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Needs Analysis: A Prior Step to ESP Course Design

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Abstract

The globalisation process has made it necessary to help students getting adapted to today's competitive society, meaning that needs analysis should be directed so as to help learners for future professional communication and be active participants in their world. In sum, analysing the specific needs of a group of learners serves as the prelude a language course design, because it determines the 'what' and the 'how' of the course. Materials designers should explore the learners' potential needs and hence decide about the process of learning and learning skills needed to be taken into account.

Needs analysis provides information about the type of language required during the teaching situation, either in terms of target needs or learning needs. This data will determine the content of the teaching materials. The collected data determine the content of a language programme that will meet these needs. It provides information about the environment of the learning situation It allow the course designer to determine the process of the organisation of the course or materiel, i.e. pedagogic approach.

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There is a general agreement that English is the international language of communication that achieves different aims of students, workers....this world status motivates a good number of researchers and scientists to learn English in order to have access to the different documents and references written in

English. The availability of a large body of scientific literature written in English facilitates for researchers the retrieval of information from various sources which they can benefit from so as to update academic research and develop their related field of study.

The urgent need for a specific proficiency in English has given birth to new approaches, methods and techniques. As a matter of fact, the teaching of English has witnessed the development of ESP to cater for specific needs of the learners. It is thus set for a purely utilitarian purpose (Robinson, 1991). In this vein, Harmer defines ESP as follows: 'Situations where the student has some specific reasons for wanting to learn a language.' (Harmer 1983:1)

That is to say, the students want to learn the language because they have particular justifications, for instance: to specialise in fields like engineering, banking, accounting and tourism. In a similar way, a researcher may want to undertake some research, while a businessman may wish to interact and carry out business exchanges. Thus ESP is an approach to language learning based on learners' needs. Its foundation lays in the fact that teacher and planner must investigate the uses to which the language will be put, to determine what these specific purposes are. These needs are then translated into linguistic and pedagogic terms for the production of an effective course. Dudley-Evans (1997) has given an extended definition of ESP in terms of 'absolute' and 'variable' characteristics as follows:

Absolute Characteristics

- 1-ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learners.
- 2- ESP makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves

3-ESP is centred on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre.

Variable Characteristics

- 1-ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines.
- 2-ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English.
- 3-ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level.
 - 4- ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students.
- 5- Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems.

From this extended and elaborated definition, we can see that ESP can be , but is not necessarily concerned with a specific discipline, nor does it have to be aimed at a certain age group or ability range. ESP should be seen as an approach to teaching whose content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning (Hutchinson and Waters 1987).

Thus, it is generally accepted that particular contexts require specific aspects of language (register). In this sense, Mackay and Mountford (1978) explain ESP as a certain range or in terms of vocabulary, grammar, used by speakers in a particular context. So for them ESP is:

A restricted repertoire of words and expressions selected from the whole language

because that restricted repertoire covers every requirement within a well defined context or task or vocation.

(Mackay and Mountford 1978:.4)

This kind of selective focusing, i.e. the choice of one area and the development of suitable language denotes the need for a careful analysis of well specified groups of learners and their areas of interest (task, specialisation or vocation). Such a need is well stated by Hutchinson and Waters:

This view gained ground that English needed by a particular group of learners could be identified by analysing the linguistic characteristics of their specialist area of work or study.

(Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 8)

In sum, ESP is one important branch of the EFL/ESL system that functions as the main branch of English language teaching ELT. Therefore, ESP is not a particular kind of language or methodology, but rather an approach to language learning whereby the content and method are based on the learners' particular needs. These learners have to reach the intended language level in a shorter time and in a better way through the practice of content-based English language teaching namely ESP. It is, then, fairly clear that the implementation of ESP demands *a prior* definition of the learners' needs so as to achieve the planned purposes within the determined area of specialisation. The selection of appropriate words and structures will in turn enable the learner to use appropriately the learned language.

In general terms needs assessment is a systematic exploration of the way things are and the way they should be (Stout, 1995). However, as far as language is concerned, needs assessment is the process of identifying the students' reasons

for studying a language. It refers to the procedure of identifying general and specific language needs of students so that appropriate goals, objectives, and content in courses can be developed (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). Therefore, the chief objective of Needs Identification and Analysis (henceforth NIA) is to specify the needs of ESP learners. More precisely, it attempts to bring a satisfactory answer to the following fundamental question: "Why do these learners need to learn English?"

At first sight, the answer lies in the need to communicate and be full participants in the target situation. In this regard, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) state:

Thus if we had to state in practical terms the irreducible minimum of an ESP approach to course design, it would be Needs Analysis, since it is the awareness of the target situation- a definable need to communicate in English- that distinguishes the ESP learner from the learner of general English.

(Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 54)

That is to say, the ESP learner is always aware of both the final aim of his learning situation, and what he will need to learn to reach the set aim, in other words, he is highly conscious of himself and his purpose. Whereas the GE learner does not have any specific aim for his English courses. He may learn English simply because it is a part of the school curriculum. It is evident, then, that stress is put on NIA of the target situation with a view to enabling the learner to use the language successfully, by making him aware that the investigation of his needs is in fact the provision of a means to achieve his end, i.e. be performing language skills successfully in the target situation.

The scope of Needs Analysis has been altered from the 1970s till the 1990s. This change has been summarized by West 1993 in the following table:

State	Period	Focus		Scope of Analysis	Examples
1	Early		EOP	Target Situation	Richederich
	1970's			Analysis	1971/80
					ELTDU 1970
		ESP			Stuart and
					LEE 1972/85
2	Later		EAP	Target Situation	Jordan and
	1970's			Analysis	Mc Kay 1973
					Mc Kay 1978
3	1980's	ESP	and	-Target Situation	Tarone and
		General		Analysis	Yule
		Language		-Strategy Analysis	Allwright and
		Teaching GLT		-Means Analysis	Allwright
				-Language Audits	1971
					Allwright
					1982
4	1990's	ESP		-Integrated/	Jones 1991
				computer Based	Nelson 1993
				Analysis	
				-Material's	
				Selection	

Table1. Stages of Development of Needs Analysis (West 1993: 1)

It is evident that the scope of target situation analysis has been the central interest of Needs Analysis through the three periods (1970s, 1980s, and 1990s). Other factors, such as means analysis and language audits, have been added according to the growing needs of the learners.

The stages of development are in fact divided into three parts within three distinct periods. In fact, the three steps do not differ from one another. It is a matter of development of the scope of Needs Analysis according to priorities. It seems rather inadequate to limit needs analysis to the requirements of the target situation. Indeed, course designers have had to go beyond that to include certain variables that may influence the teaching situation, not only for ESP but also General Language Teaching (GLT) cases (see table 1). In the fourth stage, it has been pointed out that Needs analysis suits the requirements of the ESP situations rather than GLT. It is necessary to integrate the different factors influencing the ESP teaching, and then design materials and syllabuses.

The globalisation process has made it necessary to help students getting adapted to today's competitive society, meaning that needs analysis should be directed so as to help learners for future professional communication and be active participants in their world.

In sum, analysing the specific needs of a particular group of learners serves as the prelude to an ESP course design, because it determines the 'what' and the 'how' of the ESP course. Yong (2006) also reached the conclusion that ESP materials designers should explore the learners' potential needs and hence decide about the process of learning and learning skills needed to be taken into

account (Dudley-Evans and St Johns, 1998). On the other hand, Long (1996) cites four grounds for performing NIA. These are as follows:

- 1) <u>Relevance</u>: to determine the relevance of the material to the learners' situations.
 - 2)-Accountability: to justify the material in terms of relevance for all elements involved in the learning situation.
 - 3)- Diversity of learners: to account for differences in learners' needs and styles, making use of the fact that ESP groups are generally heterogeneous.
 - 4) <u>- Efficiency</u>: to create materials that will meet the needs of the learners as completely as possible.

Adapted from Long (1996)

Long (1996) further extends that three important factors need to be taken into consideration in a needs identification process, these are: the sources; triangulation and the use of multiple methods.

1-Source:

The most important sources of NIA consist of:

- -previous needs analysis which can provide working examples as well as valuable information about the needs of the students in different programmes and with similar learning experiences.
 - the students themselves
 - -language specialists, i.e. applied linguists who constitute goods sources for language requirements.

-ESP teachers, subject specialists or even students who have an experience in dealing with the target situation. These are often referred to as domain experts.

2-Triangulation:

The sources mentioned before need to be used altogether, or at least three of them, in order to allow cross-checking of the collected data such as:

- Previous needs analysis
- the students
- language specialists

This provides more legitimacy to NIA, since needs of learners may be regarded differently. Therefore needs analysis should not be a one-sided operation (Miliani 1994).

3- Multiple methods

Collecting data through the conjunction of various methods reinforces the concept of cross-checking and adds to the validity of the accumulated information through NIA. The most frequently used methods are: questionnaires; interviews; observation informal consultations with sponsors, learners and others.

Types of Needs

Needs are always defined as the requirements that the learners have in order to be able to communicate effectively in the target situation. An ESP course will not only involve these requirements, but will also consider the different levels of language knowledge of the learners in order to specify the conditions of their learning situation. This implies the existence of different

types of needs, which have to be examined by the syllabus designer. Dudley-Evans and St Johns (1998:125) maintain that the concept of NIA includes the following aspects:

- a- Professional information about learners: the tasks and activities learners are/will be using English for.
- b- Personal information about the learners: factors which may affect the way in which they learn.
- *c- English language information about the learners.*
- d- Learners' lacks
- e- Language learning information: effective ways of learning the skills and language
- *f- Professional communication information*
- *g-* What is wanted from the course
- h- Information about the environment in which the course will be run- means analysis.

On the other hand, other ESP specialists (Hutchinson and Waters 1987; Robinson 1991; West 1993) agree on two essential types of needs: target needs and learning needs.

I) Target Needs

They are simply the needs of the target situation, i.e. what the learner needs in order to be able to communicate effectively in the target situation. Therefore, the investigator will have to:

-Consider the required level of proficiency, i.e. the target level.

lack in order

- Examine the learners' background and therefore what they to reach the required proficiency.
- -Develop students' awareness about their needs by including them in choosing what they want to learn, i.e. teacher /learner negotiations process.

It follows that the target needs can be classified into three main types, these are: necessities lacks and wants.

1) Necessities

Necessities consist of the requirements of the target situation. They represent the needed level of language proficiency of the students to achieve either academic or occupational purposes. These are known as the objective needs, or simply the objectives (Robinson1991; West 1993). These objectives show what the learners are able to do by the end of their language course. For example, a businessman may need English to understand business letters, to communicate effectively at sales and conferences, to get the necessary information from sales catalogues and so on. Therefore, he may need to know some linguistic features-discourse, functions, structures, lexis- which is commonly used in the identified situations.

The following table illustrates what might the objectives of an ESP student be in either an EAP or EOP situation:

Activities	Language Skills Required	Target Activities (EAP or EOP)
Lectures	Listening and understanding of content, listening for key words and phrases, notes taking, asking questions	Presentations
Seminars	Asking and answering questions, understanding and expressing different points of view, reporting on work done, notes taking	Meetings
Practices	Practices Understanding instructions, asking questions, understanding informal language, interacting, recording results	
Reading textbooks, articles, etc.	Understanding the overall content, distinguishing main points from supporting detail, skimming, scanning, evaluating, notes taking	Reading reports
Writing essays, dissertatio	Construction of reasonably accurate sentences and paragraphs, good organisation of ideas	Writing reports, letters, etc.

<u>Table 2</u> Illustrations of Target Needs In EAP and EOP Situations (Adapted From Blue 2001)

This table displays a clear picture of what an ESP learner requires as different needs that may be very similar to the skills needed by professionals in the same field of study. The students are, therefore, always involved in a communication situation whether in EAP or EOP using the four skills required for the acquisition of any language.

In sum, the objectives do make the difference; they affect all that a teacher has to do because objectives stand for what is believed are the aims of learners' actions; they show the perception of teaching-learning situation and reflect teaching and testing priorities, and influence teaching procedures.

2) Lacks

The course designer has to analyse the learners' present background in order to be able to identify what the language lacks are when compared to the needed background (necessities). It is these lacks that will determine the course content. It is, in other words, to define the items that have to be taught. Robinson (1991) has posited that it is a need-oriented process where what the learner needs to acquire will be considered. If students have not, for example, mastered tenses and their uses, then the teacher should start with General English.

In a foreign language situation, one of the most common types of needs analysis focuses primarily on the skills that learners may need, most commonly using a 'four skills' approach (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Needless to say, in such situation students are supposed to have acquired knowledge of the four skills all along the designed programmes of their school curricula, but different researchers have proved that students at different levels show important lacks in terms of the acquisition and practice of the four skills (Wilson 1986, Ourghi 2002). On the other hand, Brumfit (1984) suggests that there seem to be "three major isolable activities" for most students:

- Conversation or discussion
- Comprehension
- Extended writing.

He adds 'extended speaking' as a fourth activity for some learners, though he acknowledges that it is relatively unusual for learners of a foreign language to have to do very much by way of extended speaking. However, it is necessary to point at the fact foreign language learners are also involved into a fifth important activity required to fulfil academic needs: the reading skill, even though it can be incorporated within the activity of comprehension pointed at by Brumfit (1984). Needless to say comprehension is an important process in the practice of both the listening and the reading skills.

In this vein the Council of Europe (1996) has suggested that communicative language activities can be sub-divided into reception (aural, visual and audio-visual), production (oral and written), interaction (oral and written) and mediation (in particular, interpreting or translating). A more comprehensive approach of the Council of Europe can be interpreted in the following table:

Reception	Spoken	e.g. listening and comprehension of lectures, or synopses
	Written	e.g. reading documentation/ plans/ abstracts
Interaction	Spoken	e.g. discussing work, talking on the telephone
	Written	e.g. e-mail exchanges, video-conferencing using
		texts
Production	Spoken	e.g. making presentations
	Written	e.g. writing reports/ letters integrated with
		graphics/ visuals
Mediation	Spoken	e.g. informal interpreting between friends/
		colleagues
	Written	e.g. translating documents

<u>Table.3</u> Communicative Language Activities (based on Council of Europe 1996)

Admittedly, many more examples could be given. Written production, for example, may include essays, reports, letters, and notes on lectures, notes on books or articles, critical response ...

3) -Wants

They refer to the learner's own feelings towards his most important needs. He or she may have personal aims in addition to the needs of the target situation (necessities). The course designer will have to consider the learner's suggestions in order to determine syllabus content. In this vein Richterich (1984) maintains:

a need does not exist independent of a person.

It is people who build their images of their needs on the basis of data relating to themselves

and their environment.

(Richterich

1984: 29)

Since learners constitute an important source of NIA, they may have a clear idea of the necessities and requirements of the target situation; they have also certainly a clear idea about their lacks. All too often, the students' views may conflict with the perceptions of the other parties involved in the learning process namely: course designers, sponsors and teachers. In this context, West

(1993) adds to these types of needs, a fourth one called 'constraints'. It involves the non-pedagogic limits that control a course planning process such as the role of the national policy, and financial restrictions, which the analyst needs to be aware of once he starts the process of NIA.

II) Learning Needs

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) have pointed to the fact that learning needs involve an answer to the following question: "How are we going to the destination?" Learning needs seek information about the learning situation which includes information about the aims of the course, the type of the course, the type of learners, their learning styles, the available materials and resources, the type of setting, and finally the time load.

To seek the same type of information, Robinson (1991) speaks about two areas of research besides Target situation analysis (Target Needs), these are Present Situation Analysis (P.S.A) and language audits. She maintains that:

Present situation analysis seeks to establish what the students are like at the start of their language course, investigating their strengths and weaknesses.

(Robinson

1991:.9)

This means that the investigator will not look for his students' lacks (see ii), but also their strengths by investigating both their language knowledge

and learning styles. For this the investigator has recourse to three sources of information:

- The students themselves
- The language teaching establishment
- The institution of language use.

(Richterich and Chancerel, quoted in Hutchinson and Waters 1987:102)

Apart from strength and weaknesses, the collected information will give an idea about students' attitudes towards ELT in a given situation, and the available resources.

As for the language audits, the investigator must:

- a- clarify the language skills needed to carry out jobs or studies (Pilbeam 1978)
- b- draw a profile of present needs, which will make clear the different levels of achievement of different tasks.
- c- determine the amount of language training in terms of facilities.

The type of data collected at this stage provides information about the amount and the level of performance in the target situation. They can be considered as complementary information to the necessities. The amount of the needed language will be determined accordingly (Robinson 1991).

In view of these concerns, Dudley Evans and St. Johns (1998) put forward a set of questions that need to be taken into consideration when determining the different learning needs. These have been listed as follows:

- Should the course be extensive or intensive?
- Should the learners' performance be assessed or non-assessed?

- Should the course deal with immediate needs or delayed needs?
- Should the course have a broad focus or narrow focus?
- Should the course be 'pre-study' or 'pre-experience' or run parallel with the study experience?
- Should the materials be common-core or specific to learners' study or work?
- Should the group taking the course be homogeneous or heterogeneous?
- Should the course be worked out by language teacher after consultation with learners and the institution, or should it be subject to a process of negotiation with learners?

(Dudley Evans and St. Johns 1998:145)

The balance of the parameters mentioned in the above questions allows the researcher to link the different expectations and learning needs of the learners (Dudley Evans and St. Johns 1998).

In most illustrative terms, the content of any ESP lectures should be determined by a complete needs analysis process as this first step is seen as being crucial if ESP practitioners wish to design a course that will maximally promote the learning process (Wright, 2001). The different authorities in ESP mentioned above agree on the collection of the same type of information which have to be collected during the process of NIA.. For this, experts recommend:

a- Situation testing by administering tests whose aim is the assessment of language ability and requirements of the target situation.

- Linguistic needs analysis whose aim is the classification of skills' development, linguistic structures, lexical items, language functions and levels of formality.
- c-The students constitute the third area of interests. The investigator, has to analyse their present language background in order to determine their lacks; analyse their wants and expectations in terms of language course content.
- d- Learning needs analysis which takes into consideration the pedagogical requirements that allow the learners to get to the destination. An identification of learners' attitudes towards different kinds of methodology, learning tasks and activities can also be included during this step.
- e- There is the learning environment from which the course designer will have to search for the available resources and the different teaching aids, the institution, the type of classroom and the time load for the ESP teaching. The collected data allow the effective planning of the different courses along the period of the ESP training.
- f- Finally, one can add learners' perceptions analysis where one can discover learners' perceptions of themselves and others' as their part of their company culture, and their relationships with people from other company cultures.

(Adapted from: Hutchinson and Waters 1987; Robinson 1991; Dudley Evans and St. Johns 1998.).

Needs analysis will provide information about the type of language required during the ESP teaching situation, either in terms of target needs (related to real life situation) or learning needs (related to the learning situation). This data will determine the content of the teaching materials. The collected data determine the content of a language programme that will meet these needs (Munby, 1978).

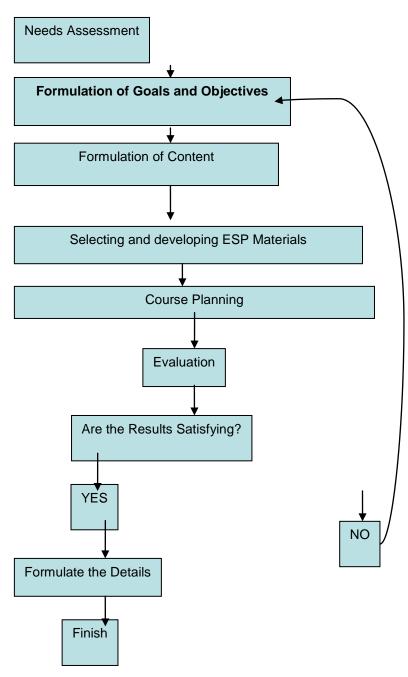
On the other hand, Hutchinson and Waters (1984) consider materials writing as one of the most characteristic features of ESP practice. They advise the practitioner to:

- 1- Design the materials in such a way that the learner is involved fully in both the content and the language topics.
- 2- Determine the language points of the materials on the bases of what might be needed for the successful solution of a communication problem limited to the content.

(Hutchinson and Waters 1984:112)

The authors consider that an appropriate content of materials will encompass issues such as students' lacks wants then a piece of real world language which is by definition authentic. Learners' exposure to this language should occur as extensively as possible (Johns, 1995). Authentic language, students lacks and expectations will engender the production of a suitable type of content.

In fact, in order to develop an ESP course six important steps have to be respected. These can be summarized in the following figure:



<u>Figure 1</u> Steps in Developing an ESP Course (Adapted from: White 1988: 26)

According to White the first step can provide two types of information. The first gives information on their current level and the second draws out the target needs. The second step is a useful tool for teachers since it gives a clear picture of *what, how, and when* to teach. In the same vein, Graves (1996) states that goals constitute the final destination the students need to achieve, whereas objectives show certain methods of achieving goals. Nunan (1988) maintains that through the objectives of a course *the students*:

In the third step the teachers should determine which aspects of ESP learning will be included, integrated and used in the designed materials to meet students' needs. The materials may focus on the language levels, skills and functions intended in the target situation. Once the content of the ESP materials is determined, the fourth step is to decide on how to organise, grade and present, the selected materials.

The fifth step concerns the presentation of each of the designed units. It is concerned with adopting and adapting the suitable methods and techniques in the performance of lectures and gradation of the planned activities. This step is

followed by the evaluation of the learners. Teachers would then assess whether the students have reached the intended level or not. If the premeditated level has not been attained, this means that a failure has occurred somewhere in the steps of the planning process. The designer or teacher would have to assess his own courses starting from the formulation of goals and objectives. If the target level has been reached, the details of the designed programme are formulated as a summary ending the process of the ESP course.

On the other hand, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) maintain that the existing materials can also be applied in ESP situations. Robinson (1991) points out that published textbooks have advantages of time-saving, and less-costing; they are also of great availability and of easy access for learners to reviewing and referring.

However, the published materials are not necessarily designed for specific classes of ESP situations. They may consist of already prepared materials provided either by the teaching institution or found in commerce. These designed materials can be regarded as inadequate. Neil(1990) points out:

Any materials that were commercially available could not be possibly suitable for this particular group since they had not been specifically designed for it.

(Neil 1990: 151)

The published materials can thus be regarded as unsuitable since they have not been—designed for the group to whom they are presented. They do not obey to the major condition of data collection for materials design namely NIA. The

subject contents may not be relevant to learners' personal interest and specific knowledge. Nevertheless, this does not mean they are useless. They can provide an interesting source for the group of ESP students, since there is always a common core of needs shared by different students studying the language for the same purposes (Neil 1990).

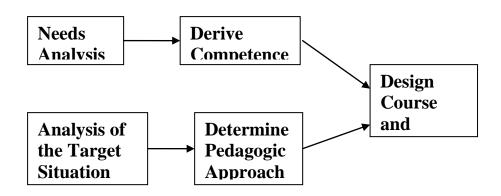
It is the task of the teacher to adapt these materials according to students' needs. During materials selection three points are stressed:

1-select materials with properly difficult language input in terms of vocabularies (general and specific) and structures which should be graded from simple to difficult;

2-pay attention to subject content input in the adapted materials, usually from general to specific topics;

3-adapt adequate and appropriate activities in the selected materials, namely the activities in each unit should be coherently matched. An appropriate adaptation can be done through teacher's classroom research which will generate interesting information about the type of language needed by his students (Mc Ginity, 1993).

After the collection of the necessary data, the course designer has to select what is appropriate for the writing of suitable materials. Throughout their works, Hutchinson and Waters have tried to provide a basis for the design of ESP materials. The first interesting process is displayed in the following figure:



<u>Figure 1.2</u> Approach to Course Design. (Hutchinson and Waters 1984:110)

In the above figure, Hutchinson and Waters start the process of materials production by an analysis of the needs of the learners. The collected data will allow the course designer to derive the expected language competence, compared to the actual language knowledge of the learners, i.e. necessities and lacks .This competence provides the basis of the ESP course (Hutchinson and Waters 1984). The analysis of the learning situation provides information about the environment of the learning situation . The collected data allow the course designer to determine the process of the organisation of the ESP course or materiel, i.e. pedagogic approach.

Flook (1993) gave primary focus to the requirements of the target situation maintaining that the tasks performed in real world should form a basis for the activities of the designed materials. On the other hand, the designer has also to consider learner's actual background in order to determine their lacks; the

combination of these elements will allow the identification of the type of content of the ESP course.

In the design of their own teaching materials, Hutchinson and Waters have presented an interesting design model. It can be summarized in the following figure:

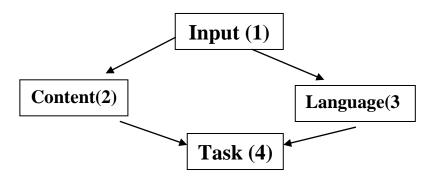


Figure 3. A Materials' Design Model (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 109)

According to the authors the input may be any piece of communication data depending on the needs identified during the analysis, since it provides a number of positive elements such as: a stimulus material for the activities; new language items; correct models of language use; provides a topic for communication; gives opportunities for students to process the information of their subject matter using English language skills. As for the content, Hutchinson and Waters (ibid) extend that it is not "an end in itself but a means of conveying information and feelings about something". Both content and

language are selected from the input in order to enable the learner to perform the task. In fact, the real aim is to enable the learner to use the language for communicative tasks in their subject matters, for which they do not have enough of the necessary language knowledge. In stressing on the language levels, "students have the chance to take the language to pieces, study how it work sand practise putting it back together again" (idem). In order to reach the ultimate purpose: building a support to language use.

Creating the necessary coherence through the combination of language and content required by the target situation, the students' actual language knowledge and the means available will allow the materials designer to produce and organise the necessary input. This input will therefore prepare the learner to the accurate performance of the tasks of the target situation.

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