



Framing English Language Syllabus for Urban and Semi- Urban Agriculture Students

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Abstract:

Agricultural students living at Urban and Semi Urban areas were facing a lot of problems in studying English language. The main occupation at Maharashtra State is basically agriculture and it is the need of the day for the educators to frame a syllabus that will exactly provide best vocational base to these agricultural students. In our Present paper I am trying to give an outline of a proposed syllabus for these Students. All the classical approaches to curriculum design and management, which goes back to early years of twentieth century, could not respond adequately to the management, which go back to early years of twentieth century.

Keywords: English Syllabus, Agricultural students

Introduction:

My present research is on discovering the challenges faced by the urban or semi-urban students in learning spoken English. We are doing our research by studying many agricultural universities situated at Maharashtra. We have visited eight agricultural colleges and four agricultural universities like: Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth Rahuri, Dr. Panhabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth, Akola, Marathawada krishi Vidyapeeth, Parbhani and Dr. Balasaheb Sawant Konkan Krishi Vidyapeeth, Dapoli are the four agricultural Universities in Maharashtra. Agricultural education started in India in 1905 at Nagpur agricultural college. Due to green revolution in 1970's advancement in agricultural education and research started.

Educational activities accelerated after the green revolution in the field of agriculture. Many new Colleges and Universities were opened for promoting the agricultural growth. Considering the need of the students many agricultural colleges were framing Syllabus that will exactly fit to agriculture. We are also trying give our suggestions regarding this. Traditional approaches to syllabus design were mainly focused with selecting linguistic feature such as grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. The design, further includes experiential content such as topics and themes. The prescribed sequenced as well as integrated lists were then presented to methodologists, who further developed learning activities to facilitate the learning of the pre-specified content. Not too far in the past the world has witnessed a radical growth in different branches of science. It has become diverse and more complicated, productive and progressive leading to

technical modernization and automation. Due to the ever-rising demands and challenges of the new millennium. Therefore this progressive development varies from one state to another. Let's consider the situation in advanced countries is different from the one in developing countries. Nevertheless, scientific research consists of an essential global component in that development movement. Great stress is drawn to English Language Teaching (ELT), as it plays a vital role in being the language of instruction of the new technology and science of the modern world. Thus many research programs in various organizations, institutes and conferences are conducted for various disciplines. There are certain deficiencies of scientific language to accomplish the needs of the target situation according to the subject specialization of learners, i.e. Functional and situational implementation of the language in communication (Rogers, 1969 and Widdowson, 1978). Hence English for Specific Purposes (ESP) materialized to promote and contribute in that specific and revolutionary phase. Tan (1988) opines that the teaching / learning of the whole of the English Language, or General English or the English grammatical system, cannot be a sound basis for a practical approach to language teaching because:

- It is not the need of the hour,
- It seems unachievable,
- It is expensive and not within the reach of the common masses
- It is not inspiring

The need for an ESP programme was approved and accepted in stages and is now in progressive flow.

ESP is a subset of English as a second or foreign language. It mostly refers to teaching a English Language to University students or people already in employment with reference to the particular vocabulary and skill they need.

Strevens (1988) ESP may be, but is not necessarily:

- Restricted as to the language skills to be learned (e.g. reading only)
- Not taught according any pre-ordained methodology (pp 1-2)

Dudley – Evans and St. John (1998)

- ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines. (Dabong 2019).
- ESP may use in specific teaching situations a different methodology from that of general English
- ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, thus be for learners for secondary school level.
- ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students.
- Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners (pp 4-5)

However, the consideration of the ESP course designer differs from one area to another as it is affected by the quality of the participants and enquiries in which it leads to enriched some areas and neglect others to some extent. Nowadays more emphasis is laid on English for Business and Economics (EBE) rather than English for Science and Technology (EST). Shujaa (2004) states that, “unquestionably, English for Business Purposes (EBP) is one of the ESP branches, which has an ever rising demand in the market.” According to Dudley-Evans (1998) and St. John (1998) EBP has emerged as a major stand and has become the largest area of growth in English for Specific Purposes. This growth in EBP is very conspicuous to the extent that 21 books were published in the area of EBP in UK in 1994.

The Agriculture discipline is vital and crucial phenomenon as it directly deals with issues, in a straight line, related to livelihood of nearly 65% of Indian population and has direct and indirect effect on the Indian economy. Unfortunately there are no ESP courses for agriculture learner and the present English course teaches communication skills to an inadequate extent. Unfortunately there is no previous research in the field of agriculture in the situation of English as a Second Language (ESL). The classical approaches to curriculum design and management which goes back to the early years of twentieth century could not respond adequately to the requirements of the new situation, now there is an urgent need to make more investigations in order to introduce reforms and innovations in agricultural

education to make it more responsive to the needs of the society and the nation as a whole, as well as advantage of agriculture and Allied sciences.

A set-back to commence a ESP course design process by carrying a systematic needs analysis is claimed to result in a host that is not relevant to the students needs and hinders the teaching / learning process (Munby, 1978); Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, and Robinson, 1991). The present study is an attempt to investigate the needs of the ESP learners for Agricultural English Communication, with reference to the learner of Agricultural discipline specially the students of B.Sc. (Agriculture) Degree Course. In other words, it aims to attempt to reveal what these students need in order to function effectively through English either as a means to learn Agricultural Science an cope with academic prerequisites of the subject – specialization as the medium of communication in varied occupational settings. Designing a syllabus involves choosing, arranging, and providing reasons for the curriculum's content. Conventional methods of syllabus design focused on choosing language elements like grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, along with experiential components like subjects and themes. These organized and cohesive lists were then given to methodologists, whose responsibility was to create educational activities that would aid in learning the predetermined content.

In recent times, there has been a significant surge in various scientific domains globally. This surge has resulted in increased complexity, productivity, and progress, fostering modernization and automation in response to the demands and challenges of the new millennium. However, it's essential to note that the extent of this development differs from one region to another. For example, the situation in advanced countries contrasts with that in developing nations. However, scientific research stands as a vital global element within this developmental trend. Significant attention is placed on English Language Teaching (ELT), given its crucial role as the instructional language for the new technology and science of the contemporary world. Consequently, numerous research programs across various organizations, institutes, and conferences are conducted across diverse disciplines. A notable challenge lies in the absence of a specialized scientific language tailored to meet the communication needs specific to learners' subject specializations, emphasizing functional and situational language implementation (Rogers, 1969, and Widdowson, 1978). As a response to this gap, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has emerged, aiming to facilitate and contribute to this specific and revolutionary shift. Tan (1988) proposes that instructing or learning the entirety of the English language, including General English or the entire

English grammatical system, lacks a solid foundation for a practical language teaching approach due to the following reasons:

- Not Urgently Needed: It does not address the immediate needs.
- Not Attainable: Achieving such a comprehensive goal would be impractical.
- Not Economical: The approach is not cost-effective.
- Not Motivating: It lacks the motivational elements necessary for effective language learning.

Recognition of the necessity for an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) program occurred in phases and is currently widely acknowledged. Robinson (1980) contends that the instruction of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) serves as a notable example of the rapidity at which change can occur. This assertion is robustly endorsed by Drobic (1978) as he characterizes the contemporary significance of ESP in the following manner:

"The shift and changes in the world's balance of power in this century imply that nations now have a greater say in determining their own language policies instead of having a language thrust upon them. ESP is not fundamentally different from other areas of language teaching." Consequently, ESP has garnered significant importance over the past two decades, with many ESP courses being tailored to meet the specific requirements of learners.

However, the perspectives of ESP course designers differ across various domains, influenced by the caliber of participants and inquiries. This can result in the enhancement of certain areas while overlooking others to some degree. Presently, there is a notable shift towards prioritizing English for Business and Economics (EBE) over English for Science and Technology (EST). Shujaa (2004) asserts, "Undoubtedly, English for Business Purposes (EBP) is one of the branches of ESP experiencing a growing demand in the market." The field of agriculture is a crucial and indispensable domain, directly addressing issues that have a profound impact on the livelihoods of nearly 65% of the Indian population. Additionally, it exerts both direct and indirect effects on the Indian economy. Regrettably, there is a lack of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses tailored for learners in the field of agriculture. Furthermore, the current English courses fall short in adequately imparting communication skills. Compounding the issue, there is a notable absence of prior research in the context of English as a Second Language (ESL) specific to agriculture.

The traditional approaches to curriculum design and management, dating back to the early decades of the twentieth century, have proven insufficient in meeting the demands of the present situation. There is a pressing requirement for further

investigations to instigate reforms and innovations in agricultural education. This is essential to enhance its responsiveness to the needs of both society and the nation, and to harness the benefits of agriculture and allied sciences more effectively. Failure to initiate the ESP course design process with a systematic needs analysis is asserted to lead to a course that lacks relevance to the students' needs and hampers the teaching/learning process. This viewpoint is supported by Munby (1978), Hutchinson and Waters (1987), and Robinson (1991).

The current study seeks to explore the specific requirements of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) learners in the context of Agricultural English communication. The focus is particularly on students within the agricultural discipline, specifically those enrolled in the B.Sc. (Agriculture) degree program. In essence, the study aims to uncover the essential communication needs of these students. It endeavors to identify what is necessary for them to effectively engage with English, both as a tool for learning agricultural science and as a medium for meeting the academic demands of their subject specialization. This includes its application in diverse occupational and social settings.

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