



An analysis of curriculum renewal in ESP context

Umida KHAYDAROVA¹

Tashkent State University of Law

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received September 2022

Received in revised form

25 October 2022

Accepted 20 November 2022

Available online

25 December 2022

Keywords:

curriculum,
content,
task-based syllabus,
learners' needs,
outcomes,
research methods,
observation,
questionnaire and etc.

ABSTRACT

This article is devoted to the research of the foreign language curriculum set by the department of language training. Specifically, it proposes some changes to the current curriculum of the module “English for lawyers”. In fact, the data were collected from second-year learners and the curriculum of this module. The current curriculum for this module partially meets the standards of the university. The research entails several steps prior to the drawn conclusion. The first step was carried out through needs analysis in order to gather sufficient data about the learners and their preferences. Secondly, the existing curriculum was researched and its advantages and disadvantages were found out. Some drawbacks contain inappropriate teaching materials, lack of legal writing and not well-explained assessment criteria. The gathered outcomes helped to provide some suggestions which include changes regarding the syllabus, textbooks, and methods of the teachers. All these suggestions are based on the drawbacks and advantages of the curriculum. The suggested curriculum includes the integration of all skills; content, skill and task-based syllabus; reading novels related to their profession and succinct explanation of the tasks as well as the assessment criteria. All of these suggestions would be effective for the further development of future lawyers.

2181-1415/© 2022 in Science LLC.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47689/2181-1415-vol3-iss11/S-pp288-295>

This is an open-access article under the Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.ru>)

ESP kontekstida o'quv dasturining tahlili

ANNOTATSIYA

Kalit so'zlar:

o'quv dasturi,
mazmuni,
vazifalarga asoslangan o'quv

Ushbu maqola ingliz tili fani dasturi ustida olib borilgan ishlar natijalari haqida. Qolaversa, maqolada hozirda mavjud bo'lgan ingliz tili moduli o'quv dasturiga qo'shimchalar yoki

¹ Senior teacher, Department of Foreign Languages, Tashkent State University of Law. E-mail: u.xaydarova@tsul.uz.

rejasi,
talabalar ehtiyojlari,
natijalar,
tadqiqot usullari,
kuzatish,
anketa va boshqalar.

yangilik kiritish to'g'risida fikr yuritiladi. Bundan tashqari, maqolada ikkinchi kurs moduli va talabalaridan yig'ilgan ma'lumotlar asosidagi natijalar ko'rsatilgan. Hozirda mavjud dastur universitet tomonidan o'rnatilgan mezonlarga qisman to'g'ri keladi. Ushbu tadqiqot xulosagacha bo'lgan ma'lum bosqichlarni o'z ichiga oladi. Birinchi bosqich talabalarining taklif va talablarini bilish uchun o'tkazilgan so'rovnomanidan iborat. Ikkinchi bosqichda esa ushbu dastur to'liq o'rganilgan hamda uning yutuq va kamchiliklari ko'rsatib o'tilgan, xususan, huquqiy yozma materiallar hamda baholash mezonida ayrim kamchiliklar mavjud. Qo'lga kiritilgan natijalar asosida dastur, kitoblar va metodlar haqidagi kiritilishi zarur bo'lgan o'zgarishlar e'tirof etiladi. Barcha takliflar dasturning kamchiliklarini bartaraf etishga qaratilgan. Mazkur taklif qilinayotgan dastur til o'rgatishdagi malaka va ko'nikmalar integratsiyasi, topshiriqlarga asoslangan kalendar reja, kasbiy rivojlanishga qaratilgan adabiyotlar va qayta ko'rib chiqilgan baholash mezonini o'z ichiga oladi. O'ylaymizki, maqolada keltirilgan barcha takliflar yuristlarning yanada salohiyatli bo'lishiga xizmat qiladi.

Анализ обновления учебной программы в контексте ESP

АННОТАЦИЯ

Ключевые слова:

учебный план,
содержание,
программа,
основанная на задачах,
потребности учащихся,
результаты,
методы исследования,
наблюдение,
анкетирование и т.д.

Данная статья посвящена исследованию учебной программы по иностранному языку, утверждённой кафедрой Языковой подготовки. В частности, предлагается внести некоторые изменения в существующую учебную программу модуля «Английский язык для юристов». Был проведён опрос учащихся второго курса, в рамках исследования учебной программы этого модуля. Текущая учебная программа для этого модуля частично соответствует стандартам университета. Исследование проводилось в несколько этапов. Первый шаг был выполнен посредством анализа потребностей учащихся и их предпочтениях. Во-вторых, была изучена существующая учебная программа, выявлены ее преимущества и недостатки. Некоторые недостатки включают в себя неподходящие учебные материалы, отсутствие юридических документов и недостаточно четкие критерии оценок. Собранные результаты помогли дать некоторые предложения, которые включают изменения в учебной программе, учебниках и методах преподавания. Предлагаемая учебная программа включает в себя интеграцию всех навыков; содержание, основанное на поставленных задачах и результатах; чтение романов, связанных с профессией и кратким объяснением задач; критериях оценок. Все эти предложения будут эффективны для дальнейшего развития будущих юристов.

A learner needs analysis report

✓ Introduction

The worldwide increase in the use of English has led to many changes in educational institutions. Today, English is no longer simply taught as a foreign language, but in an increasing number of countries serves as the medium of instruction, even in non-English speaking countries. 'Successful organizations are biased towards action and they avoid stultification by developing and changing rather than remaining routinized and standardized' [1].

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) programmes are no different from other organizations. Although some ESP programs change little over time, seemingly content with the comfort and security of the status quo, many ESP programs view change as a natural and integral part of program life. In such programs, curriculum renewal represents one effective way of responding to the evolving needs of students and faculty, to the shifting circumstances of the educational programs themselves, and to new insights from the professional literature. Curriculum renewal that is grounded in sound decision-making and a thoughtful consideration of the factors impacted by reform can ensure program integrity, viability, responsiveness, and competitiveness [2].

Initially, this needs analysis was carried out at Tashkent State University of Law. In this institution, EFL teachers deliver classes to 1st, and 2nd-year students, but for this task, 1st-year learners were particularly chosen since they have more challenges as opposed to other students. In this institution, students learn both ESP and general English. For ESP they have a legal English course book, which they study for a year, and for general English, they practice B2 level course books. Most of them face difficulties in writing academic essays and case studies. Hence, in writing classes, instructors try to use different helpful materials. In this need, analysis concentration was drawn to one of my learners who is very eager to learn English. Even though Student A joined the class a bit later, he is very active in the group, but it was interesting to know about his other skills; therefore, in a bid to find out his learning goals, his personal traits, strategies this research was carried out and outcomes through the gathered data were analyzed.

Learner profile

The target group consists of 23 students: 11 girls and 12 boys. They are all Uzbek with different backgrounds. When it comes to their language proficiency my three-month observation proves that their level differs from Pre-intermediate to Intermediate. Nearly all of them are good at English, but some are a bit introverted. Their listening and speaking are much better than their reading and writing skills. They prefer more interactive activities since they participate more actively in these types of warm-ups.

The learner chosen for this needs analysis is a 20-year-old boy hailing from an Uzbek family. Student A is a second-year student now at the University of Law and he has been very intrigued to learn languages since his mother is a language teacher. According to his personality relying on the observation, it can be said that he is very outgoing, clever and open-minded. Nowadays his knowledge of English is Intermediate and speaks English more fluently in comparison with other students. He is a movie buff since he likes watching movies in English. Besides, he is very punctual as he does all the assignments on time. However, his main challenge is writing. He does not favor writing much and makes more mistakes compared to his speaking. However, he is trying to cope with his difficulties in writing as well via writing more and reading sample essays.

✓ **Methodology**

According to Richards, one source of data can be insufficient in conducting a needs analysis. Therefore, he suggests applying a triangular approach to collect more reliable and precise outcomes. [3] In this needs analysis the data were collected via the following tools:

- Observation – while teaching this target group and particularly one of the learners was observed in a bid to find out their challenges, learning styles, strategies and participation in the class. After each class entries regarding that lesson to work on the action plan were written.

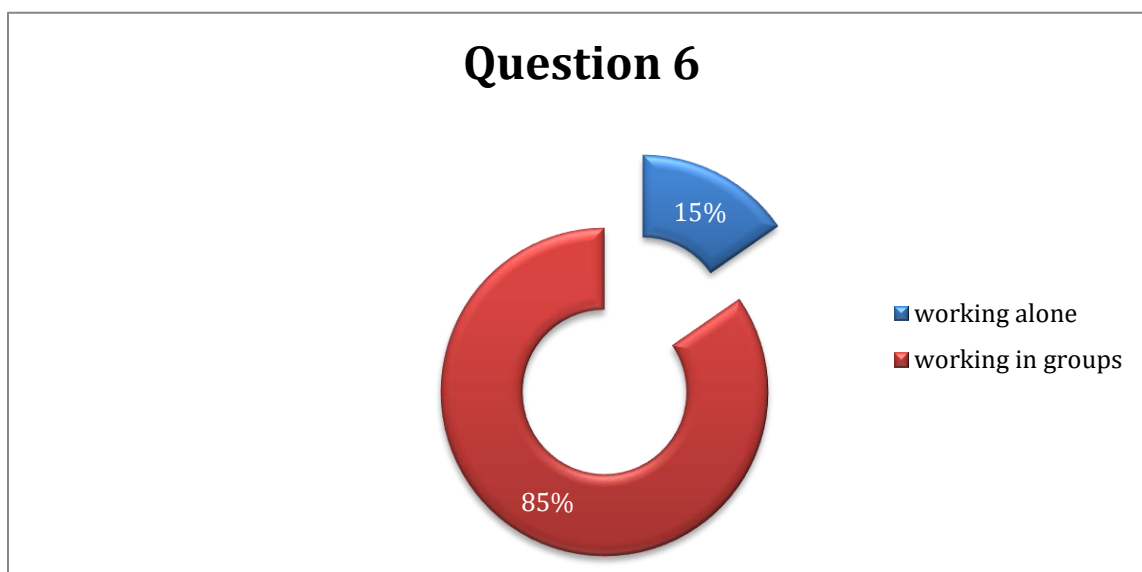
- Questionnaire – a number of written questions were asked from students about their learning styles, difficulties in the class, desires and opinions in learning English. Besides, this survey was held to know their opinions about the course they are studying in and whether their needs are met in those classes. Questionnaires were distributed to the learners at the beginning of the lesson

- Samples of students' writing – in the lesson students were given a task to write an opinion essay. It was carried out in order to assess their overall writing. Importantly, this assignment was given to them as writing is more challenging for them

- Placement test – this test was done to assess their four skills.

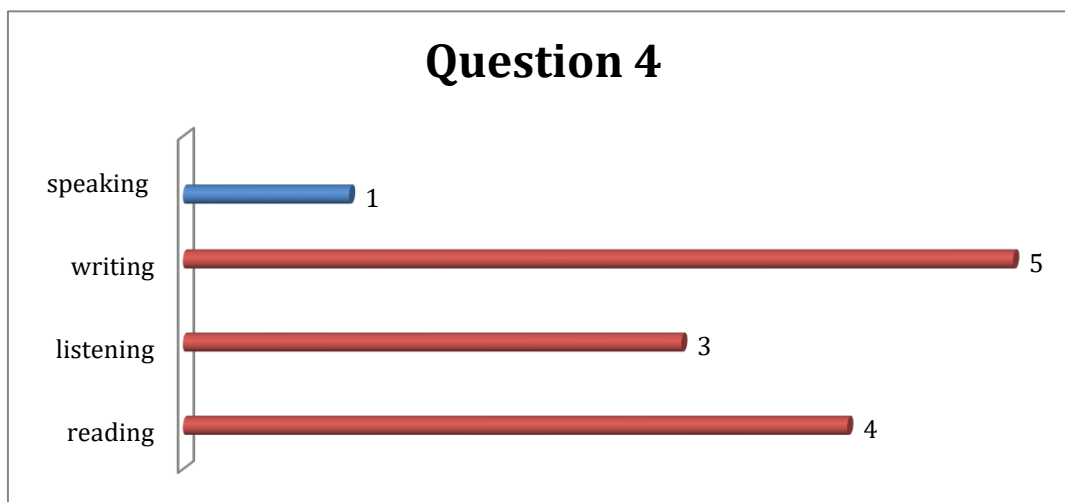
Even though this learner has been observed for only three months, sample information was acquired about him through classes.

✓ **Findings**



Having collected all essential tools, the concentration was on analyzing their outcomes. Firstly, while observing their participation in the class and conducting the questionnaire it was clear that they get more active when they are given more group or pair works (85 %). They prefer to work more collaboratively in debates, discussions and presentations.

Reading and writing tasks seem more difficult for them. When the question about difficulty of acquiring skills was asked most of them found writing and reading are rather complicated. [4] It was obvious in the observation as well because in speaking and listening activities they feel more active and positive, while in writing and reading they spend more time on the tasks and make more mistakes.



In addition, the results of the reading and writing are lower than speaking and listening as most of them found more correct answers in these skills. Nearly all of them rated the difficulty of reading at four, writing at five, listening at three and speaking at one respectively.

Overall, most students are satisfied with the classes and found teaching materials useful and helpful, and they are expecting to enlarge their vocabulary, speak more fluently and read more authentic materials in the further classes.

Regarding Student A, it can be that he is a visual learner since he likes to learn the language by watching English movies and reading books. He likes more speaking activities rather than other skills. During the lessons, several questions were asked about his goals and it is obvious that he is willing to become an International lawyer because it is his major and long-awaited dream. For this purpose, he has to know as many languages as possible and now he is learning English and Japanese languages. In terms of his personality as well as being very punctual, he is more self-assured, sociable and considerate. Although he has some mistakes in his speaking, he feels quite confident to convey his opinions.

It is evident in the observation and questionnaire that he is more active as compared to others and can express his opinions more easily. He always tries to do his best in all tasks. Like other learners, he also prefers more collaborative work and finds writing much harder. Via checking his essays, it was figured out that he has more problems with linking sentences with the help of appropriate transitions. Apparently, most of them have the same problems with linking words. Moreover, he does not consider the rules of academic writing much and makes some grammar errors related to the usage of articles apart from spelling mistakes. His results from reading are very good since he found all of the answers correctly (13 out of 13), but he made more mistakes in listening (21 out of 40).

Considering everything, it is evident that these findings are very crucial in teaching and addressing students' problems in learning English. One of the prominent scholars Richards believes that the basis to plan goals and objectives for a future program may be developed by a needs analysis.[5] Counting on his beliefs and this current needs analysis I would like to work on my students' problems by setting more precise goals and objectives as well as improving my classes. Admittedly, while conducting this needs analysis I also learnt my own mistakes in teaching because before I tried to meet my

learners' needs partially. However, after analyzing the outcomes of the questionnaire and observation it was figured out that not all of their needs were met during the lessons. With the help of this analysis some changes have to be done in teaching by using more interactive activities, authentic materials and motivating them towards the classes.

✓ **Research outcomes**

Indeed, the goal of this program is to develop students' communicative, linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in both general English and legal sphere. More specifically, by the end of the year students will be able to learn how to write academic essays, speak about any social topic as well as gaining ample knowledge to write and assess different legal cases in English with the help of appropriate legal terms.

Secondly, curriculum content is decided according to students' needs and level. Since students are future lawyers they learn both legal and general English. The content is suitable for B2 level and the legal course book is also relatively easier as compared to the third-year textbook. The stakeholders involved in this curriculum are module coordinators, teachers, students, ministry of education officials and academic specialists. Moreover, the curriculum is vertically organized centering on continuity and sequence. As it is required in National Standards the language is taught in integration and topics including grammar points and other competencies are selected according to their simplicity, frequency and centrality. In this way it meets the criteria mentioned by Richards [6].

Furthermore, the module coordinator appropriately to each lesson mostly chooses classroom activities and materials, but teachers also use various other authentic materials, such as articles, games and warm-ups related to that class. Activities mainly entail role-plays, case situations, debates and discussions. [7] Besides, lesson plans are developed sequentially entailing all objectives, stages of the lesson and outcomes. The teacher's role in the classroom is to facilitate the lesson via giving instructions, involving learners, meeting their needs and providing a communicative environment, whereas students are engaged in pair and group work in order to help each other and speak more fluently [8].

Subsequently, outcomes are determined based on the students' needs and goals of the curriculum. Relying on Tyler's opinions the aims and objectives, content, organization and evaluation were taken into consideration (Richards, 2010, p. 39), and main positive and negative aspects were found during the observation as well. Clearly, during this process formative evaluation was done through the feedback of students and some teachers [9]. As for strengths of the curriculum the followings are included:

✓ Communicative approach is widely used in both general English and legal classes. One of the prominent curriculum designers, Omaggio Hadley stated that the syllabus should be built on interactions and this curriculum also intends to achieve this target. [10]

✓ From simplicity to complexity.

✓ The content is concise including all important points and references.

The drawbacks are:

✓ Some textbooks are not properly chosen as they do not correspond to learners' level;

✓ Lack of legal writing;

✓ Testing assessment is not well-explained;

After analyzing both upsides and downsides of the curriculum some changes are needed. It is deemed that lesson plans and teaching materials are good as they focus on more interaction, but it would be better if more legal writing was added since law students need to practice more formal applications and cases. Lastly, some textbooks should be chosen taking their level into account and precise testing assessment has to be made.

✓ **Further suggestions**

In fact, the existing curriculum includes a topical/content-based syllabus. As Coxhead, A. and Nation, P. claimed that content-based syllabus serves merely to practice the language and sometimes choosing an appropriate content is problematic [11]. Creating a combination of content, skills and task-based syllabus is of importance, because at this university students are required to achieve B2 level in both general and legal English; that is why, they need to practice and incorporate all four skills and having them do different tasks facilitates the learning process.

In addition, the existing curriculum does not have an English version as well as suitable textbooks corresponding to learners' needs. Therefore, since the learners have more challenges in writing and reading more tasks have to be added which combine both of these skills. At least three novels should be given to read and discuss in the group prior to writing a reflection on them. A newly created curriculum would involve all the criteria in a sequence as well as the succinct explanation of the tasks. Dudley-Evans, T. and St John, M.J. put forward the view that course rationale should guide the planning of different components of the course, explain the process of teaching and learning, and represent the course goals and values. [12]

Focusing on their views the rationale was also created for this course. Importantly, it entails main outcomes of the course and assessment rubrics which the current curriculum lacks. Richards stated the importance of the alignment of the curriculum with the learners' needs, therefore, we also have to meet this criterion.[12]

REFERENCES

1. Stoller, F. (2001). The curriculum renewal process in English for academic purposes programs. In J. Flowerdew & M. Peacock (Authors), *Research Perspectives on English for Academic Purposes* (Cambridge Applied Linguistics, PP. 208–224). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9781139524766.017.
2. Branden K., Bygate M. and Norris J.M. (2009). *Task-based language teaching*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
3. Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
4. Coxhead A. and Nation P. (2001). The specialised vocabulary of English for academic purposes. In J. Flowerdew & M. Peacock (Eds.), *Research perspectives on English for academic purposes* (pp. 252-267). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
5. Dudley-Evans, T. and St John, M.J. (1998). *Developments in English for specific purposes: a multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
6. Jackman V, and Mcdowel, C. (2015). *Cambridge English IELTS 10*. Cambridge University Press, CUP
7. Khaydarova, U. (2020). Importance of the new decree on support and promotion of legal education signed during the pandemic. *Review of law sciences*, 2, 2266–268.
8. Khaydarova U. (2019). Spiritual, social, philosophical and poetic factors of the detective genre. *Humanities in the 21st century: scientific problems and searching for effective humanist technologies*. 69-72 10. Al-hassanieh, Salim. (2006).

9. Richards J.C. 2001. *Curriculum development in language teaching*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
10. Bereiter C., & Scardamalia M. (1987). *The psychology of written composition*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
11. Bruton A. (2002). From tasking purposes to purposing tasks. *ELT Journal*, 56(3), 280–288. DOI: 10.1093/elt/56.3.280.
12. TESL 5220 Course syllabus. *Curriculum Development in Language teaching*. Webster University.
13. Tyler, R. 1949. *Basic principles of curriculum and instruction*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
14. https://scholar.google.com/citations?view_op=view_citation&hl=ru&user=Hjz3Rc8AAAAJ&citation_for_view=Hjz3Rc8AAAAJ:MXK_kJrjxJIC
15. Umida Khaydarova. (2021). Important legal document on support and promotion of legal education (Uzbekistan context). *Eurasian Journal of Academic Research*, 1(9), 536–541. извлечено от <https://www.in-academy.uz/index.php/ejar/article/view/225>.
16. Khaydarova U.P., & Gayrat S. (2021). Strategies To Make Remote Learning More Engaging. *Psychology and Education Journal*, 58(1), 759–765.