

An Evaluation of an ESP Course at a Polytechnic

Dr. Hussein Hassan Ibrahim

University of Sinnar, Sinnar, Sudan

Faculty of Arts, Department of English Language and Literature

karkad1967@hotmail.com

Abstract

This paper attempts to evaluate a course in an ESP framework. It also aims to investigate the perceptions of the students and their teachers that concerning the present course and how challenges, which face both students and teachers, are to be solved based on their suggestions. The problem of the study is that students lack proficiency in the four skills, especially speaking and writing. The researcher used the analytical descriptive method. Upon the analysis of data, using tables and percentage, the study has revealed that it's necessary to share both students' and teachers' opinions when evaluating a program of study to yield respectable results. The findings of this study assured that the students faced many problems at the polytechnic under the study such as the lack of some of the basic skills especially the speaking skill. The recommendations obtained were: there should be an on-going evaluation as well as importing experts to evaluate the syllabus contents and the students' performance.

Keywords: evaluation, ESP, course, dimensions, on-going, learners, factors, EAP.

1. Introduction

English for Specific Purposes, ESP in short, is considered as a dynamic area in the field of English Language Teaching. Therefore, it witnessed changes in its interpretation due to the renewal of the modernized methods of teaching and techniques that have been developed through time in educational field. The conception of ESP as identified by Robinson (1980), McDonough (1984), Hutchinson and Waters (1987) takes the conception of a restricted language or special register. Robinson (1980: 5) has mentioned another important aspect for ESP as focuses attention on the purpose of the learner. This idea has widely been realized by people as English has been developed and became very important to achieve a variety of purposes. Because of English being widely used as the language of science, technology, and commerce (Mackay, 1978) and hence became an international language. For example, people in certain areas such as engineering, air-traffic controller, and medical need to know much about their specifications, and thus this attention is made into English. Where in ESP, the attention takes its way towards learning English and its usages for achieving diversity of purposes. Robinson (1980: 6) mentions that learning English is the way to the acquisition of some diversity skills and knowledge. Thus, the nature of English language is considered as a means to accomplish certain goals and at the same time cannot be regarded as an end itself (Mackay, 1978).

For years, the task of evaluation passes through different notions due to the various perceptions of researchers and linguists who take part in conducting course evaluation. The first case of evaluation was conducted in the USA by Joseph Mayer Rice's comparative study of spelling performance of over a thirty thousand students in a large city school system in 1897. Later in the 1930s, Ralph Tyler, concerning evaluation of the eight-year study and the development of school and college accreditation procedures, has done an evaluation. The two types of evaluation were regarded as measuring procedures.

1.1 The Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate an ESP programme at a polytechnic according to learners' needs analysis, which may be an effective decision towards future action concerning commercial/business English courses. It also aims to investigate the perception of the students and teachers regarding commercial/ business English courses and how difficulties, which face both students and teachers, are to be overcome. In line with above purposes, the following Objectives are to be achieved:

1. To know the aspects that one needs to look at when evaluating a course
2. To be familiar with the reasons why the students need ESP
3. To perceive how the course fulfils their needs in terms of:
 - Course objectives
 - Course content
 - Learning materials
 - Teaching methodology
 - Time allocation
 - Evaluation techniques

1.2 Research Questions:

In relation to the above objectives, the research questions are set to focus on the following two aspects:

- What are the ESP needs of polytechnic students?
- Does the current ESP course meet their needs in terms of:
 - Course objectives
 - Course content
 - Learning materials
 - Teaching methodology
 - Time allocation

- Evaluation techniques

1.3 The Significance of the Study

The importance of this study is that, it may provide us with some new views and suggestions as well as implications for ESP course evaluation in apolytechnic. These views are to be introduced by both teachers and students in the target study. This knowledge would prove invaluable criteria when drawing up an ESP programme.

As seen, not many studies have been conducted to evaluate such courses of ESP. This study is conducted to evaluate the effectiveness and relativity of the curriculum, which is set at polytechnics for commercial English students. Through this evaluation, the researcher attempts to find out the suitable evaluation system followed by the teachers and it is used to ascertain the suitability of the courses offered so that invaluable attempts can be made to suit the actual needs of the students.

It would be obvious to set some comparisons about the perceptions and notions of the teachers and the students to familiarize us with the weaknesses and the strengths of the course. These implications and suggestions for course improvements can contribute a lot to course designers to establish courses in line with students' needs analysis in the near future.

For the above simple statement concerning this study, it confirms that ESP courses play vivid and invaluable role in preparing learners with English proficiency at workplace. These ESP courses are periodically subject to educational review, based on needs analysis. The current study is considered more specific because it deals with empirical evidence on what students and their teachers reflect to the perception of commercial English.

It is believed that program evaluation is something of no importance and hence some avoid it. On contrary to that concept, it normally leads to the effectively of the program offered to be studied as well as identifies the weaknesses that need improvement and the strengths that require support. I expect this study to provide important information to course

designers to follow better techniques to carry out course evaluation in the near future based on suggestions and implications that will be given by the students and the teachers.

Data collection and analysis in this study will also provide valuable information and indication for educationalists, especially, the Technical Education Department (TED) to see to what extent ESP courses are effective and following their prescribed policy towards polytechnics education.

It is hoped that the information/details in this study will add some new issues to policy-makers who are responsible for designing and implementation of the program.

1.4 Assumptions of the Study:

The following assumptions can make use of the study if they are supposed to be found and the researcher can find out the suitable solution in collaboration with the teachers and students' suggestions and views. The following assumptions are set by researcher to diagnose the course offered at a polytechnic:

- a. Course design developers in the field of ESP ignore the importance of this vivid science including validity and reliability in designing /constructing ESP courses.
- b. The methods of teaching used are not so effective or even satisfied to evaluate students' needs.
- c. Course items and topics are not suitable for students to meet their needs.
- d. The materials used lack direct relativity to the prescribed course.
- e. The evaluation system is conventional.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

This study is applied to two types of students who are attending Commercial English (CE) at a polytechnic, that is, certificate and diploma students, and the teachers who are currently teaching the syllabus. This study will bring out reasonable outcomes if both students and teachers are involved in the study and hence, they may present invaluable

information for policy-makers as future implications. This study is considered as a small-scale because the number of participants is small and their perceptions about the study, which touch the basic components of evaluation criteria such as contents, techniques, methodologies, and strengths and weaknesses of the course under the study. It is worth to mention the factors that influence the effectiveness of the study such as administrative arrangements, learning styles, environmental factors, and the methodology used.

1.6 Methodology

1.6.1 Instruments

The evaluation methods followed by the researcher are interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observation. The latter one needs involving the researcher inside the classroom (insider-researcher) to jot down some important notes and some implications those seem to be so important for the researcher while teaching process is taking place. In addition to these, discussions are also conducted with subject teachers to collect the data for the study. According to my teaching experience, I noticed that students' tests are not satisfactory to depend on as a strategy for conducting evaluation of a course. Therefore, I agree to Sharp's ideas, which show the limitations. Sharp (1990: 132) has stated four basic limitations as follows:

- No explanation is supplied for any disparity in results
- Little help is offered in deciding which parts of a course have been working successfully and which have not
- Some of the objectives of a course cannot be easily measured by testing
- The percentage mark achieved by students after an exam provides only limited information about whether his needs have been met

1.6.2 Data Collection:

The procedure of collecting data begins after the researcher obtain the approval to pursue his study from the authorities being conducted and the distribution of the questionnaires and administering the interviews connected by classroom observations.

1.6.3 Data Analysis:

After collecting the data from the informants, the researcher will begin analysing the data obtained from the methods mentioned above. The interviewees' comments will be coded and analysed through a surveyed data. The researcher uses many means to analyse the obtained data such as tables, diagrams, graphs and charts.

2. Definition of Terms:

The terms appeared in this study are Evaluation, ESP, Course, Polytechnic, and Malaysia. The word 'Evaluation' can be defined as a systematic assessment of a program to reach at analysed results as an outcome of a study done at certain area for future awareness to problem solving. According to Robinson (1980), **ESP** can be defined as 'Quintessential ESP, if we can pinpoint it, is perhaps this: materials produced for use once only by one group of students in one place at any one time'. The researcher can add a definition according to his perception about **ESP** as follows: is a type of a course/program designed to meet specified needs of learners in a point of time. A **Course** refers to the specific program offered in specific time with specific learners. The term **Polytechnic** comes from the Greek word 'polu', which means 'many' and the word 'tekhnikos', which means 'arts', is generally used by many countries to stand for an institution that offers 'technical education'. Polytechnics came to birth since the 18th century, but they became well known after the Second World War due to the huge growth in 'technical education'. Nowadays, the word 'polytechnic' in many countries, Malaysia, in particular, means an institution/college that aims to equip learners with diversity of skills, especially scientific and technical skills that are necessary for them to be qualified to some extent in their life-situations as employees/workers. The study at

polytechnics can be pursued for both full-time and part-time students. Polytechnics offer programs in both Diploma and Certificate Levels in trades with special attention to the following courses: Electrical Engineering, Business and Commerce, Food Technology, Mechanical Engineering, Marine Engineering, and Secretarial Science.

3. Review of Related Literature

3.1 Evaluation in ESP

ESP course evaluation is considered as a process, which enables us to assess whether the course objectives are being attained – whether the course is leading to what was designed to do. The course evaluation is not separate; it adopts some other important factors such as learner assessment, materials designing, methodology evaluation, course objectives, time allocation, problems faced and overall perceptions. Therefore, ESP course evaluation is existed to help particular learners to attain particular needs with language. If the course evaluation feedback is not attained, there may be something wrong with the course design and hence more precise diagnostic evaluation must be taken to find out where the problem lies.

The ESP course evaluation frequently deals with views at the surface stage of whether or not learners have acquired the language taught (Martin and El Tatawy 1999). It identifies whether or not the program taught was designed according to needs analysis is not often evaluated. It also tries to find out whether or not the needs analysis accurately identifies the language taught and less frequently evaluated. To state that whether an evaluation touches on the issue of whether or not the learners, after the course, can actually perform the real-life situations in terms of needs analysis. This study illustrates how to evaluate whether not only learners have acquired language items, but also, what influences an ESP course evaluation that has on learners' abilities and how they have overcome the difficulties faced in their study. The study of ESP attempts how to evaluate not only whether learners have acquired language items, but also what the impact of an ESP course evaluation attitude has on learners' perceptions about learning behaviors as well as the way they think. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has contributed a lot to language teaching and hence has its great emphasis on careful and extensive needs analysis for course design (John, 1991). The thing that forced a number of experienced writers focus on it through its different types especially after the second world war, which was a mark in the emergence of finding a mutual language to be dealt with.

Consequently, this fell to English as an international language to be a means of communication between nations.

ESP experts originally developed their style in terms of course evaluation through occupying the learner as basic figure in course design, bearing in mind the needs analysis, which needs much consideration to the existence of an effective course design. Upon this idea, a lot of methodologies or techniques have adopted to collect the data such as audio and video, classroom observation, interview, questionnaire, case study, and reflection. This way shows how specific methodology leads to respective findings and implication for future studies. In short, the technique and mode of presentation vary from one article to other (in systematic condition) accordingly.

Many changes have been occurred over years as well as the actual design itself, were implemented to assist the researchers in different fields of study, likewise, ESP program. Yet, experts' design (format) adopted to help them make the type of research more effective and has best uniform. Following this, they attempted to include a new form of designing courses by involving learners through the procedure to collect information originally required and, which regarded as the first step towards course design. This new form shows the influence and the implementation of operating teaching / learning procedure. However, this point helped much in evaluating the system in its current evolving rather than the old one, which only attempts to develop the course without concerning the learner as a basic factor in the step of course evaluation and consequently, the results vary.

Evaluation is an effective means of measuring teaching and learning performances in a language program and of improving the teaching process. It can be used to trace both teaching procedures and learning progress. By comparing their teaching to the syllabi and any other documents, teachers can evaluate their teaching and adjust their teaching strategies to meet the learners' needs and the requirements of the program.

White (1988: 154) defines evaluation

‘Evaluation is concerned not with assessing individual achievement but with making judgments about the curriculum. Formative evaluation, using a variety of techniques to those of needs analysis, together with ethnographic techniques of participant observation, acts as a feedback to curriculum developers.’

Skilbeck (1984) defines evaluation in terms of gathering facts and establishing conclusion on the curriculum that represents a series of actions such as planning, designing and

implementing the curriculum. While David Hamilton has (cited from McNeil, 1996) identifies that the perception of curriculum evaluation is more general to be conducted ethically and empirically responding to the question “what should we do?” and “what can we do?” Brown (1989) defines the word evaluation as collecting and analyzing all relevant data systematically to improve a particular program and finally to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of that program through participants’ views in a certain institution.

Referring to both White (1988) and Brown (1989) views on evaluation, they look at an evaluation as technique utilized to improve the program under evaluation, which depends on learners’ feedback and opinions towards the curriculum. In addition to this, White has another issue in saying that evaluation is not a tool to assess students’ achievements, but

Evaluation is a process to judge or measure the value of a finished or ongoing program, plan, or even a policy (Gasper 1995). In the language-teaching field, especially in ESL/EFL programs, there are numerous reports on how to apply evaluations to class activities and program assessment (McDonough and McDonough 1990; Marrow and Scholker 1993; Williams and Burnden 1994; Carry and Dauber 1995; Mackay et al., 1995). An approach based on the evaluation theory is proposed by Jack C. Richards and Charles Lockhart (1995). This article will focus on the ongoing evaluation of a language program and the roles of the teachers and learners in the process.

Evaluation is viewed as a series of activities that designed to reach at the effectiveness of a program or part of it (Ellington and Aris, 2000). There are many types of approaches can be taken into consideration when conducting an evaluation of a program.

The following framework, as identified by Finch and Crunkilton, is similar to Dan Stufflebeam’s model, which contains the same components, that is, context evaluation, input evaluation, process evaluation, and product evaluation to collect the data (Stake, 1973). In line with the following criteria, Finch and Crunkilton state four basic classifications of evaluation: context evaluation, input evaluation, process evaluation, and product evaluation. As seen, context evaluation and input evaluation are classified under curriculum initiation and structuring while the other two forms, namely, process evaluation and product evaluation are under curriculum operation. Context evaluation refers to the resolution on whether the curriculum is or not taken into consideration under certain conditions to apply its goals and objectives. Therefore, this type of evaluation is considered as an environmental guided, which takes on defining and describing the environment for which a curriculum to be applied,

with much concern to needs analysis and alert to an expected type of needs to appear. The input evaluation seeks to evaluate the resources that used evaluation such as teaching and learning experiences, modules, media, stakeholders, suggestions and implementations offered authorities for future research, and others. In turn, process evaluation mainly deals with the means and techniques used for evaluation such as type of instruction, methodology and students' assessments. Product evaluation, on the other hand, tests the products of the previous stages to ascertain its developments and influences on the learners' performances. It also regarded as a summative type of evaluation (Johnson, 1989).

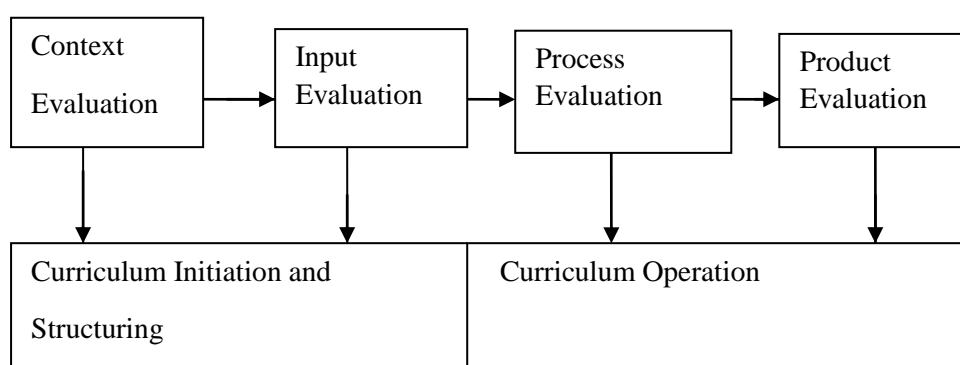


Figure 1: The four processes of evaluation (John, 1989)

3.2 Dimensions of Evaluation

To utilize perfect approach of course evaluation, there are definite guides or dimensions need to put into consideration. Therefore, the recognition of these issues helps realize the differences as well as similarities of these approaches in terms of formulating an approach programme.

- **Formative Vs Summative**

Formative evaluation occurs during the progress of the programme and its curriculum, which is under study. The main purpose of this type of evaluation is to obtain information, enhancing the development of the programme. The outcomes of this programme help decision makers undergo some changes, modification or implementation that will manipulate some or many parts of the programme. On the other hand, summative evaluation takes place

at the end of the programme. The purpose of this programme is to realize the success and effectiveness of it.

- **Product Vs Process**

Through considering the two approaches above, it is clear that they identify diverse purposes to collect information. In turn, the dissimilarity between process and product evaluation lies on what type of information for use. Product evaluation seeks the achievement of the goals while process evaluation concentrates on what is occurring now in terms of goals achievement (product).

- **Qualitative Vs Quantitative**

The distinction that lies between these two types of evaluation is based on the nature of data, which is collected from evaluation. Quantitative data (quantifiable) are obtained in the form of numbers and statistics. On the other hand, qualitative data collected in the form of observation and recording and not on numbers and statistics.

Considering this issue, the theorist, Lynch (1996) has set an observation on the field of applied linguistics. He concluded by saying that, it lacks great deal of such type of evaluation through its history. Beretta (1990:155) is in favor of Lynch, he surprises, why evaluation has neglected and laments the fact that ‘Our literature treats evaluation as a minor course issue, conveniently tacked onto the end of articles and books about curriculum development’. This concept of evaluation has come to the surface and much attention paid to its development, especially after the Second World War and to have a new form, that is, scientific approach to language learning and teaching) particularly in the USA. The early attempts in the subject of evaluation were greatly traced on quantitative (positivistic) research methodology while qualitative (naturalistic) is much used by today’s research, giving a severe confrontation. These two types of approaches are faced by many arguments in the field of psychology and education because the concept of evaluation in both differs according to the steps that are taken to conduct any one of them. The following theorists present arguments on this concept: Lynch (1996:13) states: ‘Regardless of the approach we take, it is important to be aware of (what can be known) and the (how we know and what we claim to know), which can make better trend towards our research and how these affect our choice of methodology...’ The quantitative approach is the conventional, experimental approach to evaluation, and contains two basic divisions of research planning: true experiments and quasi-experiments. The first

one needs random selection of samples, and therefore, it is not appropriate to be conducted in educational context because it gives no realistic explanation. On the other hand, quasi-experiments are the concept for those who intend to conduct the positivistic approach, and statistical and design procedures for the ‘unscientific’ choice of samples. The naturalistic approach is illustrated by Lynch as follows:

... the design of the evaluation emerges as the evaluator proceeds to investigate the program setting, allowing new information and insights to change how and from whom data will be gathered. In this sense, naturalistic research does not attempt to control conditions or variables in the research setting. The emphasis is on observing, describing, interpreting, and understanding how events take place in the real world rather than in a controlled, laboratory like setting. This approach views the educational program being evaluated ... as a process that is continuously changing rather than a stable, invariant treatment. (Lynch, 1996:14)

The above statement presents what said about the two approaches used for program evaluation and whether they are effective to this purpose (evaluation). It also judges the methods for collecting the data, considering the different variables. In this point, Feyerabend is not in favor of positivistic approach:

To those who look at the rich materials provided by history, and who are not intent on impoverishing it in order to please their lower instincts, their craving for intellectual security in the form of clarity, precision, “objectivity”, “truth”, it will become clear that there is only one principle that can be defended under all circumstances and all stages of human development. It is the principle: anything goes. (Feyerabend, 1988:19)

According to the above statement, which is introduced by Feyerabend, it is clear that it plays so little to implement the educator awareness and hence pays little interaction in the learner target situation. Contrary to, Howe (1988) suggests another perfect approach to exploit the learner’s involvement is through pragmatic approach. In my opinion, I believe that Howe’s is quite appropriate, in the sense that, the classroom interaction nowadays plays an important key factor towards learning process (communicative approach to language learning).

3.3 Course Evaluation

In the recent years ESP course evaluation has paid much attention to involve learners as basic tools, through which an effective evaluation can conducted, that is, to ascertain ‘how well the course is actually fulfilling the need’. The sponsors also want to obtain some details about the validity and the effectivity of the course that carried out to attain the prescribed goals to take

some decisions accordingly. Therefore, this step assist identifying whether the program under study responds to its objectives, requires more remedy or elsewhere. It also shapes as a direction to the role played by some parties that share with recommendations seem to be important towards taking considerable resolutions.

Through tracing the history of course evaluation at EFL education, it is believed that this respect has taken place in advance rather than ESP, but what is new here is the involvement of the learner as a basic component. Furthermore, the people who work in ESP are considered as investors and they would like to see how well the product of their investment is. It is generally agreed that the beginning work of ESP began in the late 1960s when a number of teachers and program developers recognized that the conventional way of evaluation, which has been practiced, lacks important component, that is, needs analysis. Hence, the old system of evaluation is not effective to meet the learner's needs. Accordingly, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) have classified the development of ESP into four basic stages as follows:

Stage 1 (1960s and early 70s)

It was seen that the English used by people in certain area, for example, computer operators, contained a specific register. The register has been examined to define its grammatical and lexical features, and therefore, the products figured the basic source of the program (syllabus).

Stage 2 (1970s and early 80s)

During this period, the consideration of ESP program design was enormously influenced by the developments in linguistic field, which witnessed the movement from register analysis (sentence-level analysis) to discourse- level analysis.

Stage 3 (early to the late 80s)

This stage paid more attention to needs analysis, in which many lessons have been taken from the previous stages to form a procedure regarding the language that required in particular situations (Munby, 1978).

Stage 4 (late 80s to present)

In contrary to the three above stages, which mainly focused on the surface linguistic features of the target situation, the stage 4 has followed a new procedure concerning the language use (communicative event) to process thinking attitude, which has not been given much attention

to stress the way in which learners think. The feature of this approach, it pays no attention on registers to consider it as not important feature.

The theorist, McDonough (1984) stated that the great advance of the development of ESP has brought many advantages to other fields of ELT to include the learner needs as a basic trend to course design. In contrast, this trend led the idea that ESP and general English as separate fields of knowledge. The idea of identifying the learner needs is regarded as a vivid concern to apply learner-centeredness approach in ESP and other areas such as EAP. Viewing that, this basic attention can enable learner to function well in using a language as a means of communication (communicative purposes). Hutchinson and Waters stated that the concept of needs analysis has faced many changes in the last twenty years. They remark as follows:

Course design is a dynamic process. It does not move in a linear fashion from initial analysis to completed course. Needs resources vary with time. The course design, therefore, needs to have built-in feedback channels to enable the course to respond to developments.

(Hutchinson and Waters, 1987: 74)

I fully agree with them as that the course design begins with prior preparation as well as it is not a static, but goes on in terms of the variety of time and needs in the certain situations. The concept of feedback that mentioned above, leads to the decision to be put into consideration by policy-makers and hence they can decide who participates in evaluation, what to be evaluated, and the procedures are taken to conduct evaluation.

Alderson and Waters (1983) identified four basic trends to be put into consideration when evaluating ESP program. They are as follows:

- What should be evaluated?
- How can ESP courses be evaluated?
- Who should be involved in the evaluation?
- When (and how often) should evaluation take place?

3.3.1 What should be evaluated?

It is said that this aspect deals with ‘everything of significance’. They have stated two basic restrictions:

- Your ability to collect information;
- Your ability to use the information once it has been collected. The data

gathered must be in harmony with the effort done and the time allocated to perform the task.

In line with learning-centered approach to ESP, the general objective of the ESP course is to achieve two requirements to learners' needs, that is, language learners and language users. It appears in the forms of learners' assessment in terms of delivering questions such as:

- a) Is the course fulfilling the learners' language learning needs?
- b) Has the course fulfilled the learners' language using needs?
- c) Is the course fulfilling the learners' language using needs?

In response to the one or more of the above questions, the other question to be asked is: What areas of need are not being/ have not been fulfilled? Therefore, this question helps know where the difficulty lies in (the syllabus, the materials, the teaching and learning techniques, the testing procedures, administrative arrangements, or the course evaluation system?) and what procedures one can follow to solve such problems.

3.3.2 How can ESP courses be evaluated?

In the form of theoretical aspect, many methods are used to evaluate ESP courses varying from replication to delivering suggestions. For the practical aspect, on the other hand, the majority of ESP courses are evaluated by using one or more of following methods: test results, questionnaires, interviews, discussions, comments, case study, etc. The use of certain technique is subject to teaching situation to collect the data, which need to make short if it is so countless and need to be simplified if it is complicated and vague. After approaching the information collected, a discussion should be made to arrive at conclusive remarks, tailored with suggestions to the written report for future research.

3.3.3 Who should be involved in evaluation?

A group of people are involved in evaluating a system, but the closest up with the evaluation of an ESP course, is the learning organization, the ESP instructors, the students, the course supporters and also the ex- learners can be included for their experience.

The notion of evaluation in the context of language teaching and learning is occurred in the form of outsider, that is, in the form of organization such as the British Council, which aims to observe, analyse the course, and present the results in the form of a report. This type of evaluation (accountability-oriented), focuses mainly on a central organization, telling what

is to be believed as logical trends. On the other hand, the insider type of evaluation (e.g. manager or supervisor) who evaluate the usefulness of the program and/or performance of the teacher in terms of development of the aims that stated for the program. Here, the type of evaluation may perhaps be accountability-oriented or development-oriented, or in the form of joining of the two. Relatively, it is found that, teachers avoid both of them because the course evaluator might be unaware of the appropriate concerns of the course as well as the overview might be drawn from one lesson, that is, the generalization normally lacks the real application of such decision to all parts of a course under study.

In response to those, two types of evaluation, a third one came to the surface to be seen, i.e. teacher evaluation and is done either personally or by including his colleagues. This type is known as action research, which is now takes place in applied linguistics. Moreover, it is regarded as development-oriented and formative at the same time because it develops learner's ability. Consequently, some theorists who are in favor of this type of research attempted to define it according to their views such as Kemmis and Taggart (1988), Cohen, and Manion (1985). They defined action research as a collaborative activity. In turn, Nunan defined it as:

While collaboration is highly desirable ... it should not be seen as a defining characteristic of action research. Many teachers who are interested in exploring processes of teaching and learning in their own context are either unable, for practical reasons, or unwilling, for personal reasons, to do collaborative research. The work that such as people carry out should not necessarily be excluded as action research. (Nunan, 1992: 18)

According to Nunan statement, it is clear that there is a prior problem to direct action research to take place in teaching/learning situation, and therefore, a need arises to solve that problem. He figured out this case as the basic difference between evaluation and action research. He also adds that evaluation of a course can be occurred to realize perceptions and results of a course with or without problem defined before. In my opinion, I think there is no clear-cut difference between the two types because things cannot happen without prior cause. However, there is a reason to do such things even it is hidden or beyond the hand.

3.3.4 When (and how often) should evaluation take place?

This procedure is concerned as the difficult one because of the time constraint, which may cause as a problematic issue to get the right information within a point of time. Therefore, the difficulty arises due to being busy and having enough time to deliver the data by certain time.

For the previous reason, most of ESP courses are evaluated informally. The suggested time given by Hutchinson and Waters as follows:

- 1) In the first week of the course
- 2) At regular intervals throughout the course, for example, every half term
- 3) at the end of the course.
- 4) (if possible) after the course.

3.4 Evaluation by learners

A learner plays as a direct concern in learning process and the idea of involving the learner as a basic component to course evaluation may result in success or failure of a certain program. The theorist, Aleamoni provided some reasons for getting information from students:

1. Students are the main source of information about (a) accomplishment of important educational goals, such as the development of motivation for continued learning, and (b) areas of rapport, degrees of communication, and the existence of problems between instruction and students.
2. Students are the most logical evaluators of the quality and effectiveness of and satisfaction with those course elements (instructor, textbook, homework, course content, instruction, student interest, ... attention, and general attitude)
3. Student ratings provide a means of communication between students and instructor, which in large institutions may not exist in other forms.
4. Student demands for information about instructors and courses... encourage instructional improvement.

(Aleamoni, 1981: 11)

Aleamoni has supported us with important details to ascertain the effectiveness of involving the learner in course evaluation. Now most of teachers make an effort to develop their learners' independence (autonomy) as language learners in and outside learning situation. This issue leads us to the step by which learners are included in course design from the early stages in terms of learning skills and strategies. Relatively, this is what ESP pursues through years of attempt using what called 'learning-centred approach, which plays an important part in learners' progress towards effective learning. Bearing in mind those learners can direct or change the trends of the syllabus/course accordingly. In this respect, Maurice (1992: 29) observes that 'for some educators, (evaluation by learners) may entail a substantial change in perspective- from seeing learners as subordinates to seeing them as partners or clients. That

change, however, can yield benefits to all.’

From this point of view, learners can be considered as evaluators. However, their perceptions about the program studied or under study may bring important facts seem to be in great value to their teachers or course designer. At the learning situation the learner can decide or comment on methodology and materials adopted to attain the goals and hence his/her role should not be neglected whatever happens.

Many studies in the field of evaluation, especially, evaluation by learners have ascertained the involvement of learners as key factor to decide what is going on and they can be regarded as direct methods towards collecting data and getting invaluable information that may contribute more to learning system or policy-makers.

Bowen and Marks (1996:36) stated another condition: ‘learners may well, for reasons of politeness, give a fairly bland response, which ultimately, is of no real use to anyone. The result of ‘faint praise feedback’ can often be that the teacher becomes even more comfortable in his or her particular rut and sees no particular reason to question and change what he or she is doing.’ However, evaluation by learner nowadays marks an important point in the history of course design as a valid and productive action for both teacher and learner. After all, this respect can be influence by culture and learning environment (unfamiliar concept to learners).

“Language teaching is full of choices and alternatives, and no one is totally sure which way is right” (Dougill, 1987), so whatever methods, as long as they get students involved in activities of actually using the language on both structures and functions, students can approach to their final goals.

Testing functions as quality control, an important element in syllabus design. Through testing and its feedback, appropriate remedial action can be taken to repair failures or deficits. However, testing is only a means of monitoring, not the goal of the completely teaching, it cannot and should never replace teaching.

3.5 Evaluating an ongoing language program

Ongoing evaluation, which occurs during the progression of an action, is a widely used means of judging the progress and achievements of language programs. Developers and supervisors often use the results of their evaluations to rate programs. Evaluations may help directors decide such matters as ranking teachers, funding the programs, and promoting

teachers. In some cases, evaluations include input from colleagues and supervisors, with teachers and learners playing only a passive role in the evaluation process.

The ongoing evaluation of language programs can assist in improving teaching and learning practices and help teachers and learners. First, teachers and learners can objectively view their work and performances during the course. Second, they can better understand the course progression and its relation to the program's goals. Third, teachers and learners can benefit from the evaluation by modifying their teaching or learning strategies, thus improving their performances. By participating in the ongoing evaluation program, teacher and learners become more involved in the program. Finally, the evaluation project can help to create good rapport between teachers and learners.

Ongoing evaluation is a systematic and reflective process to measure the program. Unlike other evaluations, this project usually involves only the teacher and learners. It can be considered a self-evaluation process. Administrators or supervisors of the program may provide background information or other materials. They also can be asked to inspect the project at its conclusion.

3.6 Practical Stages in Evaluation

It is significant for both teachers and learners to perform ongoing evaluations periodically. An early current evaluation may be carried out in the first week to test the whether the students and teacher are ready to the new term as well as to know their preparedness to the content. "The tone here will probably have a greater overall effect on the success of the course than what occurs later, since initial impressions are very often more enduring than later ones" (Hutchinson and Waters 1987).

Formal ongoing program evaluations may be at one-month intervals or at each stage of the program as a check on the progress of the courses. Informal evaluations may be carried out when the teacher and learners think it is necessary. It is important at all stages that data be stored in a record for analysis. The ongoing evaluation process is divided into four stages as directed below:

Stage (1)

In the preparation period of the program, the teacher will need a complete program documents including the curriculum (syllabus) and any other related materials. The teaching materials should be evaluated to see that they are in harmony with the program's

requirements and teaching methodology. The learners' data, like personal information, language proficiencies, language learning strategies, and other psychological factors, should be collected. When the data collected and studied, the teacher should have a detailed acquaintance with the program and the learners. Then a detailed teaching plan can be written.

Stage (2)

After the language program has started, the teacher and learners may use informal evaluations to measure their performances. Both the teacher and learners should be actively involved in collecting data and analyzing them periodically during the course.

Teachers and learners need to observe each other's performance. In addition to that, the teacher should conduct studies on the learners' styles and their learning strategies to enable him use the perfect teaching methodology that fully suit their learning process. This may include recording students' responses to the teacher's questions and the roles learners play in the discussions. The learners will need to observe the teacher's performances during classroom activities and the teaching techniques used. Both the teacher and learners can share views on their observations and make comments on questionnaires and during periodical interviews and group discussions. Learners should receive feedback from the teacher on corrections and personal conversations with the teacher.

The teacher should become familiar with the learners' learning styles in order to compare the learners' classroom behavior to their learning strategies, which were collected during the first stage. Besides, the teacher can assist learners in adapting their learning strategies to suit the present program. On the other hand, the learners may study the teaching strategy of the teacher and make comments, so amendments can be made to suit their own needs and the goals of the program.

Stage (3)

Following a certain period, a formal or periodic evaluation needs to be carried out. During this period, the data previously collected are studied to see if the goals have been achieved. At this point, the teacher and supervisor can study all the data such as scores, comments, and other feedback from the learners. Periodic discussions may be needed so that teacher and learners can exchange views on each other's styles.

Documents such as syllabuses, informal evaluation results and materials of other similar programs can be studied and compared to the evaluation results, so as to obtain an

objective view of the program's progress. The learners should also write brief summaries of their learning progress during this stage. The teacher can then revise the plan for the near future sessions.

Stage (4)

When the program is concluded, another evaluation should be undertaken. The teacher and the supervisor of the program need to study all the data collected during the course of the program. The result of this stage should be an objective comment and/or statistical conclusion that summarize the progress of the program. This is later used as the primary data for the institutional evaluation and as a reference for similar future programs.

For the duration of all the above-mentioned stages, feedback should be available to the teacher and learners, so they can understand what modifications they must make throughout the course to know what type of information needs to be much emphasized on especially the content that has been studied.

4.Data Analysis and Findings

The findings of the study are presented based on interviews conducted, questionnaires distributed, and classroom observation held. The profound analysis of the findings is also reviewed in details in this section. The data of the questionnaire will be analysed according to the questions as appeared in the questionnaire. The study utilizes two types of samples, namely, teacher sample and student sample (diploma students and certificate students). The two groups of samples were given similar sets of questionnaires with a slightly different in background information while researcher established the interview sessions personally and in separate places especially for teacher. The student interview sessions took place after English classes (as mentioned before) where free time was available for them to express their views freely.

In this study, all responses from questionnaires were received, but the number of interviewees was reduced to 18 respondents out of 25 respondents. The data collection through both interviews and questionnaires took about 25 days via hand and post. The interviews were conducted as a complement to the data collected by questionnaires.

However, they can be considered as two faces for one coin, that is, for the benefit gained from being used together to collect data effectively. Therefore, the data collected by them is subject to the successful designing items and questions for each.

Relatively, the data collected by questionnaires will be analysed: using frequency counts, and then converted in the form of percentage. Interview data, on the other hand, will be analyzed, using descriptive interpretation. The data obtained will be analyzed according to the evaluation criteria that the researcher is going to investigate, that is, the students' needs, methods of teaching used, evaluation results achieved, course objectives, syllabus / curriculum, materials used, evaluation system followed, time allocation, types of problems faced by both teachers and students, general perceptions about the course, and evaluation results of students.

Key:

CS = Certificate Students, DS = Diploma Students, TS = teachers, GE = General English, ESP = English for Specific Purposes, N = total number of respondents, n = real number of respondents participated, N.S = not sure, NE = neutral, A = strongly agree / agree, D = strongly disagree / disagree, M.I =most important, L.I = less important

Table (1): Analysis of use of English

Item	Details	CS N=16		DS N=20	
		n	%	n	%
Use of English	Very often	0	0	0	0
	Often	2	12.5	2	10
	Sometimes	13	81.3	18	90

	Never	1	6.3	0	0
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Table (2): analysis of ESP vs. GE

Item	Details	CS N=16		DS N=20	
		n	%	n	%
ESP vs. GE	Yes	5	31.3	5	25
	No	11	68.7	15	75

Referring to the above three tables, table (1) illustrates the general background information of two types of student samples, that is, Diploma Students (DS) and Certificate Students (CS) who were engaged in this study. As shown, most of the students are young of age rated between 18-20, i.e. about (81.3 %) and (75%) for CS and DS respectively. Table (2) shows that both CS (81.3%) and DS (90%) rarely use English outside the classroom. This feature noticed by the researcher when conducting interview sessions as well as during classroom observation. The finding of this observation assured that they intend to use their own language whether. In the class, they feel comfortable to convert English to their own language. Where in Table (3), the majority of students (CS=68.7%, DS=75%) did not know the concept of ESP although they have been studying ESP courses, for example, Commercial English. To this end, the interviews discovered that their teachers did not recognize the students about the concept of ESP.

Table (3): Analysis of CE students' grades

Grade	CS N=16		DS N=20	
	N	%	n	%
A	0	0	0	0

A-	0	0	1	5
B+	1	6.3	4	20
B	1	6.3	7	35
B-	1	6.3	2	10
C+	6	37.5	4	20
C	4	25	1	5
C-	2	12.5	1	5
D and less	1	6.3	0	0

In Table (3), as noticed above, the DS results in this course confirm that their standard of knowledge is better than CS. For CS, the highest scores are obtained in grade C+ (37.5%). DS, on the other hand, a number of seven students scored grade B (35%). That means CE has helped them improving their level of proficiency.

Table (4): Analysis of CE students' grades

Grade	CS N=16		DS N=20	
	N	%	n	%
A	0	0	0	0
A-	0	0	1	5
B+	1	6.3	4	20
B	1	6.3	7	35
B-	1	6.3	2	10
C+	6	37.5	4	20
C	4	25	1	5
C-	2	12.5	1	5
D and less	1	6.3	0	0

In Table (4), as noticed above, the DS results in this course confirm that their standard of knowledge is better than CS. For CS, the highest scores are obtained in grade C+ (37.5%). DS, on the other hand, a number of seven students scored grade B (35%). That means CE has helped them improving their level of proficiency.

Table (5): Analysis of students' needs

Items	CS N= 16			DS N= 20			Ts N= 14		
	A	NE	D	A	NE	D	A	NE	D
8	14 (87.5)	2 (12.5)	0 (0)	16 (80)	20 (20)	0 (0)	13 (92.9)	1 (7.1)	0 (0)
9	13 (81.3)	3 (18.7)	0 (0)	14 (70)	2 (10)	0 (0)	12 (85.7)	2 (14.3)	0 (0)
10	6 (37.5)	9 (56.3)	1 (6.3)	13 (65)	3 (15)	0 (0)	13 (92.9)	1 (7.1)	0 (0)
11	8 (50)	5 (31.3)	3 (18.8)	12 (60)	3 (15)	1 (5)	11 (78.6)	2 (14.3)	1 (7.1)

Key:

Item 8 = The CE course helps improve students' listening skills

Item 9 = The CE course helps improve students' speaking skills

Item 10 = The CE course helps improve students' reading skills

Item 11 = The CE course helps improve students' writing skills

The findings for item (8) clarified that CE course enhanced students' improvement in listening skill according to the agreement of all respondents, CS (87.5%), DS (80%), and Ts (92.9%). Next to that (item 9), all the respondents were in agreement to confirm CE helped students' advancement in speaking skills, CS (81.3%), DS (70%), and Ts (85.7%). For the item 10, there was variance in responses; both DS (65%) and Ts (92.9%) agreed that CE course helped in the improvement of writing skills. Unlikely, CS (56.3%) provided different answers to mean that they were neutral to either agree or disagree. For the fourth one (item 11), both DS (60%) and Ts (78.6%) had given consent answer that CE helped the students' advancement towards writing skills while only half of CS (50%) had the same opinion to the previous respondents, i.e. DS and Ts. As a whole, CE played an important role in improving students' four skills, which proved upon interview sessions held with students.

Table (6): Analysis of Suggestions about Students' Skills

Skills	CS N= 16		DS N= 20		Ts N= 14	
	M.I	L.I	M.I	L.I	M.I	L.I
Listening	13(81.3)	3(18.8)	11(55)	9(45)	11(78.6)	3(21.4)
Speaking	14(87.5)	2(12.5)	16(80)	4(20)	9(64.3)	5(35.7)
Reading	11(68.8)	5(31.3)	10(50)	10(50)	9(64.3)	5(35.7)
Writing	11(68.8)	5(31.3)	10(50)	10(50)	8(57.1)	6(42.9)

The suggestions drawn from the respondents of this study sorted out that all of them, CS (81.3%), DS (55%), and Ts (78.6%) suggested that listening skills were most important to be dealt with to perform certain tasks. For the speaking skills, the responses were in consent for all the respondents, that is, CS (87.5%), DS (80%), and Ts (64.3%). Subsequently, the reading skills were verified by above half of the respondents (CS=68.8%, Ts=64.3%) to be most important in order to improve reading speed. DS (50%), on the other hand, only half of them agreed that these skills were most important to be acquired. Consequently, the interview sessions taken, assured that these skills are most important to achieve many duties in and out place of study.

Table (7): Analysis of Course Objectives

Items	CS N= 16			DS N= 20			Ts N= 14		
	A	NE	D	A	NE	D	A	NE	D
12	12 (75)	3 (18.8)	1 (6.3)	4 (20)	7 (35)	9 (45)	0 (0)	2 (14.3)	12 (85.7)
13	12 (75)	3 (18.8)	1 (6.3)	15 (75)	5 (25)	0 (0)	10 (71.5)	3 (21.4)	1 (7.1)
14	13 (81.3)	1 (6.3)	2 (12.5)	13 (65)	7 (35)	0 (0)	12 (85.8)	1 (7.1)	1 (7.1)

Key:

Item 12 = Do you think this course fail to achieve students' specific goals?

Item 13 = Do you think this course succeeded in equipping students with skills enable them to be competent in the future?

Item 14 = Do you think this course enable students to attain the business needs?

In Table (16), the analysis of the notions about the course objectives is going to be explained. In item 12, both DS (45%) and Ts (85.7%) were confirmed that this course did not fail to achieve its specific goals through equipping students with study skills while CS (75%) agreed that this course failed to attain the specific goals. On the contrary, all the interview sessions introduced positive agreement to assure the ideas announced by both DS and TS respectively. The findings of the item 13 ascertained the success of the course in providing students with skills to be competent in future jobs (trace item 13 above). For the last one (item 14), the majority of the respondents (CS=81.3%, DS=65%, and Ts=85.8%) agreed to the course objectives of being able to prepare students for business needs. Overall, the interviewees ascertained that the course objectives succeeded in empowering students with important skills to be competent as well as attain business requirements.

Table (8): Analysis of Specific Course Objectives (Suggestions)

Specific objectives	CS N= 16		DS N= 20		Ts N= 14	
	M.I	L.I	M.I	L.I	M.I	L.I
a	15(93.8)	0	7(35)	0	6(42.9)	0
b	5(31.3)	1(6.3)	6(30)	1(5)	3(21.4)	0
c	10(62.5)	0	3(15)	2(10)	2(14.3)	0
d	9(56.3)	1(6.3)	3(15)	1(5)	1(7.1)	1(7.1)
e	1(6.3)	0	5(25)	2(10)	5(35.7)	2(14.3)
f	1(6.3)	1(6.3)	7(35)	2(10)	1(7.1)	0
g	1(6.3)	0	7(35)	2(10)	3(21.4)	0
h	0	0	3(15)	0	7(50)	0
i	1(6.3)	0	4(20)	2(10)	7(50)	2(14.3)
j	1(6.3)	0	2(10)	1(5)	2(14.3)	0

Key:

a = able to use a dictionary

b = able to make summaries from a given text.

c = able to apply the library skills

d = able to take notes.

e = able to introduce and greet people in an accepted way.

f = able to use normal conversation strategies.

g = able to interpret information from BM to English.

h = able to initiate or respond to oral exchange.

i = able to participate confidently in oral exchange.

j = able to identify essential message of a text.

Referring to the Table (18) above, which introduces the specific objectives of the course, the answers received by CS=93.8% confirmed the use of a dictionary is most important while less than half of the other respondents, i.e. DS (35%) and Ts (42.9) also agreed to the above opinion. The second item (b) point up the ability to make summary from texts, which announced by the respondents (CS=31.3%, DS=30% and Ts=21.4%) to mean most important. For the third item (c), the respondents (CS=62.5%, DS=15% and Ts=14.3%) agreed to the application of library skills were most important to be achieved. The fourth item (d) assured the ability of taking notes, suggested by respondents (CS=56.3%, DS=15% and Ts=7.1%) to mean most important. Next, item (e) explained that the ability to communicate with people is most important as announced by the respondents (CS=6.3%, DS=25% and Ts=35.7%). Item (f) seeks for the views about the establishing conversation with people, which assigned by the respondents (CS=6.3%, DS=35% and Ts=7.1%) to mean they were in favor of the idea of being most important. The following item (g) dealt with the interpretation from BM to English where the respondents (CS=13.5%, DS=35%, and Ts=21.4%) ascertained to it as most important towards understanding the course content. The item (h) explained that only DS (15%) and TS=50% provided responses to rate most important. The respondents who answered with most important to the item (i) were CS (6.3%), DS (20%) and Ts (50%). The last one (item j), the participants answered with most important were CS (6.3%), DS (10%), and Ts (14.3%). From the above report, it was assured according to the

results introduced; the respondents agreed that the specific skills helped them to function well towards performing their multiple tasks.

5.2 Discussion of Results

This section attempts to discuss the results in terms of responses to the research questions. In order to help the reader, follow the discussion of results, the research questions will be re-edited again as follows:

Research Questions:

- 1) What are the ESP needs of polytechnic students?
- 2) Does the current ESP course meet the needs of the students in terms of:
 - Course objectives
 - Course content
 - Learning materials
 - Teaching methodology
 - Time allocation
 - Evaluation system

Research Question One: What are the ESP needs of polytechnic students?

In answering this question, the students' needs will be discussed to show how these needs can be obtained to attain their goals. According to the results of the study concerning this aspect, it has been assured that Commercial English played an important role in improving their major skills, that is, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Consequently, their English proficiency has become well as they declared to the researcher during the interview sessions that have been held with them. Thus, their needs to improve their English

proficiency as well as social communication in terms of mutual understanding have been developed better.

Research Question Two: Does the current ESP course meet the needs of students in terms of:

- Course objectives
- Course content
- Learning materials
- Teaching methodology
- Time allocation
- Evaluation

The second research question contains six items (as mentioned above) that need to be tested whether they have been achieved. Hence, the researcher has to show that based on the views and issues introduced by teachers and their students. Relatively, these different items will be presented as they appeared in their orders.

- **Course objectives**

There are two types of objectives, namely, general objectives and specific objectives. The general objectives are those, which can be achieved at the end of the programme or years of study. Specific objectives, on the other hand, are those that can be attained in short time. In terms of accomplishing students' goals, there were different issues have been given. Some of the certificate students agreed that the current course failed to achieve their needs while teachers and diploma students disagreed to this claim to indicate that some changes to be done in order to activate the present course. The success of the course in preparing students with skills, on the other hand, received support from the majority of the respondents to ascertain that the course succeeded in

supporting them with skills to function well in their study and job requirements. Where in business needs, the content of this course enabled students recognize and attain their business needs in terms of proficiency, which in turn, help them accomplish future business job needs. The indications of these views, in spite of being contradicted in some ways, inform us that the course failed in equipping students with basic skills as general. However, it succeeded in equipping them with some of the specific skills such as the ability to use dictionary in the time of need; the ability of making summaries from texts; the ability to introduce and greet people; the ability to deal with library procedures in accepted way; and the ability to identify essential message of a text. It is notable to mention that during attending classes as a classroom observer, the researcher was able to notice and identify students' skills, which did not function well in some specific areas such as the ability to cope with ordinary conversation at the time of need; the ability to take notes directly from the lecture, but instead, they depended mostly on course books. In addition, they desired from the lecture to use translation technique in order to make them understand the lessons, but teachers encourage them to speak in English.

- **Course content**

The course content deals with syllabus organized by Ministry of Education. In relation to this aspect, the researcher will discuss the course under study in terms of its items, which make up the whole syllabus. To this end, the results obtained by the respondents assured that the items of the course were related to students' needs, that is, their specialization towards future jobs. Study skills, to some extent, were considered as being enough for students to do their business requirements. Commercial English is considered as social-based, that is, social behavior, which

requires social skills to apply them in diversity of situations. Relatively, the respondents in interview sessions confirmed that social skills are so important and they must be given much attention to strengthen their nature. Oral communication is the main characteristic of business requirements in order to deal with people (clients). From this aspect, the respondents assigned, as it is very important to accomplish business goals. All these varieties indicate that the content of the syllabus pours in the heart of business requirements, in particular, social interaction. Strong agreement has been come to the surface, considering that CE lacks integral of basic skills and some changes to be included to embrace basic skills parallel to study skills. Therefore, most of the respondents recommended CE to be substituted by ECP as to serve multiple purposes. The reason is that, ECP applies three important types of skills, that is, study skills, social English skills, and oral communication skills. For their effectivity, the three integrated skills obtained support from the majority of the respondents.

For the importance of GE, the majority of respondents (teachers and certificate students) suggested being taught in the first year because students lack some of basic skills such as speaking and reading and this feature was confirmed during the interview sessions for not being able to express in English. While for CE, they preferred to be included in the second year after being developed their basic skills, which inevitably enhance their levels of proficiency towards study skills. The majority of diploma students preferred CE only for test. The indication drawn from these perceptions showed that prior focus should be based on the basic skills, and then other skills come later on. Upon classroom observation, it was obvious to notice that certificate students lack basic skills (reading, speaking, writing, and listening) and this confirming their suggestions towards CE as being for test only.

- **Learning materials**

They represent as the fruit of the learning process when well selected and prepared to serve certain purpose. There are three types of materials used in educational system: published materials such as textbooks; in-house materials, which prepared by teachers; and technical materials such as video, OHP (Overhead Projector), computer, etc. During classroom observation, the researcher noticed that the greater part of materials used in classes was published materials and this made the majority of the respondents assign for the item (published materials) as an existed material. Thus, most teachers relied on published materials for being economic, readily available, and well designed, especially the textbooks. In addition, another reason for depending on this type of materials is time constraints. The published materials used in teaching process related to the area of study and the guidebook represents as a reference for teachers to follow effective teaching methodologies. Most respondents were in favor of technical materials due to the invasion of technology as modern materials for teaching and learning activity.

- **Teaching methodology**

Teaching methodology is the way of applying techniques that enhance learning and teaching process and through which the information passes from the sender (educator/teacher) to the receiver (student/learner) via systematic medium of instruction. The effectivity of learning and teaching depends much on the successful methodology. The views drawn from teaching methodology assured that teachers take ECP skills as a centre of attention rather than major skills. The methods of teaching were confirmed for being suitable and effective during the interview sessions held with students. Another concern was that, all the teachers with whom I attended classes were active, had good command of English although most of them were new. They

succeeded in making lessons as fun, vividness and map engineering, which made the students most motivated to follow their lesson attentively. The implications resulted from this aspect; ascertain that the students' learning background lacks the basic skills. In relevance to that, the students lack confidence to express themselves as well as to participate effectively in lesson activities whether group work, pair work, or individually. It is worth noting that, the teachers were focusing on the four basic skills and grammar as a problematic issue faced by most of students.

- **Time allocation**

Time allocation is considered as a duration, which defines the amount of time allotted to certain activity to be performed. Here, the amount of time given to lesson activity will be discussed based on the perceptions and suggestions obtained by teachers and students. In this respect, most of the respondents assured that the time prescribed per week was enough to teach and perform activities. Relatively, most of the respondents assigned for three periods per week as enough to do all the work. In contrast, some of the respondents announced that the time per week is not enough even five periods during the interview sessions.

- **Evaluation system**

Evaluation system is the measure utilized by certain institution to evaluate its learners within specific criteria. In other words, to see how effective or ineffective is the system used to accomplish the goals as well as to obtain alert for learner's progress. In line with this information, most of the respondents assigned that the system of evaluation was the same for all Malaysian Polytechnics as accredited by the authorities in educational institution, polytechnic section. It is worth noting that, the evaluation system used by teachers is effective and suitable for the students as they declared during the interview

sessions. Since all polytechnics follow the same mode of evaluation, the students will follow the same system of evaluation for CE accordingly. In line with mark distribution, the greater part of students preferred the system rating at (30% course work and 70% for final exam), which indicate that they were not in favour of doing many assignments, that is, they only want to focus on exam result. On the other hand, half of the teachers preferred the system (50% course work and 50% for final exam) to indicate that they want to equip their students with skills for language proficiency.

5. Conclusion

This study has focused on the perceptions of the respondents drawn up through their results as well as the challenges they face in teaching and learning activity. The mode of this research could also be very useful in other contexts and disciplines such as social studies, law, teacher education, etc. However, more research of this nature is needed in a variety of settings and disciplines, as the findings can lead to improvements in both content and ESP courses. Therefore, the findings of this study have brought systematic criteria followed by the evaluator to obtain details based on research results and analysis drawn up from questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observation.

The findings obtained through this study, confirmed that the methods of involving learners in evaluation system could bring invaluable feedback to both teachers and researchers if well developed. As seen, many views and notions have been brought based on systematic method and evaluation criteria such as students' needs, course objectives, materials used, problems faced by both teachers and students, time devoted to teaching and doing students' duties, methods of teaching practiced by teachers, syllabus / curriculum, and system of evaluation used in evaluating students' results.

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