

Meeting business students' English language needs in the Algerian tertiary education

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Abstract

Graduate Algerian economic sciences students, who will be future university teachers or workplace managers, are urged to use the English language. However, most of them reveal that they are unable to use the English language appropriately. The main aim in this paper is to depict students' difficulties and help them improve their academic language performance. This paper describes the teaching and learning situations of English for Business and Economics (EBE) in the Department of Economic Sciences at the University of Tlemcen. The investigator used a questionnaire and two structured interviews. The sampling included EBE learners and English for specific purposes teachers as well as workplace managers (former EBE students). The main findings in this investigation confirmed that students had poor target language proficiency. Results revealed that the content of the actual EBE course was inappropriate to learners' needs. The investigator wants to integrate new technologies as the government supplies digital platforms to the Algerian universities.

Keywords: Algerian, tertiary education, English, Economics, business students.

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1. Introduction

The Algerian university witnessed many reforms during the 21st century. It has launched the new degree system, licence, master, doctorate, to join the education standards over the world. The Algerian market too is opened to the world economy. Thus, the English language has become the medium of communication. The need for a global language is particularly appreciated by the international academic and business communities (Crystal, 1997). Therefore, many new streams have arisen in the economic sciences department to cope with the outstanding growth of new technologies. Although English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses were common ground in the Algerian universities, no special attention was paid to update the curricula in different specialities. Not even careful studies were conducted to highlight students' needs during and after graduation. Indeed, most English for business and economic students are unable to use English accurately. They are also unable to write accurately for academic or professional tasks. Therefore, the present study investigates the following questions:

1. What are the target needs of Algerian economic science students?
2. What are the learning needs of the economic science students?
3. What course would fit the needs of these students?

These research questions help to illustrate students' needs, lacks and wants. Therefore, they permit to find out methodological and psychological needs to shape the English for Business and Economics (EBE) course. Needs identification and analysis (NIA) is first undertaken as it is considered a prerequisite in any course design (Richerich & Chancerel, 1987). For this reason, we can make a basic distinction between target needs, i.e., what the learner needs to do in the target situation, and learning needs, i.e., what the learner needs to do to learn (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Indeed, in Algeria, the English language has the status of a foreign language and students are taught the general language. Therefore, at the university level, they are urged to use the language for academic purposes. However, students demonstrate poor English language mastery and need tailored courses to develop good communicative competence through the four skills.

1.1. Literature review

The ESP enterprise has been widely defined as the language for utilitarian purpose.

Yet, ESP is tracked down from English language teaching (ELT) in general and (EFL) in particular and it is broadly divided into two main disciplines: English for academic purposes (EAP) and English for occupational purposes (EOP); these two main divisions help to distinguish ESP situations: EOP and EAP (Kennedy & Bolitho, 1984). This paper tries to shed light on business English teaching which falls into different acronyms. Figure 1 shows two different classifications of business English with different acronyms.

In both classifications, one may note that the teaching of business English might come under academic as well as occupational purposes. In the Algerian context, different ESP practitioners teach different content in various economic sciences departments. Dudley-Evans and John (1998) mentioned that business English is difficult to define and limit in linguistic terms, yet for Hutchinson and Waters (1987), the acronym EBE is employed to refer to English for business and economics and falls to the EAP discipline. However, in Evans and Johns' (1998) study, different acronyms (E. for management, finance and economics, and English for business purposes) are used for quite the same scope and come under the two different disciplines of ESP.

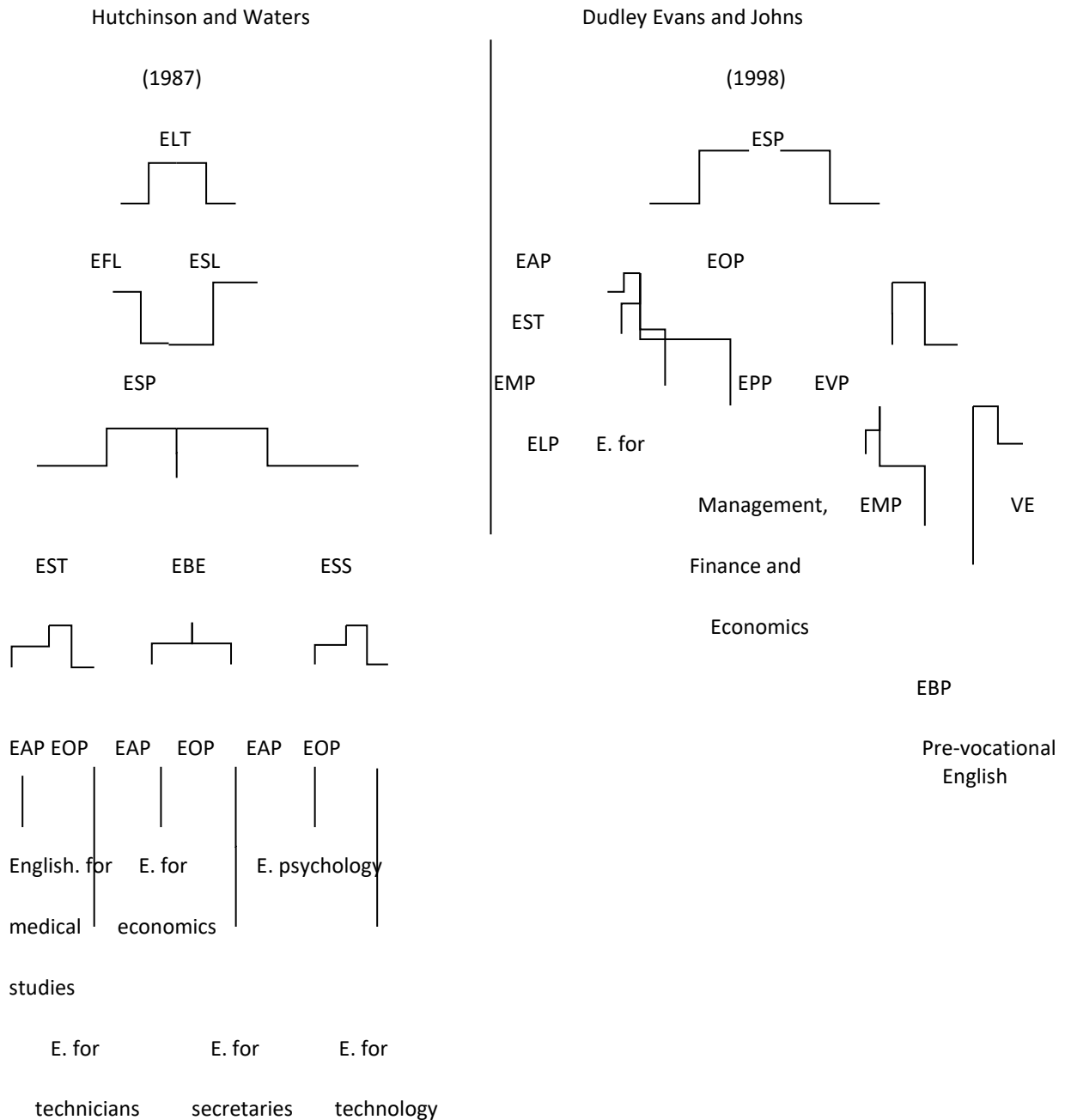


Figure 1. ESP classifications according to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) and Dudley Evans and Johns (1998)

Finally, for EAP and EOP, it can be noted above that there is no clear distinction since they fall under the same discipline. Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 16) sustained that: ‘people can work and study simultaneously; it is also likely that in many cases the language learnt for immediate use in a study environment will be used later when the student takes up, or returns to, a job’. Hence, the EAP and EOP sub-disciplines of ESP prepare students for both job enrolment and a good command of the language in context. In the Algerian context, EAP would serve to enrol at a university position to keep up with the latest research papers and participate in international conferences or congresses as well as to work in national or multinational companies like the SONATRACH Algerian gas company. Yet,

Algerian students like many students the world over are unfamiliar with the process of writing academic texts and discover that the writing training they received at school is not necessarily transferrable to the tertiary context (Leki, 1995; Spack, 2001). Moreover, prior investigation results confirm that most academic problems in ESP context are related to sentence and text structure, expressing ideas, using vocabulary, spelling, paraphrasing, achieving coherence and cohesion (Hidri, 2018, p. 161, cited in Ladjel, 2020).

English for occupational purposes' (EOP) instruction in Algeria would assure positions like engineering, computer scientist or information technology telecommunication technician. National or international bank officers also are vocations EBE students could apply for. Hence, the literature on English language performance in ESP in general and writing difficulties in particular in works like Maouche (2016), Boukhatem (2018), Bouabdallah and Bouyakoub (2017) and Mebitil (2011) have raised causes with students like the lack of motivation, weak attendance and heterogeneous groups (groups with mixed abilities). The teaching-learning process is also hindered from a teachers' factor in the absence of pre-service training, a lack of specialised knowledge and a lack of cooperation between ESP and content teachers. From an institutional perspective, the problems raised spotted the short time load allocated to ESP sessions and the absence of official syllabi.

Hamzaoui and Graia (2014, p. 91) observe another phenomenon, where they have sustained that, 'although subject students reported being motivated to learn English, their classroom behaviour showed lack of interest and low motivation'. They concluded that their low motivation was largely due to the English course they received which did not seem to be appropriate to equip them with the strategies and skills needed in their studies and 'future profession'. Scarce work was specific to EBE students' academic writing, although many findings may be transferred to the EBE context.

As mentioned above, needs analysis (NA) constitutes the starting point for course development. Yet, we can go back to Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) definition of ESP as an approach to language teaching which aims to meet the needs of particular learners. Then, a careful NA would serve to define what should be taught and what the actual students' needs are. Brown (1995, p. 36) too, observes that NA is:

'The systematic collection and analysis of all subjective and objective information necessary to define and validate defensible curriculum purposes that satisfy the language learning requirements of students within the context of particular institutions that influence the learning and teaching situation'. (Brown, 1995, p. 36)

This research paper is arranged according to Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) model where NA encompasses target needs (what the learner needs to do in the target situation) and learning needs (what the learner needs to do to learn). Target needs refer to necessities, lacks and wants and learning needs are referred to as the route between the starting point (lacks) and the destination (necessities) by Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 55). The main terms are summarised as follows:

Necessities: the type of need determined by the demands of the target situation, that is, what the learner has to know in order to function effectively in the target situation.

Lacks: refer to gap between existing proficiency and what the learner needs to know in order to function effectively in the target situation.

Wants: is linked to the learner's internal driving motor and motivation within the target language.

Hutchinson and Waters' (1987, p. 55)

Learning needs are described as psychological and cognitive, sociological and methodological needs. They concern things such as how learners learn the language, why they learn it and what resources are available to help them learn (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 62-63). They encompass students' motivation, affective filters and other emotional needs. Sociological needs and methodological needs like the time load are devoted to ESP classes.

The outcome data from target and learning needs will serve the course design that would meet students' needs and expectations as sustained by Johns' (1991) study where the very first step of a course design is what we call NA which provides validity and relevancy for the other subsequent course design activities.

2. The Study

The present study has been conducted in the Department of Science Economics at Abou Bekr Belkaid University of Tlemcen. The purpose of the investigation is to identify and analyse the needs of economic science students and future workplace managers or head officers. Then, to explore tasks students need to complete by the end of the course to build up an English business blended course. It is then a question of matching the needs of the learner as he sees them with his needs as perceived by his teacher (Kennedy & Bolitho, 1984). Students need to master the language during and after training. Thus, the study will focus on students' target needs to permit them to comprehend what to know and what to do in the target language.

3. Research design

3.1. Methods

The study entailed a qualitative and a quantitative research method to report various types of research questions. The research design used in this paper was a case study for which Dornyei (2007, p. 155) observed that, 'a case study offers rich and in-depth insights that no other method can yield'. Therefore, it was carried out with students, teachers and workplace managers to gather data about the present ELT situation in the Algerian economic sciences department and to examine the tasks students need to fulfil to achieve academic communicative requirements specific to their discipline. Moreover, it was also carried to explore the sample's opinion about the implementation of a blended business English course. Hartley (2004) maintains that:

A case study consists of a detailed investigation, often with data collected over a period of time, of phenomena, within their context. Though, many shortcomings have been associated to this method, it enables the researcher 'to gain a holistic view of a certain phenomenon or series of events' (Gummesson, 1991, p. 83).

As a first step, the researcher pinpointed the target needs and learning needs of both EBE students and ESP teachers within a restricted sample at the economic sciences department of the University of Tlemcen. Target needs also have been raised with some workplace bank managers as many students from this stream apply for bank positions.

A descriptive and explanatory case study was used for the NIA as this study described the EBE teaching situation, the target and the learning needs. It was also exploratory, for it explored the expectations and limitations of the new teaching method: blended learning. In this ESP context, the NIA is used in conducting the case study; procedures used to collect information about learner needs are known as an NA (Richards, 2001).

3.2. Participants

Three informant categories have been selected in this research to cross check results: students, teachers and bank officers.

3.2.1. Bank officers

Students from the economic sciences department can hold a myriad of workplace responsibilities. However, many of these students holding licence or master degree postulate for bank positions. Thus, in this research, the investigator has interviewed four bank workplace officers chosen randomly with

different rank positions. The target sample has the same characteristics as the population studied. The four informants in the workplace were as follows:

- One bank director (20 years in service);
- One bank executive (20 years in service);
- Two customer charges (5 years and 4 years, respectively).

3.2.2. Students

The investigation dealt with third-year licence students in the Department of Economic Sciences, University of Tlemcen. Some of them applied for job positions others carried on a master's degree for 2 years, where they were urged to end up with a master's dissertation. Then, they will have to take a competitive exam to carry on a postgraduate doctorate. Before defending their project, they should publish some of their work in a scientific international journal in the English language.

The informants, who are likely to graduate to the master level, might be more aware of the necessity to learn the English language. For, if learners, sponsors and teachers know why the learners need English, that awareness will influence on what will be accepted as reasonable content in the language course (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

Fifty-four students from the human resources management were randomly selected. The informants involved in this research are baccalaureate holders; they have been studying general English in middle school for 3 years, then in high school for 3 other years. At the university level, they are having English language courses at all stages of university graduation, 3 years in the licence degree which refers to 9 years language exposure. Moreover, students who graduate with a master's degree also have access to ESP courses during the first theoretical year as the second one is practical where they are urged to write their dissertation for the master's degree.

3.2.3. Teachers

A structured interview has been conducted with nine language teachers at the economic sciences department. The informants are six full-time and three part-time teachers. Their teaching experience at the university level varies from 5 to 16 years as language teachers. The ESP teachers have been teaching English in different faculty departments, namely commercial sciences, accountancy and taxation and human resource management.

3.3. Research tools

To identify students' learning needs, a structured interview with teachers and an unstructured one with bank officers were conducted, in addition to a questionnaire addressed to students for:

A combination of data sources is likely to be necessary for most evaluations because often no one source can describe adequately such a diversity of features as is found in educational settings and because of the need for corroboration of findings by using data from these different sources collected by different methods and by different people (i.e., 'triangulation'). It is now widely held that multiple methods should be used in all investigations (Weir & Roberts, 1994).

Indeed, since any one source of information is likely to be incomplete or partial, a triangular approach (i.e., collecting information from two or more sources) is advisable (Richards, 2001).

3.3.1. Semi-structured interview

A semi-structured interview was conducted with workplace managers. The purpose was to identify their English language proficiency level, to check the usefulness of the language in the work field, to depict existing gaps in the use of the language and, then, their expectations about the tasks students would need to be fulfilled on the spot.

3.3.2. Structured interview

The structured interview was held with seven ESP teachers at the science economic department to define the actual situation in terms of students' skill proficiency and determine students' needs and expectations about the use of ICTs in the teaching process.

3.3.3. Questionnaire

A questionnaire was distributed to EBE students. Note that the data collection method relied on Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) model to identify target and learning needs mentioned before. The questionnaire was distributed to 54 students. The researcher monitored the questionnaire by explaining and translating some students' inquiries.

4. Results

This section was devoted to the NIA findings based on the participants' responses to the data collection tools. The main objective of the instruments was to shed light on students' target and learning needs during and after graduation.

4.1. Students' questionnaire

4.1.1. Target needs

1. Necessities

Findings through the data collection instruments in conducting an NIA have permitted to spot difficulties for both students and teachers and convert findings for criteria to design an ESP course. The main results are listed below.

English course at the university level

The question intended to know whether students receive an English language course at the university level training and at which level. The results displayed that most of the students (85.18%) received an English course at the university level, whereas 14.81% revealed not having access to it. For the second part of the question, almost all students replied that they received an English course during all university graduation.

Importance of learning the English language

Most students (92.59%) are aware of the importance of mastering the English language in their field of study. The majority claim to receive English courses at all university levels. 57.4% of the students sustain having received lectures comprising general English plus business English. The remaining ones (27.77%) claim having received merely business English courses.

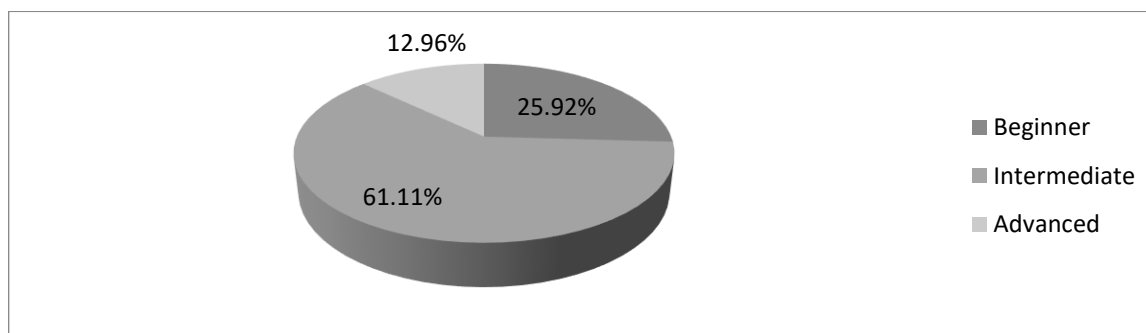


Figure 2. Students' English proficiency level

2. Lacks

Students' proficiency level

EBE students are believed to have an intermediate level of the English language although they are in their last year of graduation to hold a licence degree. Only a minority (12.96%) consider holding an advanced level (Figure 2).

Rating students' difficulties

Most students consider themselves weak in speaking skills as they feel unable to hold an oral discourse during a classroom activity. 74.07% of them also reply encountering difficulties to read academic papers, as they have difficulty understanding vocabulary. They also encounter problems with reading sub-skills like pronunciations. The informants confess that they prefer translated papers and texts. Most of them also self-evaluate themselves often encountering listening difficulties. Almost half of the informants see that they often encounter writing problems. Detailed results are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Skill's difficulty frequency

	Often	Seldom	No answer
Speaking	79.62%	12.96%	7.40%
Reading	74.07%	25.92%	0
Listening	61.11%	33.33%	5.55%
Writing	59.25%	35.18%	5.55%

3. Wants

Reasons for learning business English

Students' reasons to learn the target language are vital to course design. Thus, the researcher asked them to grade how important it is for them the following tasks to complete? Yet, they replied to learn the language because it was a requirement since the module is not optional but compulsory and then to pass examinations and have a good grade. The next reason they sustained was to use the language for further studies as they were aware of its importance for post-graduate studies and career. They also mentioned that they wished to have a good command of the language (Table 2).

Table 2. Students' reasons for learning business English

Purposes to learn English	AF	RF
Pass exams	34	62.96%
Use English for further studies	28	51.85%
Have a good command of the English language	25	46.29%
Write business letters	24	44.44%
Writing reports, projects	20	37.03%
Answer emails	18	33.33%
Publish in scientific journals	13	24.07%
Understand terminology in context	12	22.22%
Read scientific research papers	12	22.22%
Take part in international study days/conferences	08	14.81%

Skill development according to fields of interest

Students' skill development in the target language learning was scaled according to the need importance (Table 3). Students maintained that the speaking skill was the utmost important skill for them to master, followed by reading and listening skills. Writing according to them was the last one to develop.

Table 3. Students' skill importance to improve

	Most important (1)	Important (2)	Less important (3)	Least important (4)	Didn't answer
<i>Improving speaking</i>	55.55%	11.11%	11.11%	3.70%	5,55%
<i>Improving reading</i>	31.48%	20.37%	5.55%	14.81%	5.55%
<i>Improving listening</i>	29.62%	11.11%	9.25%	22.22%	5.55%
<i>Improving writing</i>	20.37%	9.25%	25.92%	12.96%	5.55%

4.1.2. Learning needs

1. Methodological needs

ESP courses time load

Bearing in mind that the ESP time load in the science economic department is 1.5 hours a week, most respondents maintained that it was not sufficient to consolidate their business English (Figure 3).

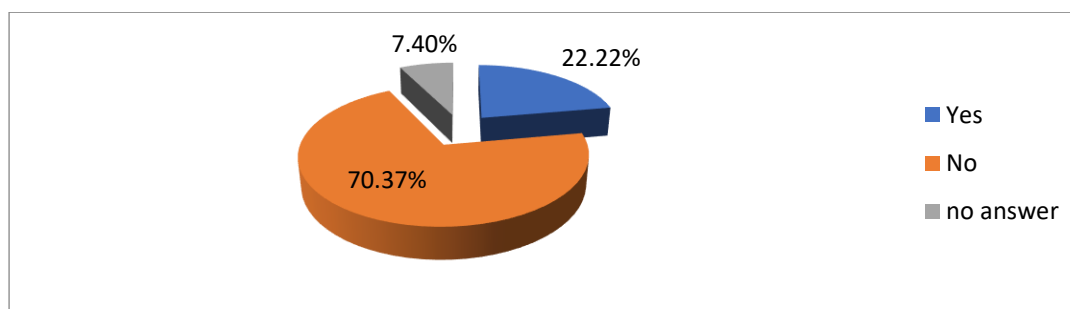


Figure 3. Students' perception of ESP classes time load

Attitudes towards receiving a blended course

The overall reaction of students is positive to receive a blended business course. 77.77% of the informants replied that it was a good idea to receive some parts of the lectures on their digital supports. Some students in the class were inhibited by some affective filters that impeded them from classroom participation. For example, in a listening session, even if they did not understand, they would not ask the teacher to repeat a listening track. However, when they are alone, they can repeat the track or video as much as possible. Other students (16.66%) feel reluctant to this method due to eventual difficulties to use the Internet according to them (Figure 4).

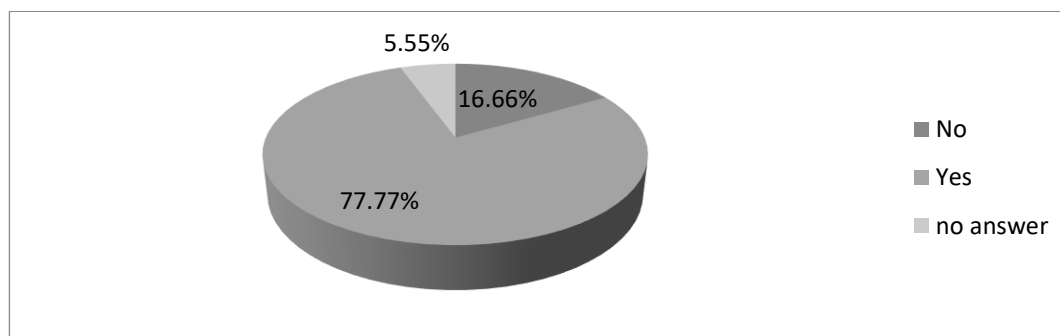


Figure 4. Attitudes towards receiving a blended course

4.2. Teachers' interview

ESP teachers are also a valuable resource to the present study as they are the language instructors. Yet, they can give us not only a clear description of the situation but also what are the skills or tasks that will help students to improve the language mastery.

4.2.1. Target needs

1. Necessities

Students' language proficiency level

The actual overall proficiency level is intermediate. Five teachers out of seven consider students holding an intermediate level, whereas one informant sees them as advanced (Figure 5).

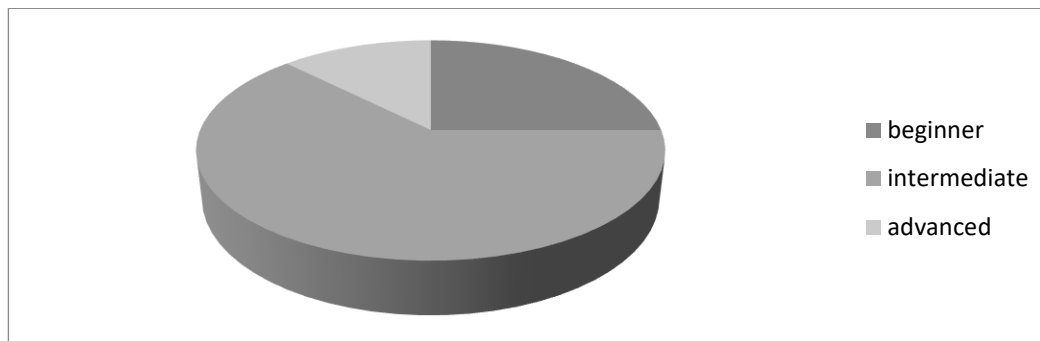


Figure 5. Students' language mastery

Students' needed skill to develop according to their field of study

Teachers point out that the students have to develop the four skills. Yet, the priority is given on the listening skill, where six informants out of seven maintain that the listening skill is the utmost priority since students are invited to participate and attend study days, conferences and then comprehend the language. The writing and the reading skills are on the second level of priority according to the informants. More details are listed below for the type of activities students need to complete. Less importance is given to the speaking skill according to language teachers (Figure 6).

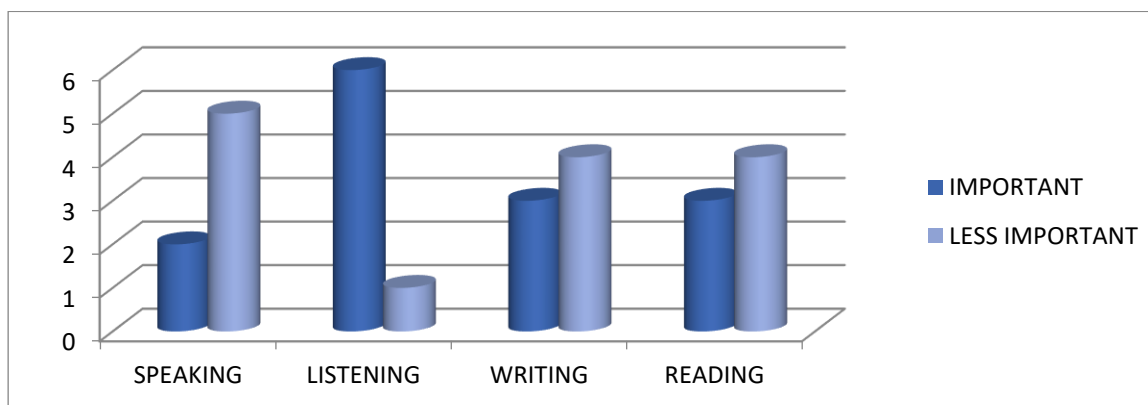


Figure 6. Students' skill importance

Writing tasks students need to complete

According to ESP teachers, students have to be able to achieve specific tasks during and by the end of their course. Writing academic papers like scientific articles is a pre-requisite according to most teachers as students are compelled to publish in an international scientific journal as mentioned before. Students also have to be able to apply for jobs and then write a CV, a cover letter and so on in the target language. Finally, four teachers out of seven maintained that students are also urged to formulate and answer emails properly (Figure 7).

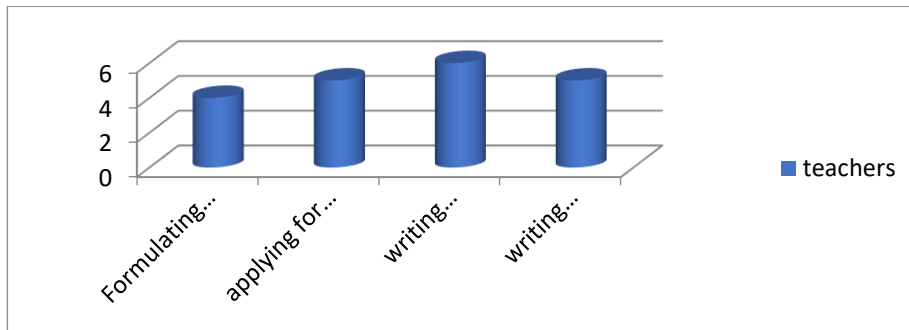


Figure 7. Needed tasks to complete

2. Lacks

Informants' perception of students' skill difficulty

EBE students demonstrated many gaps when dealing with the target language. The informants revealed that their students had the same difficulties concerning listening, speaking and writing skills. The reading skill according to them refers to the less difficult one (Figure 8).

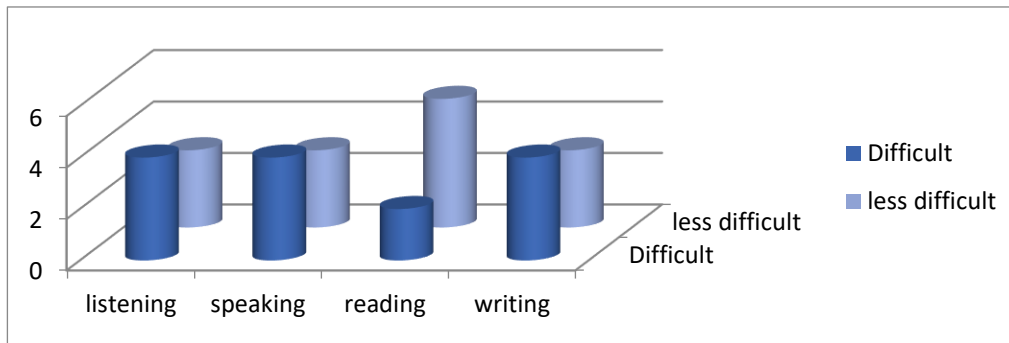


Figure 8. Students' skill difficulty according to teachers

Informants' perception of language difficulties faced by students

Language teachers noted many language difficulties within EBE students. Grammar mistakes were the most frequent ones as students did not have a sound command of the basic structures and functions of the language (Figure 9). They also noticed that students had difficulties with lexis, spelling and pronunciation. Most students demonstrated a lack of vocabulary to complete business tasks, did not know how to write appropriately in task completion and had phonetic difficulties when reading or speaking. Coherence and cohesion problems were also pointed out. Yet, the connection of ideas, grammatical and lexical relationship between parts of a written or spoken discourse was raised.

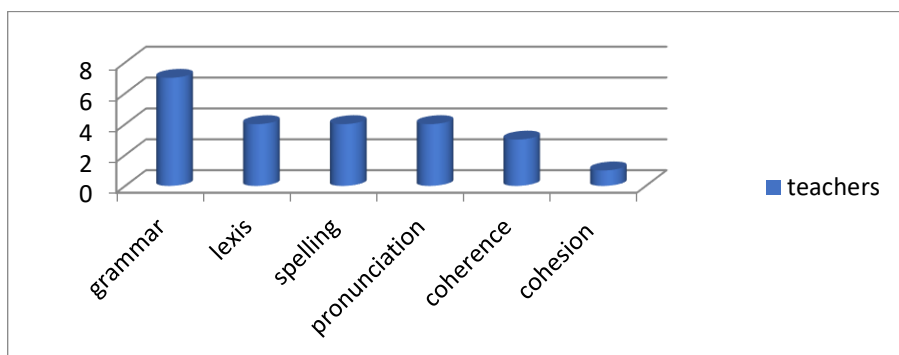


Figure 9. Students' types of mistakes

4.2.2. Learning needs

1. Psychological needs

Attitudes towards the use of the English language

Most teachers revealed that their students demonstrate not only positive attitudes towards language use but that they are also aware of the importance of the language for their studies. They also maintained that students are mindful about the language importance in general and the socio-economic perspective in particular.

2. Methodological needs

Time allocated to English sessions and suggestions

The overall answer to this question was negative; teachers deemed that the time devoted to ESP classes is non-sufficient to achieve their goals. They all agree that students should receive at least two sessions a week (of 90 minutes). One teacher has suggested the implementation of blended learning to compensate for the insufficient time load and to permit exposure outside the classroom as the language has the status of a foreign language.

Teaching material resource

The informants claim that there is no specific existing syllabus for EBE students. Teachers rely on business books, e-books and web references. One teacher maintains having written a hand out; meanwhile, no specific NA has been conducted to depict learning needs and expectations. This shows the importance to establish an adequate course.

4.3. Bank officers' interview

4.3.1. Target needs

1. Necessities

The importance of English language mastery in workplace positions

The bank staff revealed that they need to master the target language as they are urged to use it, for they receive official documents in the target language like banking requests, domiciliation, faxes, letter mailing, bank transfer and also phone interactions. Yet, the ability to master the language is an asset to fulfil their responsibilities and apply for higher positions.

2. Lacks

Difficulties in exchanges

The answers revealed that 75% of the informants did not face difficulties on the spot in exchanges through the medium of English, whereas 25% encountered hurdles like the lack of vocabulary and difficulties to communicate.

Difficulties in writing official documents

50% of the informants maintained facing problems in the written skill, while 25% of them assert not encountering written hurdles.

3. Wants

Skills needed to be developed

Responses to this question indicate that almost all respondents would like to improve mainly the listening, writing and speaking skills. Details are listed in Table 4.

Table 4. Bank officers needed skills to develop

	Skills	Reasons
R1	Listening	For I studied the other skills at university
R2	Listening–reading–speaking and writing	To be able to communicate
R3	Writing–listening–speaking	To be able to communicate
R4	Speaking	Speaking would help me to interact with clients and ask for a job promotion

Needed writing tasks

The writing tasks that the informants want to master are mainly in writing reports. More information is displayed in Table 5.

Table 5. Bank officers' tasks to be enhanced

	R1	R2	R3	R4
Formulating and answering emails				X
Writing CVs				
Applying for jobs				X
Writing academic papers				X
Writing reports	X	X	X	X
Other				Writing a letter

5. Main results and discussion

The present study investigated the English language needs of Algerian business students in the department of economic sciences at Abou Bekr University in Tlemcen through the implementation of a NA to answer the above-mentioned research questions.

The main findings to the first question asking about target needs were threefold. Necessities revealed that almost all students receive an English course at the university level and most respondents claimed that the mastery of the language was important to them for short and long-term goals. Target necessities also revealed that the content of the present ESP course was inappropriate to EBE students' needs. It relied mainly on general English activities. Students reported that they were keen to develop speaking as a first concern as they were aware that they needed to use the language for further studies, and for giving academic presentations. However, according to teachers, students should first master oral communication skills, without ignoring the intertwined connection of all the other skills. Workplace managers interviewed observed the language mastery importance since they were urged to use English in different tasks.

Regarding lacks, results from both students and teachers revealed that most students hold an intermediate proficiency level though they have been studying English from secondary school. Students were not able to deal with tasks requiring oral production performance. Students also deemed having difficulty with the reading skill when reading technical texts, reports, with some sub-skills mentioned before (in the teachers' interview). They also felt that they were not able to understand technical and scientific terminology in spoken discourse. In this sense, it should be noticed that the EBE students do not have laboratories or materials designed to permit them to have adequate listening tasks except for teachers who make special efforts to bring materials like speakers or data show devices. Finally, students also believe having problems with the writing skill (59.25% of the informants). At this level, teachers also mentioned sub-skill difficulties. Indeed, making correct grammar structures are common problems encountered by students like subject-verb agreement and use of correct verb tenses. Coherence and cohesion problems were also raised by teachers when writing correct sentences or creating well-structured paragraphs. Results confirm findings in Hidri (2018) cited in the literature. Workplace managers spotted difficulties like lack of vocabulary and limitations in writing official documents.

Moreover, it should be noted that the Algerian government provides university online platforms so that all students might use and benefit from the myriad of possibilities to improve their skills. This is possible after the plea of some researches like in Mebitil (2011, p. 145)

'The proposed idea for moodle is not only for language teachers alongside their learners but it can also join language teachers from different universities nation-wide which may help ESP teachers better exchange their ideas, experiences and courses, too. Highly experienced teachers can provide assistance for prospective, and novice teachers providing guidance for them besides feedback.'

Thus, a blended learning course would permit to send them different material types like videos, podcasts etc., on their digital supports and get immediate feedback and this answers the third question asking about the course that would fit students' needs build upon the target and learning needs.

In an attempt to answer the second question, psychologically speaking, both students and teachers agreed on a positive attitude towards the target language learning and are aware of its utmost importance for their studies and future careers. In the methodological needs almost all the informants agreed on the inadequate time load allocated to the ESP sessions, teachers also revealed the absence of a definite syllabus for the EBE students and this displayed the importance to design a course based on the informants' target and learning needs. Students also were favourable to the integration of new technologies and the implementation of Blended learning and that would permit to save issues like time load devoted to ESP sessions in the Algerian case. Furthermore, this learning environment leads to an improvement in self-confidence, low affective filter and thus language input (Krashen, 1982).

Findings from EBE students' wants came as a logical reaction to their lacks. Improving speaking capacities was the utmost priority for students, followed by the desire to enhance reading, listening and, finally, writing skill. Teachers believed that it was more important for them to promote the listening skill to understand terminology and be able to infer from existing background knowledge. They also recommended them to have a sound command of writing and reading skills to permit to them to fulfil the above-mentioned tasks like passing examinations, master academic English for further studies, and write business letters or emails. Speaking according to teachers is the last but not the least skill they should manage to be able to attend conferences, respond to phone calls or simply present a classroom talk or presentation project.

6. Conclusion and recommendations

The actual investigation was conducted to understand and depict L3 EBE students' difficulties to communicate via English language although existing ESP courses. Therefore, it described the EBE students' English language situation at the economic sciences department, to identify their target and learning needs and define tasks students would need to complete. The findings from the research questions displayed the gap between existing proficiency and target proficiency (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Students were aware of the utmost importance of language mastery in their field of study. They also ranked themselves holding an intermediate level and weak at the productive and communicative skills, although they knew that it was important to carry on academic completions. Students demonstrated the desire to master the speaking and listening skills; meanwhile, teachers favoured listening, writing and the reading skills rather than the speaking skills. Teachers and workplace managers shed light on the tasks students would need to complete to carry on their studies or for future working responsibilities like the ability to read and write accurate formal emails, to hold on a phone call within an out borders' company and to be able to publish articles in international journals without relying on translating agents. Accordingly, this case study helps to design an ESP course for EBE students at Tlemcen University, Algeria.

The ESP course's low time load of one hour and a half, already identified in works like Mebitil (2011) can be solved, thanks to the integration of technology to permit students to adopt an ongoing learning and practice process. Indeed, blended learning can be used since all informants were

enthusiastic to follow this hybrid teaching method to combine interactivity, personal feedback and audio-visual components. Moreover, this new teaching method would permit students to practice the target language outside the classroom since the use of language is limited for; English has the status of a foreign language in Algeria. Thus, the course needs to be based on the language skills, business vocabulary, grammar rules and in context expressions to cover students' needs, lacks and wants with a special focus on speaking and writing skills. Yet, the course should include different tasks like: how to write a formal email with the bundle of functions, for instance, students should be able to complete language functions like formulating requests, enquiries, make complaints, apologising through adequate expressions like an opening greeting to one or more than one person. They might become future head managers, so they should know how to give instructions or make polite commands. Students also manifested their willingness to improve their listening abilities, for that sake, audio tutorials are included in the course, followed by comprehension questions. Motivation also can be raised through audio-visual aids as it has been well demonstrated that they have a significant impact on language learning. The course also includes tasks like answering a job interview and writing a job application and writing a CV. Future investigation is advisable to establish a syllabus coherence between first, second and third year. Further work should shed light on the techniques students would use to improve the needed skills to improve.

Finally, the present investigation is conducted with a small sample and cannot be generalised to all students at the economic sciences department, as well as other limitations that have been encountered as reluctance to online use for some students.

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