

**A suggested program to enhance the ESP course design
skills of Egyptian English trainers.**

A thesis

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Abstract

The present study was intended to investigate the effectiveness of the suggested program (ESP-CDSP) on developing ESP teachers' course design skills. The researcher used both qualitative and quantitative data gathering tools to assure illustrating some descriptive and interpretive information alongside collecting more precise and statistical data free of subjectivity. Furthermore, reviewing literature and related studies along with the outcomes of the pre-post test and piloting questionnaire showed that most EFL teachers undergo a sort of extreme difficulty in managing their challenging roles as to be course material provider due to lack of having effective assistance and the difficulty of getting involved in professional development activities and practices. Accordingly, the researcher prepared a list of course design skills suggested and developed by K. Graves (2000) as a guide for the design of both the program and the instruments. In addition, the researcher modified this list to cope up with the divergent needs of the study

Key Words:

ESP, ESP course design skills, qualitative and quantitative data gathering tools, professional development activities, pre-posttest, piloting questionnaire, ESP-CDSP.

مستخلص الرسالة :

تم إعداد هذا البرنامج المقترح بغرض دعم مدرسي و مدربي اللغة الانجليزية لتكوين فهم عملي فيما يخص المهارات التي يفتقدونها للخبرة في مجال Esp ، و خاصة لدي هؤلاء المدربين مما يفتقدون للخبرة في مجال ESP . ووفقا لنتائج الإستبيان الذي أجري في مراكز التدريب الخاصة في بعض الشركات ، فإنه يمكن القول بأن خبرة تخطيط و تصميم أحد البرامج المناسبة يكون أمر يمثل تحدي كبير و خصوصا للمحاضرين الجدد .

من الجدير بالذكر أن هؤلاء المحاضرين يواجهوا عقبات متنوعة في حالة أفتقادهم للمعرفة العلمية لتصميم برامج فعالة تغطي الإحتياجات اللغوية النوعية لطلابهم ، وفي دولة مثل مصر فإن تصميم برامج ESP يقتصر علي نماذج سابقة التجهيز دون أن تأخذ في الإعتبار تحليل شامل للإحتياجات .

بالإضافة إلي ذلك ، فإن مدرسي ESP يجدون صعوبة اللغة في ممارسة أدوارهم الجديدة ، و التي تمثل تحدي في مجال ESP و المتمثلة في دورهم كمصمم ومعد للمادة الخاصة بالبرامج ؛ و ذلك بسبب عدم توافر وأفتقاد أوجه المساعدة الفعالة ووجود صعوبة في الإنخراط و المشاركة في أنشطة و ممارسات تتعلق بالتنمية المهنية في هذا المجال .

وفي هذا الصدد تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلي بيان فعالية البرنامج المقترح (ESP-DSP) ، وتم بناؤه علي أساس قائمة المهارات المقترحة بواسطة جريفز (2000) و التي تبناها الباحث و قام بإدخال تعديلات عليها ، وذلك علي تطوير مهارات تصميم برامج ESP الخاصة بالمدرسين

This suggested program was set up with the main purpose of supporting English teachers and trainers to develop a practical understanding about ESP course design skills especially for English teachers with little or bare experience of ESP courses. According to the results of the questionnaire conducted at the training centers of some corporates, it can be argued that the experience of planning and designing an appropriate course that suits target ESP groups can be very challenging, especially for new instructors. ESP instructors of such target groups are often faced with various hurdles in case they lack the know-how of designing effective courses that will cover the specific language needs of their students as illustrated by the results of the piloting samples of the study. Within the scope of ESP teaching and learning in a developing country like Egypt, many variants of ESP course design are often ready-made and not entirely based on comprehensive needs analyses.

In addition, EFL teachers find difficulty in managing their challenging roles as ESP teachers as to be course material provider due to lack of having effective assistance and the difficulty of getting involved in professional development activities and practices. Accordingly, the present study was intended to investigate the effectiveness of the suggested program (ESP-CDSP) inspired and facilitated by a list of ESP course design skills suggested by Graves (2000), and adopted and modified by the researcher on developing ESP teachers' course design skills.

Therefore, *the research main question* was:

What are the requirements and skills needed for the Egyptian trainers of ESP course design?

The following sub-questions were answered to get to responding to the above-main question of the study:

1. What are the pertinent and specific skills of the suggested program?
2. How effective is the suggested program in enhancing the Egyptian trainers' skills of designing ESP courses?
3. How satisfied are the trainees with the suggested program?

The main hypothesis of the study was

- There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the trainers of English in the pre and post-test administrations concerning **the overall** of the ESP course design skills test in favor of the post-test mean scores administration.

In attempting to verify the major hypothesis mentioned above, the following **sub-hypotheses** were also tested:

- There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the trainers of English in the pre and post-test administrations in **Articulating Teacher's beliefs** skill in favor of their post-test mean scores.
- There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the trainers of English in the pre and post-test administrations in **conducting students' needs analysis& defining context skill** in favor of their post-test mean scores.
- There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the trainers of English in the pre and post-test administrations in **Organization of the content and activities skill** in favor of their post-test mean scores.
- There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the trainers of English in the pre and post-test administrations in **conceptualizing the content skill** in favor of their post-test mean scores.
- There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the trainers of English in the pre and post-test administrations in **Selecting and Developing ESP Materials and Activities skill** in favor of their post-test mean scores.
- There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the trainers of English in the pre and post-test administrations in **determining the goals and objectives of the course skill** in favor of their post-test mean scores.

- There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the trainers of English in the pre and post-test administrations in **Designing an assessment plan of the ESP course skill** in favor of their post-test mean scores.

Significance of the study:

The present study will provide curriculum designers and developers, and ESP trainers at the training centers of different training bodies or companies with a distinctive background and a pertinent framework that can help them set the ESP course design according to the learner - centered approach indications and ESP course design skills suggested by Graves (2000).

In addition, the study will drag researchers' attention to the scope of ESP in the light of ESP course design skills, which suffers from a high degree of scarcity in Egypt, so they may do more significant efforts to enhance this dire status of ESP course design skills in Egypt.

Methodology:

Concerning the **subjects of the study**, the pilot sample of the subjects of this study were a group of 30 EFL teachers. Just after administering the pre-administration test and the pre-administration questionnaire, it was eluded for two thirds of the subjects to keep to more about the research due to some circumstances related to family inconveniences or work obsessions. A third of the total number of those EFL teachers were interested in joining the program suggested by the researcher as volunteers. Those teachers have been working for TE group at the training sector as EFL teachers. They showed their interests in taking part in this study as volunteers. They were given this free opportunity for enrolling in this TOT program, which was held at IELTS House Egypt, located in Cairo Governorate, in 2019. Those subjects were chosen to be the appropriate participants in the light of some aspects they have : they all work for a corporate with a discernible need to elevate the quality of ESP courses .Furthermore, they have been teaching general English courses at the corporate training center and they are about to be first time introduced to

ESP track .However, they will be given no support to master their challenging role as ESP course material provider starting from allocating and selecting materials to setting the evaluation plan .According , the results of the quantative analysis , the researcher opted for those subjects to be the appropriate participants of the program suggested by the researcher .The researcher conducted Pre-Post administration tests to those subjects to identify their deficiencies and ameliorations over the due course of the study .

The researcher used both qualitative and quantative data gathering tools. He used the qualitative instruments represented in a questionnaire and a number of observation sheets to illustrate some descriptive and interpretive information that could not be provided by means of other data instruments.

The researcher used the quantative tools to collect more precise and statistical data free of subjectivity that was always correlated with qualitative tools.

The following **instruments were manipulated** in order to carry out the treatment of the present study.

- 1- Pre- Administration Questionnaire (PrAQ).
- 2- Pre- Administration Test (PrAT).
- 3- Group discussion (observation sheets).
- 4- The booklet (ESPCDP)
- 5- Post-Administration Test (PAT).

In order *to answer the study questions*, and to prove **the study hypotheses** , the related literature and previous studies were reviewed , and both qualitative and quantative analyses were enacted .The results of the study revealed that the study subjects achieved significantly higher in dealing with and reflecting on ESP course design skills after attending the suggested program (ESP-CDSP).In turn , this proves the effectiveness of the program in facilitating the mission of ESP course design for all the study participants .A number of pillars gave a hand to the researcher to deliver a discernible support for the study subjects to accomplish the program goals and objectives .

The needs analysis , performed as a piloting assessment by the researcher using the questionnaire as initial data gathering tool , enabled him to serve the subjects the best ; just after collecting the data and analyzing them quantitatively , the researcher was able to set the focus more on the skills that represent the urgent needs , lacks and wants of the subjects .

The researcher adopted the list of skills as suggested by Graves (2000), but he modified it a little bit to cope with the needs of the subjects. To be more precise, adopting and modifying a list of skills after conducting the piloting questionnaire constituted a cornerstone for both the researcher and the study subjects.

Findings

Several findings emerged from the present study. They are summed up as follows:

- 1- Figuring out the pertinent skills of the suggested course framework enhanced EFL teachers' course design skills.
- 2- Conducting needs analysis of the study subjects had positive effects on EFL teachers' satisfaction with the suggested program.
- 3- Discussing issues and problems related to the practices (ESP-CDSP) provided the participants with ample opportunities to develop their personal beliefs and professional perceptions about their roles as ESP trainers, language, learning and learner as well as their self-confidence.
- 4- Keeping observation sheets during the group discussions helped the researcher to be aware of both strengths and weaknesses and to monitor progress.
- 5- Incorporating learner-centered approach in conducting the program engender more satisfaction for all the subjects of the present study, who did demonstrate positive attitudes and practices towards the treatment. The subjects reported that applying ESP course design skills in the future, though challenging, would be rewarding to a great extent. Furthermore, they mentioned that they talked about their experience to their colleagues.

Conclusions

In an attempt to investigate the effectiveness of implementing (ESP-CDSP) on fostering ESP teachers' skills, the present study was conducted. To determine the effectiveness of the treatment, several instruments were applied in this mixed –method research. The obtained data was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. As the results revealed, responses showed positive attitudes towards the use of the program suggested (ESP-CDSP). The participants confirmed that the program-related skills (ESP-CDSP), though challenging, is worth the time and effort put in its implementation.

Based on the above results, the (ESP-CDSP) provides EFL teachers with an effective tool that enables them to be autonomous and reflective when performing their roles as ESP practitioners and material designer.

Albeit these positive findings and conclusions, the need for skeptic adoption when generalizing them should be emphasized.

Recommendations & Suggestions

In the light of the above results and conclusions, the following recommendations are highlighted with the purpose of contributing to the development of ESP teachers' ESP course design skills in Egypt:

A- Recommendations for Curriculum designers and developers, and ESP trainers.

Designers of ESP programs should take into account some important considerations which are as follows:

- 1- Integrating the skill of defining the context, in which the course participants experience and receive the language program inputs, with the need analysis has become a top priority for the sake of serving the program and the participants the best.
- 2- To feel cautious of the internal barriers represented in teachers' personal views about language, learners and learning when developing the course materials.

- 3- To be patient and persistent in order to become ESP practitioner and course designer
- 4- Discussing with learners the problems that may face them in practicing ESP courses can help you as a material designer to get pertinent information about the emergent needs of the students to utilize them when redeveloping the program or other programs.

B- Suggestions for Further Research

It is desired that the following suggestions for further research and study will lead researchers and teacher educators to pay more attention to ESP teacher education.

- 1- Additional studies are required concerning other effective approaches **and skills to enhance ESP teachers' professional development attributes.**
- 2- Investigating the effectiveness of including TOT programs of ESP instruction earlier in the EFL instruction programs at university programs before graduation; third and fourth-year undergraduates can enroll in such programs, which can make it more convenient to deal earlier with their shortcomings.

C. Suggestions for stakeholders and administration of corporates:

- 1- Structuring a needs analysis department whose main task is to prove and maintain the consistency between the trainees' needs and the programs intended to be performed.
- 2- The training of trainers should be a strategic approach which should be periodically reviewed and underpinned for the best of the quality of the intended training programs.

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