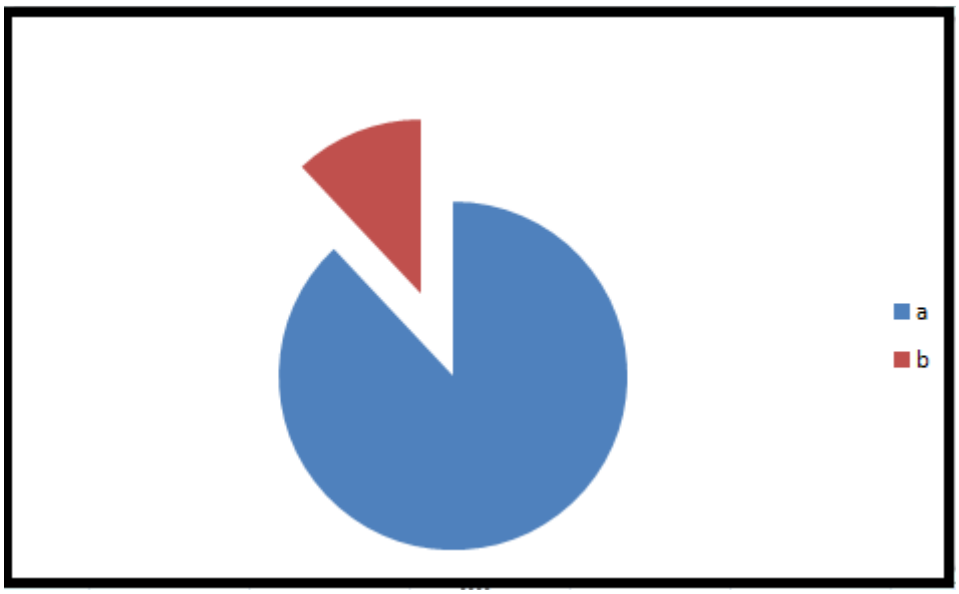

Figure 16: The effect of heterogeneity on the ESP practitioner

Opposite from the previous the question we wanted to know, by asking this question, the effect of heterogeneity on the performance of the ESP practitioner himself. There is a great effect that heterogeneity of learners creates on the ESP practitioner especially on his way of administrating the ESP course as (88%) of teachers affirmed this. However only (12%) of them noted that there is not such an effect of heterogeneity on them

Item 17: The effect of the class's heterogeneity on your performance is?

a) Positive
b) Negative

Items	NB	%
a	19	76%
b	9	36%

Table 17: The way affecting the ESP practitioner.

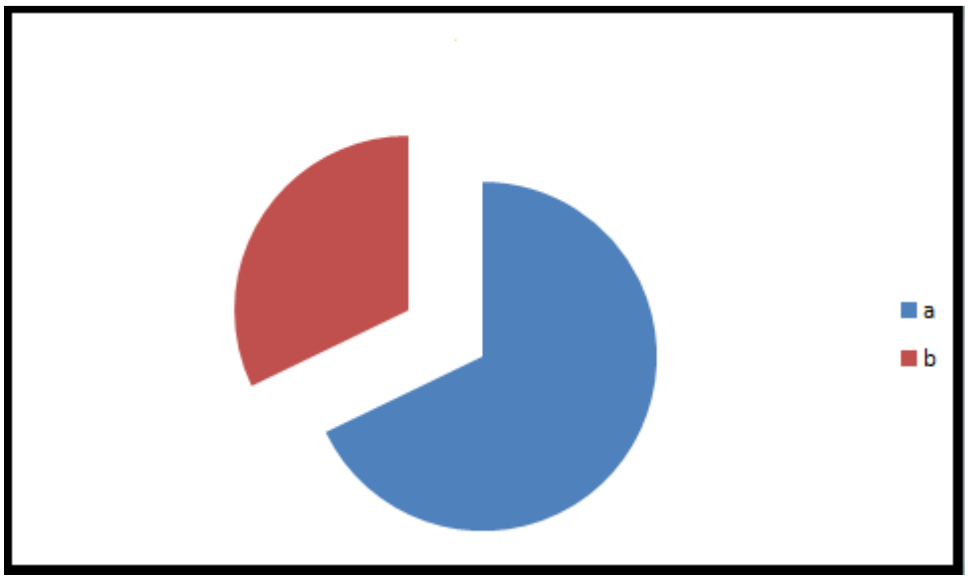

Figure 17: The way affecting the ESP practitioner.

This question is a follow up to the previous one. The effect of heterogeneity is obvious on the performance of the ESP practitioner as (76%) believed that its effect is positive on them in helping them to generate new, fresh and different ways and styles of teaching. Whereas, (36%) of them declared that the negative effect of heterogeneity is almost taking over on their performance linking that to the issue of creating lack of self-confidence in transmitting the information.

5. Conclusion

The teachers' questionnaire analyses affirm that ESP practitioners do understand the significance of the ESP course and all what it required to improve it. Also the majority of teachers' answers indicate that they accommodate the heterogeneity of their learners and deal within a way that might help in improving the ESP learning / teaching process. Furthermore, these analyses demonstrate that ESP practitioners agree on the fact that their learners' heterogeneity does have a great and noticeable impact on their performance as it has on their learners. The impact of learners' heterogeneity is significantly noticed in the different teaching styles used in order to match learners' different strategies to learn. In addition, the syllabus designed for ESP courses is considered to be real evidence to the impact of learners' heterogeneity on the teaching process as the ESP practitioner tries to cover all the areas possible and come up with a syllabus that works with all learners' needs, wants, lacks, beliefs, expectations and awareness

Pedagogical Recommandations and Conclusion

Conclusion

This study has investigated the relation that might priori exist between the heterogeneity of learners and the ESP practitioner. Its main concern was investigating the possibility of the existence of the impact of heterogeneity of learners in the classroom on the performance of the ESP practitioner.

Through literature review, it has long been stressed that there is a high extent of effect of the learners' heterogeneity which seems to be a natural context of our classrooms on the performance of learners. Based on the previous truth, our hypothesis was proposed to identify the effect of learners' heterogeneity on the ESP practitioners themselves. The results of the analysis of the questionnaire accord closely with the predicted reasons (the interpretation), have to come to confirm the proposed hypothesis and show the significant, predictable and noticeable effect of learners' heterogeneity on the ESP practitioner. The majority of ESP practitioners declare the fact that their learners' individual differences do affect the way they teach and transmit the information as well as their way of directing and cooperating with their learners. In point of fact, ESP practitioners show a deep interest to their learners' heterogeneity and a sound concern to understand and deal with it in way that facilitate their teaching process as they ought to analyze their learners' needs, wants and lacks.

As a matter of fact, the impact of learners' heterogeneity on the ESP practitioner is too obvious, since learners are considered as the central part of ESP teaching/ learning process. ESP teachers believe that their learners' heterogeneity is in fact a driving force for them to present the best they can and challenge themselves for more. On the other hand, no one can deny what ESP teacher face of high extent of difficulty by dealing with heterogeneous classrooms as they need to be aware of all individual differences and try to manipulate and decrease or find the bridge that relates these learners to facilitate the ESP teaching.

Finally, this dissertation has shed some light on one of the most important ESP issues that have been allocated a lot of researches. Actually, ESP practitioners' awareness of such an issue facilitate our work to a great extent and gave it a the flavor of authenticity. Heterogeneous classrooms are ordinary contexts that might face all teachers in general and ESP practitioners in particular who the needs of their learners as well as the specificity of the ESP nature might create real problems for them along the teaching process.

Pedagogical Recommendations

Teaching and learning a foreign language is a highly complex task, that should consider both parties, the teacher's and the learner's requirements, needs and wants so to reach their expectations and the course objectives. From all what have been said, some pedagogical suggestions are expectantly proposed to improve ESP teaching in our Algerian context:

- ✓ Accept and deal naturally with the heterogeneity of learners and try to benefit from it to improve the ESP teaching /learning process. After all each learner is unique.
- ✓ Encourage female learners to be more active in the classroom and increase their motivation towards ESP courses.
- ✓ Use the age difference between learners as an aid to motivate young learners to improve their learning.
- ✓ Activate learners' capacities to design their own course that would be a great help for the ESP practitioner to understand the needs and the wants of his learners.
- ✓ The use of authentic material in ESP courses could be the best means to increase learners' motivation and would give the learners the chance to get closer to the real world.
- ✓ Needs analysis is the best aid could the teacher use to know his learners' want and requirements, for that the ESP practitioners ought to analyze his learners consistently.
- ✓ Evaluation is a source of effectiveness in ESP teaching, thus, the assessment should be reliable and valid.

Recommendations for future studies

To develop this study further, more extensive amount of materials could be collected, more researches could be done following the same stream and investigating for more issues related to the field of ESP. heterogeneity is a vast field in applied linguistics and there are many topics and areas that need to be examined and explored. Based on the findings of this study, which have established that the impact of learners' heterogeneity does exist on the performance of the ESP practitioner, other studies are recommended:

- Carry out a research about the effect of ESP practitioner's individual differences on the ESP learners' performance.
- Investigate the effect of each factor of heterogeneity of Learners in the class separately on the ESP practitioner.
- Examine the issue of trying to have homogeneous classrooms and its effects on the learners, the ESP practitioner and the ESP teaching process.

And the door is wildly open for more researches that would lead to much more discoveries and will open the way for new future expectations.

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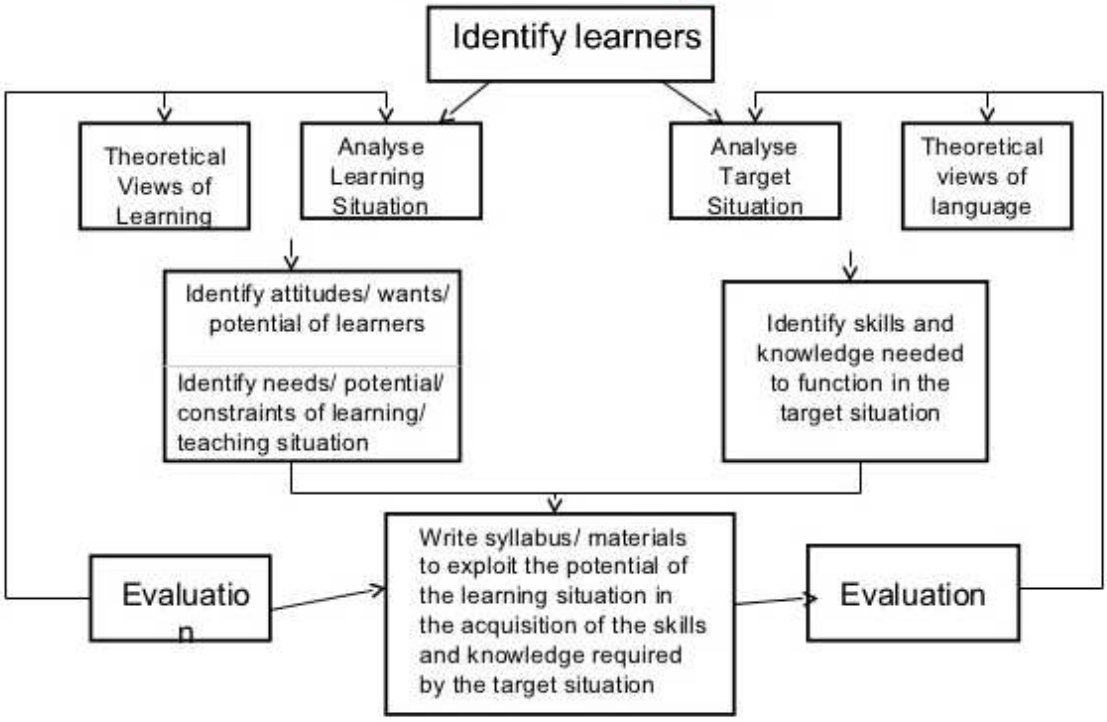
Appendices

Diagram 1 : Learning-centered approach to course design



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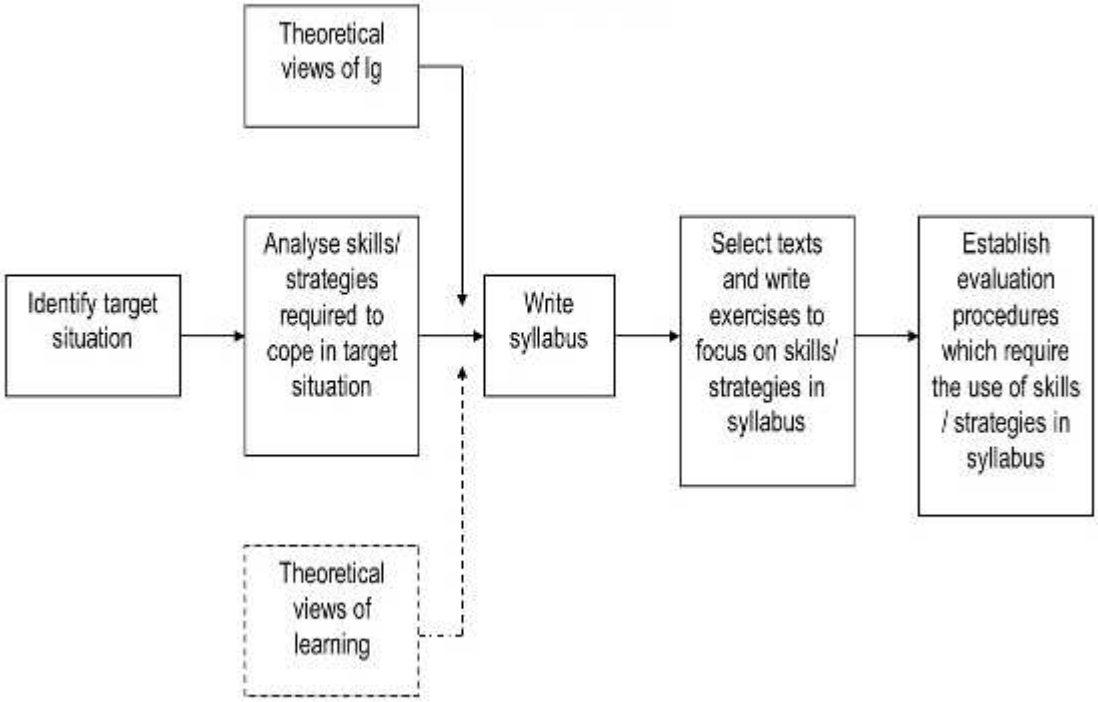
Skill-centered approach to course design: Procedure



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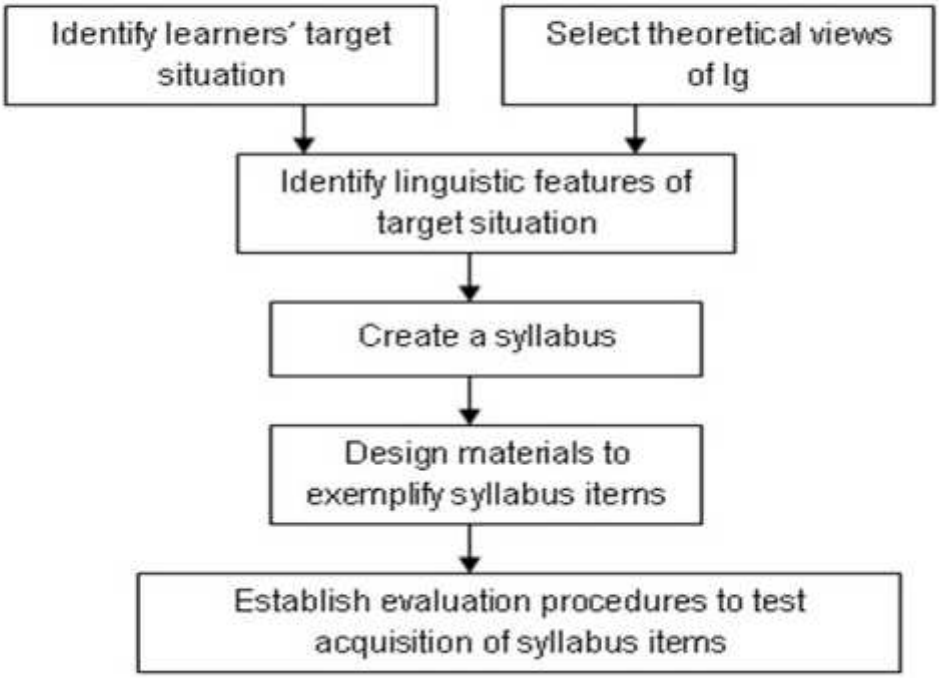
Language-centered approach to course design: Procedure



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Teachers' questionnaire

Dear Teachers,

We would be very grateful if you fill the following questionnaire which is a part of a research work. It concerns a study on the impact of heterogeneity of the learners on the ESP practitioner. You are kindly then invited to answer the following questions by putting a tick (√) in the appropriate box(es) or making full statements whenever necessary.

Thank you

****

1) Sex : male ☐ , Female ☐

2) How long have you been teaching ESP?

d) One (1) to five (5) years ☐

e) Five (5) to ten (10) years ☐

f) More than ten (10) years ☐

3) According to you ESP is?

d) An approach of language teaching based on teaching lists of English technical vocabularies ☐

e) An approach to language teaching based on learners' needs ☐

f) Both ☐

4) In your ESP courses the most influential biological factors of heterogeneity is:

c) Age ☐

d) gender ☐

5) Which gender is more motivated in your ESP courses?

c) Male ☐

d) Female ☐

6) How does the age difference between your ESP learners affect your teaching process?

c) Positively ☐

d) Negatively ☐

How:

…….....

.....

7) Do you use different styles f teaching?

c) Yes ☐

d) No ☐

Why?

.....

.....

8) Do you find yourself obliged to repeat the explanation of the courses?

d) Always ☐

e) When needed ☐

f) Never ☐

Why?

……

……

9) Being unspecialized in the field creates serious problems when designing and teaching ESP course with whom you collaborate to overcome them?

d) To outsider collaborators ☐

e) To your learners ☐

f) Both ☐

10) Do you analyze your learners' needs before you design an ESP course?

f) Always ☐

g) Often ☐

h) Sometimes ☐

i) Rarely ☐

j) Never ☐

11) What is the type of assessment you use with your ESP courses?

d) Formative ☐

e) Summative ☐

f) Both ☐

Why?

……

……

12) Which one of these roles do you usually play in your ESP courses?

f) Teacher ☐

g) Researcher ☐

h) Course designer and material provider ☐

i) Collaborator ☐

j) Evaluator ☐

13) Your ESP classroom is?

d) Homogeneous ☐

e) Heterogeneous to some extent ☐

f) Heterogeneous to a great extent ☐

14) Does heterogeneity of your ESP classroom affect your learners' performance?

c) Yes ☐

d) No ☐

15) The effect of the class's heterogeneity is?

c) Positive ☐

d) Negative ☐

Explain?

.....

.....

16) Does the heterogeneity of your ESP classroom affect your performance?

c) Yes ☐

d) No ☐

17) The effect of the class's heterogeneity on your performance is?

c) Positive ☐

d) Negative ☐

Explain?

……

……

Thanks a lot.

Abstract

The present dissertation, a total of three chapters, is meant to investigate the relationship between learners' heterogeneity and the ESP practitioner. Heterogeneous classrooms are, in matter of fact, the state of all classrooms that comprises more than a learner. This study aims at exploring the impact that might be a result of learners' individual differences (heterogeneity) on the performance of the ESP practitioner. The hypothesis of this work was examined using a means of a questionnaire which was submitted to ESP practitioners at some Algerian universities (Ghardaia, Ouargla, Adrar, Oran, Annaba, Constantine, Jijel, Tlemcen…). The results and the analysis of this research show the high extent of the impact that learners' heterogeneity in the class has on the ESP practitioners and reveal its backwash and washback effects on their performance and the teaching process in whole. Based on the extracted results from this study we have suggested some recommendations thinking would be helpful for the ESP practitioners in their ESP teaching career to enhance ESP learning and teaching.

Key words: ESP, heterogeneity, homogeneity, ESPpractitioner.

ملخص البحث

تهدف هذه الدراسة و المتكونة من 3 فصول الى التحقق من امكانية تواجد علاقة بين عدم التجانس بين الطلبة في الفصول الدراسية و ممارس اللغة الانجليزية لأغراض خاصة. في حقيقة الأمر ان الفصول الغير متجانسة هي حال كل الفصول الدراسية التي تحتوي على اكثر من طالب و يهدف هذا البحث الى اكتشاف التأثير الذي يمكن ان ينجم من الفروق الفردية لطلبة في الفصول المدرسية على اداء ممارس اللغة الانجليزية لتخصصات مختلفة. تم تقييم صحة نظرية هذا العمل باستعمال وسيلة الاستبيان و الذي قدم لممارسي اللغة الانجليزية لأغراض خاصة في بعض الجامعات الجزائرية (غرداية, ورقلة, ادرار, وهران, عنابه, قسنطينة, جيجل, تلمسان ...). من تحليل نتائج هذا البحث تبين المدى العالي لتأثير الناتج من عدم تجانس الطلبة في الفصول الدراسية على الممارس نفسه و كشف الغطاء على الاثار الايجابية و السلبية على أدائهم و على عملية التدريس على العموم. استنادا على النتائج المستخلصة من هذه الدراسة اقترحنا بعض التوصيات التي نعتقد انها ستعود بالفائدة على ممارسي اللغة الانجليزية لتخصصات اخرى في مسارهم التدريسي لتحسين عملية تعلم و تدريس اللغة الانجليزية المتخصصة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الانجليزية المتخصصة ،عدم التجانس، التجانس،ـــ ممارس اللغة الانجليزية المتخصصة.