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Assessing Iraqi EFL College of Basic Education Students Educational and Vocational Needs Of English Language Classroom

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Abstract

The study aims at assessing Iraqi EFL Basic Education College of Students' Educational and Vocational Needs of English Language classroom via a questionnaire to specify the academic needs of students on 2 areas namely Educational needs, and Vocational needs. As a result, the researchers have got 39 items. The obtained results are that the Educational area and the Vocational area. In conclusion, EFL college students become more aware of their needs and start to assess them in a more mature manner thinking of their future needs as independent people who try to satisfy their life needs out of their studying.

Keywords: Assessing, Educational Vocational, Needs, Classroom.

Evaluación de los estudiantes de la Escuela de Educación Básica EFL de Iraq y necesidades educativas y vocacionales del aula del idioma inglés

Resumen

El objetivo del estudio es evaluar las necesidades educativas y vocacionales del Colegio de Educación Básica Iraquí EFL del Idioma Inglés a través de un cuestionario para especificar las necesidades académicas de los estudiantes en 2 áreas, a saber, las necesidades educativas y las necesidades vocacionales. Como resultado, los investigadores tienen 39 ítems. Los resultados obtenidos son que el área educativa y el área vocacional. En conclusión, los estudiantes universitarios de EFL se vuelven más conscientes de sus necesidades y comienzan a evaluarlos de una manera más madura, pensando en sus necesidades futuras como personas independientes que tratan de satisfacer sus necesidades de vida después de estudiar.

Palabras clave: Evaluación, Educación Vocacional, Necesidades, Aula.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Problem of the Study and its Significance

Need Analysis is the process of identifying and evaluating needs in a community or other defined population of people. The identification of needs is a process of describing problems of a target population and possible solutions to these problems. So, a need has been described as:

- A gap between what is and what should be.

- A gap between real and ideal that is both acknowledged by community values and potentially amenable to change.

There are many Educational Needs and Vocational Needs of English Language help the teacher to meet the requirements of the classroom teaching according to the educational situations and teachers' abilities and their competencies and qualifications to teach the English language exhaustively. Students have many needs, most of which cannot be met in the classroom. However, they have some needs that are specific to the classroom and others that are affected by their Classroom experiences. The present study tried to answer the following question: which of the two types of needs, educational and vocational, are preferred by Iraqi EFL college students? There is still a big gap between needs analysis and materials selection. The jump is usually considered to be a subjective matter.

1.2. The Aim

The present study aims at:

Assessing Iraqi EFL Basic Education College Students' Educational and Vocational Needs of English Language classroom.

1.3. The Limit

The present study is limited to the Iraqi EFL students of the morning studies at the departments of English in the College of Basic Education in the academic year 2018 – 2019.

1.4. The Value

The present study can be of great value to syllabus designers, educators, teachers of English.

1.5 Definitions of Basic Terms

1.5.1 Need Analysis

Nunan (1988) defines need analysis as sets of tools, techniques and procedures for determining the language content and learning process for specified groups of learners.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 English for specific purposes (ESP) Course

Modak (2015) says that the ESP course meets specific English language needs of the learners in terms of different functions of English and its use. Various English for Occupational Purposes courses helps

learners to use English appropriately as well as accurately to perform their jobs in a variety of situations where they encounter their English language functions. English for teaching serves teachers' specific English language needs to teach assertively and confidently in their English classes. ESP is generally divided into two main areas: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). For this research, the focus is on EOP, which is further divided into (a) English for Professional Purposes, such as medical purposes and business purposes, and (b) English for Vocational Purposes. EVP is again divided into Pre-vocational English (preparing for the job) and Vocational English (already on the job).

2.2. Needs Analysis and its Application in TEFL

The needs analysis is a simple concept and an extremely important one at the same time. It is the cornerstone of teaching English and its importance cannot be underestimated. Essentially it is the process of assessing the needs of students. In other words, what they know already, what they want to know, and finally what interests them. Similarly, Needs analysis is a complex process which has to take into account what Hutchinson & Waters (1987) define as target needs, what learners need to do in the target situation – i.e. language use, and learning needs, what learners need to do in order to learn – i.e. language learning. In a more modern view, we should not only take into account target needs and learning needs – i.e. objective needs – but also learners' subjective needs, that is, their effective needs, such as their interests, wishes, expectations and preferences (Nunan 1988).

A needs analysis is sometimes referred to as a situational analysis a problem assessment or an organizational diagnosis. While Brindley's (1984) distinction between content needs and process needs. Content needs include the selection and sequencing of such things as topics, grammar, function, notions, and vocabulary –traditionally the domain of syllabus design while process needs refer to the selection and sequencing of learning tasks and experiences traditionally seen as the domain of methodology. Thus, Richards cites in Cahyati et al. (2014) states that the procedures used to gather information about the needs of students known as need analysis. Hutchinson & Waters (1987) and Nunan, (1988) cites in Albakrawi & Theeb (2013) that Curriculum specialists believe that the breakdown of curriculum into components and sub-processes is of vital importance since it simplifies and organizes a process as complex as curriculum design, The first component in such a procedure is the needs assessment that is, obtaining data, followed by needs analyses that are, assigning value to those data. Therefore, the first issue to elaborate on is the needs of the students. Shahriari & Behjat (2014) cites in Albassri (2016) that Needs analysis (NA) (also known as needs assessment) plays an essential and important role in any course design, which mainly aims at obtaining learning needs of a particular group of learners. A needs analysis includes all the activities used to collect information about the students' learning needs, wants, wishes, desires, etc... The process also sometimes involves looking at the expectations and requirements of other interested parties such as the teacher/ teacher's aide/ tutor (you), administrators, financial supporters, and other people who may be impacted by the program (such as students' family members or employers).

A needs analysis can be very formal, extensive and time-consuming, or it can be informal, narrowly focused and quick. Some of the resources for conducting a needs analysis may include surveys and questionnaires, test scores, and interviews. The information gleaned from a needs analysis can be used to help you define program goals. These goals can then be stated as specific teaching objectives, which in turn will function as the foundation on which to develop lesson plans, materials, tests, assignments and activities. Basically, a needs analysis will help you to clarify the purposes of your language program (Palacios, 1992). Teachers can gather information about learners' needs through different media (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Palacios, 1992) surveys, questionnaires, interviews, attitude scales, intelligence tests, language tests, job analyses, content analyses, statistical analyses, observation, data collection, or informal consultation with sponsors, learners and others. Needs analysis can use to identify some problems in the instruction and students' learning and to improve the teaching and learning in the process of TEFL. In an era of shrinking resources, there are growing demands for accountability in public life, with education a particularly urgent case and foreign language education a prime example within it. Many secondary school and college students and, especially, adults with serious academic, occupational, vocational, or survival needs for functional L2 proficiency, as well as their sponsors, are increasingly dissatisfied with lessons, materials and methodology developed for someone else or for no-one in particular. A needs analysis involves:

1. Collecting background information
2. Understanding the real needs of the young people

3. Identifying potential partners and potential obstacles in the inclusion field .4.Making an inventory of the skills, competencies and resources available to you.

2.3 What is Target Need?

Target Need is something of an umbrella term, which in practice hides a number of important distinction .It is more useful to look at the target situation in term of necessities, lacks and wants (See Figure 1).

Figure 1: Necessities, Lacks and Wants (Mead, 1980)

Definitions	Objective (i.e.as perceived by course designers)	Subjective(i.e.as perceived by learners)
Necessities: This type of need determined by the demands of target situation, that is, what the learner has to know in order to function effectively in the target situation .For example, a businessman or woman might need to understand business letters, to communicate effectively at sales conferences, to get the necessary information from sales catalogues and so on.	The English needed for success in Agricultural or Veterinary Studies	To reluctantly cope with a 'second – best 'situation
Lacks: To identify necessities a lone, however, is not enough, since the concern in ESP is with the need of particular learners. The teacher also needs to know what the learner knows already, so that the teacher can then decide which of the necessities the learner lack.	Presumably areas of English needed for Agricultural or Veterinary Studies	Means of doing Medical Studies
Wants: So far, the teachers have considered target needs only in an objective sense, with the actual learners playing no active role. But learners too, have view as to what their needs are.	To success in Agricultural or Veterinary Studies	To undertake Medical Studies

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Population and Sample

The whole population of the college students in the morning studies at the Departments of English / Basic Education College is taken as the population of the study. The total number of students is 300 which comprise the population of this study. The sample of the study consists of 100 students. Every 25 students represent one academic stage of studying at the College of / Basic Education of Maysan University.

3.2 Instruments

In order to achieve the aims of the study, a questionnaire has been constructed to be the main instrument used.

3.2.1 Construction of the Questionnaire

The information used in the pilot study has been gathered through an open questionnaire administered to 9 specialists' linguists and educators of English. The researchers have requested them to answer the questionnaire to specify the academic needs of adults in 2 areas namely educational needs and vocational needs. As a result of this process, the researchers have got 39 items identified as follows (see Table 1):

1-The Educational area comprises of 18 needs. 2-The Vocational area comprises of 21 needs

Table (1). The Number of the Questionnaire Items and their Percentages

No.	Areas	No. of items	No. of items from-to	The percentage
1.	The Educational Needs	18	1-18	46.153
2.	The Vocational Needs	21	18-39	53.84
Total		39		100

3.2.1.1 Face Validity of the Questionnaire

An instrument is considered to have face validity in case that its items are well accepted by other testers, moderators, teachers (Hughes, 1989). In order to ensure the face validity of the questionnaire, its first version has been exposed to a number of specialists in the fields of linguistics and methodology of teaching EFL. The experts have been requested to judge whether the components of the questionnaire are suitable or not. In the light of the experts' views, some items have been added and others have been omitted. However, the final form of the students' questionnaire consists of 39 items (see Appendix A).

3.2.1.2 Reliability of the Questionnaire

Reliability refers to how consistent evaluation results are from one measurement to another. However, the questionnaire has been read

ministered to the same pilot sample after two weeks. The statistical manipulation of the data has been obtained from the two administrations. By using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient formula the result yields 0.86, whereas, by using Alpha Cronbach Formula the result yields 0.87.

4. RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Results Related to the Aim of the study

The results of the study have revealed that there is a necessity to study learners' needs and consider them basic when dealing with the English language in the classroom.

4.1.1 Identification of the Academic Needs

The researcher has to identify the academic needs by submitting an open questionnaire to those who are specialized in linguistics and ELT. The collected data has revealed the following results: A- Two major areas have been identified. They are:

- 1) The Educational area (approved by 90.45% of the total sample).
- 2) The Vocational area (approved by 89.84% of the total sample).

B-Table (2) represents the percentages of the identified areas of needs at the first stage. This table shows that the Educational needs get the highest percentage, and the Vocational needs get the lowest percentage.

Table (2): The Percentages of the Identified Areas of Needs at the First Stage

No.	Areas	Percentage of app. Res.	Percentage of N.N.
3-	Educational Needs	90.18	9.5
4-	Vocational Needs	89.845	10.155

C- Table (3) represents the percentages of the identified areas of needs at the second stage. The Vocational needs get the highest percentage, and the Educational get the lowest percentage.

Table (3): The Percentages of the Identified Areas of Needs at the Second Stage

No.	Areas	Percentage of app. Res.	Percentage of N.N.
2-	Vocational Needs	92.285	7.715
3-	Educational Needs	90.666	9.334

D- Table (4) represents the percentages of the identified areas of needs at the third stage .The Educational needs get the highest percentage, and the Vocational needs get the lowest percentage

Table (4). The percentages of the Identified Areas of Needs at the Third Stage

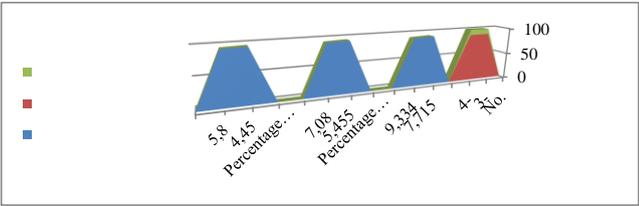
No.	Areas	Percentage of app. Res.	Percentage of N.N.
1-	Educational Needs	94.545	5.455
2-	Vocational Needs	92.92	7.08

E- Table (5) represents the percentages of the identified areas of needs at the fourth stage. The Vocational needs get the highest percentage, and the Educational needs get the lowest percentage.

Table (5). Table 9 the Percentage of the Identified Areas of Needs at the Fourth Stage

No.	Areas	Percentage of app. Res.	Percentage of N.N.
1-	Vocational Needs	95.55	4.45
2-	Educational Needs	94.2	5.8

As a conclusion for these results , it can be observed that the percentages become higher as we move from one stage to fourth , like the Vocational needs, because the students become more aware and sensitive for this needs and start to assess them in a more mature manner.



Graphic (1). The Percentages of the Identified Areas of Needs at the First Stage, the Second Stage, the Third Stage and the Fourth Stage.

4.1.2 Analyzing the Essential Needs

The aim of this study is to analyse the needs which the researchers identified at the first aim. The two identified areas of needs for learners are educational needs and vocational needs.

4.1.2.1. The Vocational Needs

This area represents the second set of needs, which includes 21 items. Those items ranging between 18–39. This area is important because it shows how the teacher can motivate students and make them learn, shows how to be realistic when testing his students, and how to keep the class action and in good order.

4.1.2.2. The Educational Needs

This area represents the first set of needs, which includes 18 items. Those items ranging between 1–18. This area is important because it shows the teacher how to choose suitable techniques for teaching, the readiness to listen carefully to the students' problems, the ability to make his teaching interesting, wide knowledge of the world and good knowledge of his subject matter.

5. CONCLUSIONS

It can be observed from the statistical results that the percentages become higher as we move from one stage to the fourth stage in favor of the vocational needs because the students become more aware for these needs and start to assess them in a more mature manner thinking of their future needs. EFL college students become more aware of their needs and start to assess them in a more mature manner thinking of their future needs as independent people who try to satisfy their life needs out of their studying.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the study findings, the following recommendations are put forward: The analysis of learners' needs of English language becomes an urgent matter for the planners and designers of English language programmers since the achievement of proper identification of these needs makes it easy to choose the content and the methods which are suitable to the functions and abilities of the learners.

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Appendix (A). The Final Version of the Questionnaire for of EFL Iraqi College Students Educational and Vocational Needs Of English Language Classroom

A-	THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS A GOOD TEACHER HAS :	HIGHLY NEEDED	NEEDED	NOT NEEDED
1 -	The ability to choose suitable techniques of teaching.			
2 -	Wide knowledge of the world.			
3 -	Moral and religious practices.			
4 -	Good knowledge of subject-matters that helps him in his future career.			
5 -	Intellectual abilities and problem-solving skills.			
6 -	Good knowledge of the society.			
7 -	Good understanding of the context of school.			
8 -	Good administrative character.			
9 -	Knowledge of different curricula, textbooks, and materials to select from.			
10 -	The ability to use the language in a meaningful situation.			
11 -	The ability to evaluate a curriculum and the textbooks that has been prescribed by educational authorities.			
12 -	The readiness to listen carefully to the students problems and enquires.			
13-	The ability to make his teaching interesting.			
14 -	The knowledge that helping the learner is an attempt to produce freedom and self-sufficiency.			
15 -	The knowledge of the skills of using a computer.			
16 -	Knowledge of the teaching goals.			
17 -	A sense of appreciation of life (art, music, poetry....).			
18 -	Strategies for global comprehension.			
B-	The Vocational Need : A good teacher:			

19 -	Can teach all language aspects.			
20 -	Must acquaint himself with the main methods of teaching FL.			
21 -	Must be trained in how to plan his/her lessons appropriately.			
22 -	Must be trained in how to motivate his pupils and make them learn.			
23 -	Knows well how to use gestures, miming, and actions.			
24 -	Has adequate knowledge of learning and teaching styles and strategies.			
25 -	Knows the teaching methods that are in line with the educational policy of the country.			
26 -	Must be trained in how to possess the professional competencies essential for good teachers.			
27 -	Knows the sequencing of activities in his classroom.			
28 -	Knows how to use games, role-play, songs and other techniques of presentation.			
29 -	Knows how to organize teaching by tasks.			
30 -	Knows how to show interest in the students as individuals.			
31 -	Knows when to allow time for free communication.			
32 -	Knows how to be sensitive to his students.			
33 -	Knows how to be fair and realistic when testing his pupils.			
34 -	Knows how to keep the class active and in good order.			
35 -	Follows up the achievement of all his pupils' especially slow learners.			
36 -	Uses encouragement rather than punishment.			
37 -	Teaches the language activities in the order of input, intake, and output.			
38 -	Evaluates pupils' progress at the end of each lesson.			
39 -	Distributes time carefully over the activities he teaches.			
(Savage & Storer, 1992: 43).				



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