

A Comparative Evaluation of Two ESP Textbooks for Students of Engineering: Merits and Demerits

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Abstract

Concerning the development of English for specific purposes (ESP), huge quantities of textbooks have been published for different fields of specialization. Presently, almost all undergraduates in the Iranian higher educational system must pass an obligatory course in ESP. Consequently, due to the importance of textbooks as one of the basic elements in curriculum and the essential role of textbook evaluation and lack of any systematic research on the effectiveness of current ESP textbooks in Iranian universities, this study attempted to evaluate two ESP textbooks on “Engineering”, one of which has been written by SAMT (The Center for Studying and Compiling University Books in Humanities) and the other one by Cambridge University Press. To this end, a very detailed checklist, which shared most of the features of seven well-known checklists, was used to evaluate different sections of textbooks critically. Nevertheless, the results of the present study indicated that SAMT ESP textbook did not have expected effectiveness and usefulness. Cambridge ESP textbooks had them more satisfactorily. Furthermore, it was found that most undergraduates do not have a clear understanding about what ESP is.

Key words: Textbook evaluation, ESP, needs analysis, checklist

Introduction

The major goal of English for specific purposes in EFL settings is to help non-native English-speaking students of post-secondary colleges in which English is the sole medium (Suzani, Yamini and Yarmohammadi, 2011, p.180). Owing to its variety, it is obligatory first to delineate what English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is. Hutchinson & Waters (1987, p.19) state that ESP is not "a product", but rather "an approach to language learning which is based on learner need". Robinson (1991) builds her more comprehensive definition on two key defining criteria and several significant characteristics. Her main criteria are that ESP is "*normally goal-directed*" and that ESP comes out from a solid *need analysis* (Robinson, 1991:3). Her important characteristics are that ESP courses are taught to *adults in homogeneous classes* and under a *limited time period*. The most comprehensive and specific definition was developed by Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998) in terms of absolute and variable characteristics. Table 1 summarizes and compares absolute and variable characteristics of ESP:

Table1

ESP Absolute Characteristics vs. Variable Characteristics (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998, p.4-5)

As its name suggests, ESP is designed for a particular group of people with particular needs in a particular context. The materials used are related to the learners' specialized field of study. One of the chief issues in language teaching and learning in

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general and ESP in particular is to see what students really expect from an ESP course and then determine their special needs in relation to this new situation.

The Significance of Learners' Needs Analysis

It is well recognized that the very first step for devising syllabuses, courses, teaching materials and classroom lessons is needs analysis (Coffey, 1984). The importance of needs analysis in any language teaching programming is roughly self-evident. Variety of sources and various methods will be considered and utilized in the process of specifying students' needs. Learners play a central role in ESP classrooms. Consequently, the course is generally more learner-centered.

According to Belcher (2006) ESP specialists suppose that education can recuperate problems which are unique to specific learners in specific contexts through carefully tailored-to-fit instructions.

Dudley-Evans and John (1998) state that needs analysis is the most important element of ESP and it is actually the first step prior to a course. Needs analysis is the basis of ESP and causes the course to be purposeful and meaningful (Dudley-Evans and John, 1998). Needs have been classified in different and diverse forms, namely, perceived and felt, objective and subjective, and product-oriented and process-oriented.

Jordan (1997) proposes other terms, such as demands, necessities, likes, lacks and deficiencies for the concept of "needs". Holmes and Celani (2006) believe that 'needs' must be considered with regard to the specific and unique characteristics of the learning context in which the study takes place. The analysis of needs and diversity of students' needs in diverse contexts can be effective if the language needs are exactly and correctly defined and seek maximum specificity within the specific target use (Deutch, 2003).

The results of the studies conducted by several researchers (Eslami-Rasekh, 2010; Ferris and Tagg, 1996; Mazdayasna and Tahririan, 2008 and others) have emphasized the value of examining the specific needs of students in different academic fields so as to help them to be prepared for forward tasks and situations.

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The Significance of Course Books and Teaching Materials

Helping ESP students to acquire necessary knowledge to play functionally in professional settings and situations is the very chief goal for designing the materials (Suzani, Yamini and Yarmohammadi, 2011, p.180). In all teaching and learning contexts, textbooks play a significant function in teaching and imparting learning and helping teachers to accomplish their responsibility properly. Mirza Suzani (2007, p.1) asserts that teaching materials and course books play vital and indispensable role in educational enterprises. Schmidt, McKnight, and Raizen (1997) recognize textbooks as playing a central role in making a bridge between policy and plans to classroom procedures and activities.

O'Neill (1982) proposes the following four reasons for the utilization of course books. First of all, course book materials are in harmony with students' needs, although they are not particularly designed for them. Secondly, they help students to sketch a vivid line for their future learning and moreover evaluate the earlier lessons and materials. Thirdly, course books are cost-effective. That is, they present students worthy materials with a mean price. Lastly, teachers can modify or change materials to meet the learners' needs.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) identify six objectives for textbooks: (a) providing an incentive for learning, (b) helping to put in order teaching and learning practices, (c) representing a sight of the very essence of language and learning, (d) revealing the nature of the learning task, (e) expanding the foundation of teacher training, and (f) offering models of accurate and appropriate language use.

Finally, Hutchinson and Torres (1994) point out that textbooks may play a pivotal role in innovation, suggesting that textbooks can support teachers through potentially disturbing and threatening change processes, demonstrate new and/or untried methodologies, introduce change gradually, and create scaffolding upon which teachers can build a more creative methodology of their own.

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Although many of the researchers and ESP specialists point at the widespread advantages of using ESP/ESL/EFL textbooks, several other practitioners and researchers do not agree to this view and they retain some well-founded reservations on the subject. Allwright (1981) has suggested that because course books are too rigid and inflexible, their author's psychological, linguistic and pedagogic inclinations and biases will be reflected and practiced into the actual real classroom. Thus, in this manner, textbooks fundamentally decide and manage the methods, procedures and processes of language teaching and learning.

Furthermore, some researchers have asserted that the textbooks which are available are in various ways deficient (Ewer and Boys, 1981; Allwright, 1981; Sheldon, 1987; Swales, 1980). Ewer and Boys presented a very strong attack on the EST textbooks and argued that the following issues are some of the critical problems with textbooks: "a) validity of the linguistics contents, b) the accuracy of the explanations and examples given, c) the number and coverage of the exercises provided" (1981, pp. 87-8).

Another strong attack on textbooks was given by Sheldon (1987). He pointed to the teachers' disappointment with textbooks, of "a variety of common design flaws at one level, and a skepticism about the theoretical premises of many course books on another" (1987, p.238). Newly inherent cultural and social biases of textbooks have cast doubt on their effectiveness and appropriateness. Lots of researchers have demonstrated that many EFL/ESL textbooks, in general, and ESP textbooks, in particular, still have widespread examples of prejudices, sexism, gender bias and stereotyping (Porreca, 1984; Florent and Walter, 1989; Clarke and Clarke, 1990; Carrell and Korwitz, 1994; Renner, 1997). Swales (1980, p.14) also pointed out that "the textbooks are increasingly less self-sufficient in practice material and in coverage of skill areas".

A final reason for dissatisfaction and uncertainty about many ESP textbooks is that too many textbooks are often advertised with luxurious artificial claims by their publishers and authors, and yet these books contain serious design flaws, theoretical defects, and practical shortcomings (Sheldon, 1988).

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Although the above-mentioned flaws seem less or more true, there are far more convincing arguments in support of using textbooks than against them. Riazi (2003, p. 52) argues that "textbooks play a very crucial role in the realm of language teaching and learning and are considered the next important factor in the second/foreign language classroom after the teacher."

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) assert that books play a key role in all learning situations and assert that materials are useful tools which can be utilized as: a) sources of language, b) references, c) motivation and stimulation, and d) learning supports.

In the same way, Hutchinson and Torres (1994) propose that "the textbook is an almost universal element of [English language] teaching. Millions of copies are sold every year, and numerous aid projects have been set up to produce them in [various] countries.... No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook" (p. 315). Sheldon (1988) have the same and advocate that textbooks not only "represent the visible heart of any ELT program" (p. 237) but also have numerous visible and invisible benefits for both the teacher and the student. Haycroft (1998), for instance, asserts that textbooks are psychologically vital for students since their accomplishment and progress can be calculated concretely and accurately when we use them.

Justification for Textbook Evaluation

There are numerous reasons for textbook evaluation. As Cunningsworth (1995) puts it, we must ensure "that careful selection is made, and that the materials selected closely reflect [the needs of the learners and] the aims, methods, and values of the teaching program" (p.7).

Sheldon (1988) offers a number of new reasons for textbook evaluation. He argues that selection of an ESL/ESP textbook regularly presumes critical didactic and administrative decisions in which there is considerable professional, financial, or even political investment. A careful evaluation, then, allow decision-making and teaching personnel of a specific organization or a society to differentiate between all of the accessible textbooks on the market.

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Another reason for textbook evaluation is the fact that it helps teachers to cross over imprecise and subjective assessments and assists them to attain practical, systematic, helpful, accurate and contextualizes insights into the essence of textbook materials (Cunningsworth , 1995; Ellis, 1997).

Textbook evaluation, therefore, certainly is a predominantly useful way of performing as specialized empowerment and improvement as well as action research. Correspondingly, teacher education programs can utilized from textbook evaluation as a helpful element in order to teach and learn language well.

Iranian Context

Atai and Tahririan (2003) assert that “In Iran, as in numerous other countries where English is a foreign language, ESP has increasingly expanded so that currently EAP forms a considerable part of curricula for all academic fields at universities”. The overall history of EAP development in Iran can be classified as the following three distinct phases: Firstly, EAP programs were jointly designed and put into practice by Iranian universities and Western universities (Bates & Dudley-Evans, 1975; Bates, 1978). The second phase of EAP development is marked by the government’s efforts in the 1980s to design and put into action EAP teaching nation-widely at all Iranian universities which were predominantly done by the Center for Studying and Compiling University Books in Humanities (SAMT) (Atai, 2002). The last wave of EAP instruction has been comprehensive and profound attempts in the direction of insightful specificity of content and text authenticity (Atai, 2002).

As Eslami-Rasekh (2010) states the rationale behind these programs was to increase the students’ interest and incentive through presenting EAP courses that were more correlated to the learners’ needs in special fields of study.

Studies on General Textbook Evaluation in Iran

Kheibari (1999) applied Tucker’s (1975) model to the five volumes of teaching Persian to speakers of other languages (TPSOL) text books and claimed that the text books paid the least heed to various types of tasks or language skills such as speaking, listening

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and role-playing and thus pursue the grammar translation method. Shahedi (2001) investigated one of the top texts in TPSOL and confirmed that the four language skills have not received enough attention.

Ansary and Babaei (2002) examined a corpus of 10 EFL/ESL textbook evaluation checklists and 10 EFL/ESL textbook reviews and claimed that the main types of universal characteristics of EFL/ESL textbooks include approach, content delivering, bodily make-up, and concerns but not all of these characteristics are overriding and dominant in all textbooks.

Yarmohammadi (2002) scrutinized the senior high school textbooks and came to the conclusion that the following several inadequacies are found in these text books: 1. They are not authentic. 2. Oral skills are ignored, and 3. English and Persian names are used interchangeably.

Statement of the Problem

However, due to the fact that EAP courses in Iran were not based or designed on any logical systematic needs analysis, the course designer's objectives did not turn into expected outcomes (Eslami-Rasekh, 2010). Despite uniformity of EAP instructions, Eslami-Rasekh (2010) cites several different researchers and claims that EAP practice is largely off the cuff, lacking in strong systematic needs analysis, course design, appropriate assessment, teacher training and logical research on the usefulness of these programs. She then asserts the importance of a careful examination of the attitudes and perceptions of learners and instructors in determining the success of EAP programs.

Considering the above-mentioned issues and browsing through a good quantity of review literature about textbooks evaluation, it seems that there was not a good, adequate and appropriate ESP text evaluation in Iranian context. EAP textbooks in Iranian higher education, in general, and ESP textbooks, in general, have several serious flaws and defects but no comprehensive research has been done to measure the effectiveness of these programs (Atai & Tahririan, 2003). As such, the present study was conducted to evaluate and compare two ESP textbooks on "Engineering" one of which has been written by

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SAMT (The Center for Studying and Compiling University Books in Humanities) and the other one by Cambridge University Press. Bearing in mind the points presented above and the significance of textbook evaluation, present researchers intended to examine the strengths and weaknesses of these books and hoped to suggest some matter-of-fact suggestions to remedy the weaknesses.

Materials

Bidsahri, P., Fallahi, M., Haghani, M., & Maftoon, P. (2001). *English for the Students of Engineering*. Tehran: The Center for Studying and Compiling University Books in Humanities (SAMT).

Ibbotson, M. (2008). *Cambridge English for Engineering*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Instrument

The researchers surfed roughly eight checklists presented by different famous authors and selected ten features which were common to most of these checklists to do the evaluation:

- Rivers, W. (1981). *Teaching Foreign-Language Skills* (pp. 475-483). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Williams, D. (1983). Developing criteria for textbook evaluation. *ELT Journal*, 37(2), 251-255.
- Sheldon, L. (1988). Evaluating ELT Textbooks and Materials. *ELT Journal*, 42 (4), 237-246.
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- Garinger, D. (2002). Textbook selection for the ESL classroom. Retrieved 30th October 2006, from http://www.cal.org/resources/digest/digest_pdfs/0210garinger.pdf
- Miekley, J. (2005). ESL textbook evaluation checklist. *The Reading Matrix*, 5(2).
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Ten prominent features which were most common to all the proposed checklists were used in evaluation. The two ESP textbooks were scrutinized against each one of the criteria.

Results

1. Context and Target Situation

- Can the textbook's contents be usefully employed in the target situation?

Regarding Cambridge textbook's content, it is obvious that this textbook, to a great extent, is similar to real life situation of engineers and can be used in their future business life. SAMT textbook also presents an overall picture of target situation but, unfortunately, it places too emphasis on vocabulary and reading comprehension and not on future real life situation.

- Are the purposes of the material authentic?

Regarding authenticity, materials of both of SAMT and Cambridge textbook represent a scale of authenticity but the degree and range of authenticity varies between them. As it is evident, Cambridge textbook presents a more authentic text, tasks, classroom, reader and teacher authenticity than SAMT textbook.

2. The Student

- Can the student clearly appreciate the utility of the textbook's objectives in real-life target situations? Both of these books' materials can be utilized and practiced in

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real life situations.

- Is the textbook adequate for the students' level of communicative competence?

Regarding Cambridge textbook, it is suitable for students' level of communicative competence and it enhances and promotes this competence. However, SAMT textbook places a great degree of stress on students' comprehension, vocabulary memorization and a lot of reading comprehension and thus is a bit complex and difficult for students' level of competence.

- Does the textbook match the needs of the students' specialization?

Both SAMT and Cambridge textbooks try to provide essential specific needs of students and I think that both of them have been successful in this matter.

- Does it generate authentic interaction, communication, and responses from the learner?

Regarding SAMT textbook, unfortunately, there is no common interaction and communication between students and text and even teacher. The main characteristic of this book is to read intensively and answering questions roughly and There is no section in the lessons specifically designed to develop and enhance speaking and listening skills in the learners. However, Cambridge textbook pay a lot to students' generation, creativity, communication and initiations and because of this is very successful in this issue.

- Will the book engage the reader, i.e. does it appropriately reflect his/her concerns and interests?

Regarding student's interest and concerns, they usually want to be fluent and accurate in target language and this cannot be achieved by a rigid and inflexible curriculum and textbook. As it is evident, Cambridge textbook pays more attentions to students' needs and thus is more attractive and enjoyable text than SAMT textbook which places a less emphasis on students' real needs and concerns.

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3. The Teacher

- Can the textbook be adapted by the teacher to meet the needs of his/her specific context/learners?

Regarding SAMT textbook, teachers are not usually permitted to adapt and change the materials very much and it is a weakness. Conversely, Cambridge textbook' teachers are permitted to adapt and make dramatic changes in order to meet their context and learners' needs.

4. Linguistic Aspects

- Does it include up-to-date and relevant grammatical structures and lexicon?

Cambridge textbook does present up-to-date and relevant lexicon and grammatical structures which can be applied and utilized by students readily. Equally but in lesser degree, SAMT textbook delivers and practices the grammatical and lexical materials which enhance students' level of linguistic awareness and knowledge.

- Do they include stretches of real language produced by real speakers or writers for a real audience and conveying a real message of some sort?

Cambridge Textbook Does Indeed Present And Illustrate A Lot Of Authentic Real Conversations And Discussions By Real Speakers And Writers And By This Act Encourage Students To Be Involved In Real Life Situations. On The Contrary, SAMT Textbook Never Ever Presents Or Illustrate Any Real Life Stretch Of Real Speakers Or Writers.

- Are there Good vocabulary explanation and practice?

On the basis of lexical analysis of each text in both textbooks, I can say that the number of new vocabularies has been controlled in the Cambridge textbook. In contrast, the SAMT textbook ignored the appropriateness of input and all the texts have the same length and complexity.

- Is there Periodic review and test sections?

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There isn't any systematic review and test section in the two compared textbooks.

5. Socio-Cultural Aspects

-- Does the book help to foster an awareness of international as well as domestic issues?

SAMT textbook only provides a surface structure of socio-cultural dimension of language and cannot enhance students' awareness of international issues very deeply. However, Cambridge textbook introduces a lot of international as well as national issues and promotes students' awareness.

6. Notional-Functional Aspects

- Is the presentation of functions complemented with linguistic and communicative exercises?

Regarding Cambridge textbook, its linguistics and communicative exercises do complement and match with the intended functions and, through this way, students can feel the materials' relevance to each other. On the other hand, SAMT textbook presents scattered and irrelevant linguistic exercises and materials which cannot be matched in anyway.

7. Topics

- Are the topics included in the textbook valid from an occupational and/or academic point of view?

Both the SAMT and Cambridge textbooks try to prepare the students for an occupational situation in which they can easily and appropriately play roles.

- Are Interesting topics and tasks used in the textbook?

Regarding Cambridge textbook, the majority of the topics seem to be attractive to the learners because they are compatible and comparable to their interesting academic field. In addition, as the texts and topics are scientific texts and are in line with ESP learners' needs, they meet the learners' interests and they may be

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eager to pursue the topics. However, SAMT textbook has not been very successful in this regard.

8. Organization

- Are the lessons built around content-based themes in the specific purpose area?

Both of SAMT and Cambridge textbooks have a content-based themes but in variant degrees. Cambridge textbook is more dramatically content-based and specific than SAMT.

- Do the headings and sub-headings make it easy to navigate around the book?

Cambridge textbook neatly presents and draws its units' structures and headings and thus is a well-structured textbook than SAMT.

- Are objectives explicitly laid out in an introduction, and implemented in the material?

The SAMT textbook begins with an introduction which tries to clarify goals. The Cambridge textbook has no introduction section which is the sign of its deficiency.

- Is the Content clearly organized and graded?

The complexity of the reading texts of SAMT textbook is more than the complexity of the texts used in Cambridge textbook.

9. Activities

- Do the activities develop problem-solving skills both at an individual and group level?

As it is obvious, Cambridge textbook does present and promote pair groups problem-solving situations and thus increases students' collaborative spirits. In opposition, SAMT does not promote pair groups or problem-solving situations and only seek accurate and direct answers.

- Do the activities and assignments reflect the different learning styles of students?

SAMT textbook introduces a set of activities to be completed by students, without any

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attention to their various and different levels, styles and individual strategies but Cambridge textbook takes into account students' diverse individual style and strategies.

10. Physical Properties

- Is the textbook Clear, attractive, and easy to read?

The cover of SAMT textbook is different from that of Cambridge textbook. Cambridge textbook has qualified papers, a lot of high-quality pictures and illustrations, while SAMT textbook does not have any picture on the cover or inside of it. But both are acceptable with regard to orthography.

- Are appropriate visual materials available in textbook?

Unfortunately SAMT textbook does not contain any visual materials to reinforce the theme of the text as well as vocabularies and grammatical points but Cambridge textbook does have many vivid and high-quality pictures.

- Are the instructions clear?

Most of the instructions in both textbooks being compared are clear and easy to understand for ESP learners.

Discussion

Retention of materials in educational settings relies on three vital factors: the motivation and interest of learners, the meaningfulness of textbooks and the excellence of teaching and materials (Richard, C., Platt, J. and Platt, H., 1992). Taking into account these three key elements and applying them at the needs analysis and course design phases can contribute a lot to the effectiveness and reliability of ESP textbooks.

Effective and efficient use of a textbook depends on teachers' decisions about appropriateness of text books' contents and the only manner to do this is through extensive and deep text books evaluation.

According to the findings of the this study, the ESP textbook written by SAMT used for engineering undergraduate students seems to be dull, very complex and of little benefit for the students. Conversely, Cambridge ESP textbook, due to its adherence to

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communicative approaches and its interactive nature, seems to possess better status and attracting the attention of students more compellingly. The present research tried to shed more light on several of the weaknesses and strengths of these two textbooks used in EAP/ESP courses. It is expected that these results can be applied by thoughtful ESP teachers in the actual classroom practices and can contribute to the effectiveness of ESP textbooks at the level of the students' interests, needs, and expectations.

Pedagogical Implications

As was mentioned earlier and as it is evident from the above-mentioned contrast and differences between SAMT and Cambridge textbook, there are numerous factors that can make one ESP textbooks different from another and taking into account of these factors may help ESP textbooks' writers to reevaluate and reengineer their current perspective toward ESP textbooks' contents.

Consequently, there are a number of potential reproachful factors that might act as serious obstacles to the usefulness and effectiveness of ESP courses. Some of these debilitating factors are as the following:

1. Almost all students are needed to learn by heart a series of phrases, words or terminology without utilizing them in real authentic contexts.
2. Most students do not know what philosophy behind ESP course and language learning strategies is.
3. Reading and Writing skills receive the most or even hyper emphasis and instead speaking and listening skills are downgraded.
4. Instead of reflective education and discovery, objectionable state of cliché-learning and stereotyped education is prescribed and practiced in ESP classrooms.
5. A small number of appropriate, accurate authentic and up-to-date materials are used in the classrooms.

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6. There is no specific lesson plan, scheme, stratagem, or objective for teaching the materials.
7. Time-tabling for offering ESP courses is badly chosen and out of place.
8. Content is extremely complex and above the students' current level.
9. The lessons do not have any clear aim.

To do some remedial actions, the following suggestions will be helpful:

1. Language learning materials should be geared to the students' educational and/or occupational needs, hence, making a consensus between theory and practice.
2. The purpose and rationale behind the ESP classes must be brought to students' consciousness.
3. It is highly favorable that comprehensive lesson plan based on specific needs and locality of students should be prepared by teachers.
4. Students must play a more active role in the classroom interactions.
5. More appropriate class hours should be allocated to teach the specific language; i.e. the beginning hours of the day.
6. It is suggested that some time be allocated to the currently-published periodicals and magazines.
7. Teachers can and should support the students in adopting right kinds of language learning strategies.
8. Learners' motivation plays a chief role in the successful and effective learning. Therefore, teachers and other educational staffs must attempt to increase and promote this very critical element of learning.
9. Downsizing the numbers of students can be a very helpful and economic movement.

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10. Integrative language skills learning should be advocated and emphasized from the very beginning of a course.

11. It is highly constructive to plan and develop ESP course and ESP textbooks around a Content-based instruction (CBI), because in this way the students learn the content better together and with support of language skills simultaneously.

12. Affective and emotional conditions of learners must be considered as one of the most important factors in successful language learning.

13. Due to its very flexible and efficient framework for both finding common ground within ESP and for catering to specific needs in a language learning environment, it is extremely suggested that more Task-based learning be planned and conducted.

14. Could have an important role in ESP classrooms, as it offers students the possibility of planning their writing and paying attention to language use.

15. In addition to the above implications, the classroom can be made more instructive by using Internet, Computer-mediated communication (CMC) ,pictures, photographs, slides, diagrams, and realia, and all kind of instructional tools to help students learn specific language more enjoyable and easily.

Finally, and in general, it seems that the disintegration between theory and practice is the biggest implicational problem of teaching ESP. The students must recognize and employ different learning strategies to bridge between theory and practice. Luckily, currently multitude of language learners' needs in the informal and formal language teaching have been recognized and accepted in our country and as a result a hopeful highway is beginning to emerge which finally would direct our students toward bright pinnacles.

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Appendix1

Sample checklist for textbook evaluation

General Elements	Specific Questions	Rating				
CONTEXT AND TARGET SITUATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can the textbook's contents be usefully employed in the target situation? - Are the purposes of the material authentic? 					
THE STUDENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can the student clearly appreciate the utility of the textbook's objectives in real-life target situations? - Is the textbook adequate for the students' level of communicative competence? - Does the textbook match the needs of the students' specialization? - Does it generate authentic interaction, communication, and responses from the learner? - Will the book engage the reader, i.e. does it appropriately reflect his/her concerns and interests? 					

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THE TEACHER	- Can the textbook be adapted by the teacher to meet the needs of his/her specific context/learners?					
Linguistic aspects	- Does it include up-to-date and relevant grammatical structures and lexicon? - Do they include stretches of real language produced by real speakers or writers for a real audience and conveying a real message of some sort? - Are there Good vocabulary explanation and practice?					
Socio-cultural aspect	- Is there Periodic review and test? - Does the book help to foster an awareness of international as well as domestic issues?					
Notional-functional aspects	- Is the presentation of functions complemented with linguistic and communicative exercises?					
Topics	- Are the topics included in the textbook valid from an occupational and/or academic point of view? - Are Interesting topics and tasks used in the textbook?					
Organization	- Are the lessons built around content-based themes in the specific purpose area? - Do the headings and sub-headings make it easy to navigate around the book? - Are objectives explicitly laid out in an introduction, and implemented in the material? - Is the Content clearly organized and graded?					

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do the activities develop problem-solving skills both at an individual and group level? - Do the activities and assignments reflect the different learning styles of students? 					
Physical properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the textbook Clear, attractive, and easy to read? - Are appropriate visual materials available in textbook? - Are the instructions clear? 					

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