

## Insights to Sustain Third Year International Commerce Students' Motivation to Learn ESP at Chlef University

رؤى لتحفيز طلاب سنة ثالثة تخصص تجارة دولية لتعلم اللغة الانجليزية لأهداف معينة بجامعة الشلف

Samiya ZIDANE<sup>1\*</sup>

Prof Habib YAHIAOUI<sup>2</sup>

1Djillali Liabes Sidi Bel-Abes University, Algeria. samiazidane60@yahoo.com

TICELET Laboratory.

2Mustapha Stambouli Mascara University, Algeira. yayabib@hotmail.com

Received 27/04/2020

Accepted 29/06/2022

Published 23/09/2022

### Abstract:

This paper attempts to shed some lights on one of the myriad of affective variables in the English language teaching /learning process namely motivation for its indispensable role in determining the learners' success and failure. More clearly, the main purposes of this study are to measure the students' level of satisfaction when attending ESP classes and to find out what strategies to be used to foster and sustain their motivation. The study involves administrating a developed questionnaire to a sample of 40 third year international commerce students and a structured interview with an English language teacher at the Department of Economy at Chlef University. The findings revealed that the students were not highly motivated since their specific needs and expectations were not met. Thus syllabus content revision and dramatic changes are demanded to offer more supportive atmosphere and effective ESP courses that address the students' target workplace specific demands and thereby enhancing their motivation.

**Keywords:** ESP, motivation, students' satisfaction, supportive atmosphere.

### ملخص:

تحاول هذه الدراسة تسليط الضوء على واحدة ضمن عدد لا يحصى من العوامل التي لها تأثير في مسار تعلم وتعليم اللغة الانجليزية تحديدا الدافعية لما لها من دور فعال في تحديد نجاح وفشل الطلاب. تهدف هذه الدراسة بشكل أوضح معرفة مدى رضا الطلبة عند تلقيم دروس اللغة الانجليزية لأهداف معينة. تطلبت هذه الدراسة توزيع استبيان لعينة مكونة من 40 طالبا سنة ثالثة في تخصص تجارة دولية وتنظيم مقابلة مع مدرس للغة الانجليزية بقسم الإقتصاد بجامعة الشلف. كشفت النتائج ان الطلاب لم يكونوا متحمسين للغاية حيث لم يتم تلبية متطلباتهم واحتياجاتهم الخاصة وعليه فإنه من الضروري مراجعة محتوى المنهج الدراسي وإدراج تقنيات مختلفة لتوفير أجواء داعمة وتقديم دروس فعالة تلبي احتياجات الطلاب المطلوبة في مكان العمل وبالتالي تعزيز دوافعهم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغة الانجليزية لأغراض معينة، الدافعية، رضا الطلبة، فضاء محفز

\*Corresponding Author

### **1.Introduction:**

In the process of teaching and learning English, learners with different levels come with a whole range of motivation and may encounter many internal and external variables which may affect their interests and minimize their chances of success. This is the case at the department of Economy in which ESP module is taught as a pedagogical support for many reasons mainly because the wide range of scientific terms and documentation are available in English. Based on previous investigation done by Zidane and Arabi in (2019), the so called "ESP courses" seemed to be more general simply because the syllabus designers gave no particular consideration to the ESP course content, methodology and teaching materials. As a result, the teacher found himself /herself responsible to organize the ESP course and was free to teach and select whatever he/ she saw convenient and relevant. In this case, the offered ESP courses would neither suit the students' needs nor cover all the necessary knowledge. Apparently, this situation caused the students' loss of interest to learn English and failed in their attempt to acquire the basic information and knowledge related to their specific domain.

#### **Objectives of the Study**

This study was designed:

- To measure the students' level of motivation when attending English classes at the department of Economy.
- To provide new motivating strategies and methodologies to enhance the students' level of motivation and maximize the chances of success in the learning process.

#### **Research Questions**

To achieve these objectives, the following corresponding questions were formulated:

- Are third year international commerce students motivated when learning ESP courses?
- How can the students' motivation at the department of Economy be sustained and fostered?

#### **Research Hypotheses**

The observations made above led to formulating the following hypotheses:

- The students were not highly motivated due to the disconnection they felt with the offered ESP courses and the target workplace demands.
- Implementing needs analysis approach as a starting step in designing ESP courses and offering a supportive atmosphere through the use of motivating strategies such as cooperative learning and integrating ICT will sustain and stimulate the students' motivation.

### **2. Literature Review**

It is well known that motivation plays an important role in the foreign language learning process. Much attention was given to this area because of its vital role in determining the success of foreign language acquisition. A student's initial motivation is changeable. It may be weak and die, as it may be increased and directed to new orientations. (Rogers,1996, as cited in Harmer, 2001). So, directing and increasing the students' motivation are the teacher's responsibility. This means that the teacher has a

profound impact on the students' classroom participation and he is required to perform different roles in the learning process as to sustain their motivation.

### **1.2.ESP Practitioner Tasks**

Practitioners that are engaged to teach ESP need to play different roles as Dudley Evans et al (1998, p.13) claim: "The ESP practitioner has five key roles: teacher, course designer and material provider, collaborator, researcher and evaluator". They prefer to use the label "practitioner" rather than teacher to emphasize that ESP works involve more than teaching.

Robinson (1991) asserts that the ESP teacher's role is not only teaching however, he is supposed to design, setting up and administering the ESP course. He is likely to be involved in evaluation, testing, setting learning objectives, and to provide a positive learning environment.

#### **-Designing Courses**

ESP teacher sets the learning objectives and goals, with some typical purposive and fundamental tasks comprising choosing, designing and organizing course materials. He also supports and encourages the learners in their efforts and providing them with feedback on their progress.

#### **-Setting Goals and Objectives**

The teacher's main tasks are arranging the conditions for learning in the classroom and setting the objectives for learners' achievement. The teacher's awareness of students' potential is of paramount importance in designing the syllabus with specific aims that takes into consideration the students' interest and concern in the learning situation.

#### **-Creating a Learning Environment**

The first step for achieving setting objectives and goals is creating a pleasant learning atmosphere because it makes the teaching/ learning process more effective for both students and teachers and it supports the learners in their tasks.

Creating a positive and supportive environment is closely linked to motivation because it plays a vital role in affecting and influencing the students' future success or failure. Thus, students should be motivated as much as possible to appreciate and enjoy the activity and gain its real purpose. As noted by Ur (1996, p. 274) who states that "Motivation makes teaching and learning immeasurably easier and more pleasant, as well as more productive". ESP teacher's main roles are building the students' confidence and giving them opportunities to communicate and use the foreign language effectively.

#### **-Evaluation**

Students' work and teachers' course evaluation are considered the necessary elements in the learning/teaching process. Evaluation is a motivating variable because it determines the learners' progress in the course. It also provides information for the teacher whether his/ her work is effective or not.

Teachers are involved in many types of evaluation as noted by Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 144) who stress two prominent levels of evaluation: "learner evaluation" and "course evaluation". Evaluation can be performed on various ways including, tests, questionnaires, tasks or evaluation in the form of discussion and interviews.

As far as students' evaluation, tests are the best method to be used. Teacher finds if the lesson content suits and covers the learners' specific needs and whether the students acquire the basic skills and be able to perform them effectively in a particular situation. "This assessment takes on a greater importance in ESP, because ESP is

concerned with the ability to perform particular communication tasks". (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 144). Similarly, the course evaluation helps to assess whether the main characteristics of organizing and designing the course were met. In this respect, Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 156) assert: "In course evaluation we need to involve all those who share the learning process in making the ESP course as satisfying to the parties as possible".

### **3. Research Method**

#### **1.3 Research Population**

This research encompasses the active participation of two populations. The first sample was a group of 40 third year international commerce students who was taking English as a compulsory module. The second targeted population was an English language teacher holding an M.A degree in Literature and Civilization who was in charge of teaching English courses at the department of Economy.

#### **2.3 Research Instruments and Data Collection**

The mode of inquiry adopted in this research was based on the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data through administering a developed questionnaire and a structured interview to the target population under investigation. The aim of the research instruments was to elicit the students' attitudes towards the English course and its usefulness as well as investigating the teacher's perceptions about the course content. It was preferred to gather the necessary information about the situation in question from a large and unlimited number of participants to achieve more reliable and valid findings. At first, the students' questionnaire was distributed among the applicants and the required data were gathered. Next, the teacher was interviewed to give her views about the course content and activities, strategies, and teaching methodology.

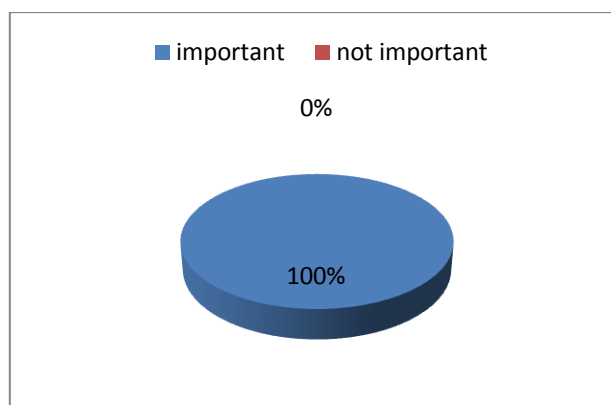
### **4. Results and Discussion**

#### **1.4 Students' Questionnaire**

The aim of the questionnaire was to examine the students' views towards the English course and its usefulness.

##### **-Students attitudes towards the importance of English**

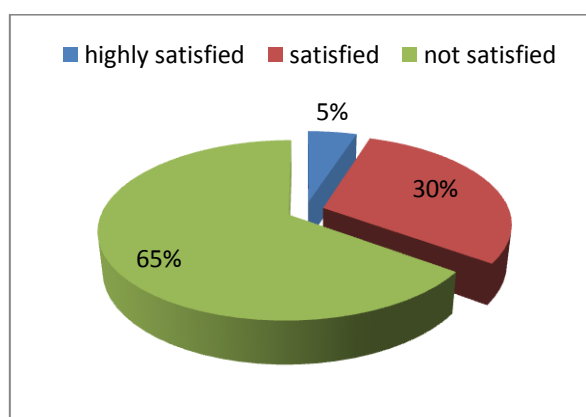
**Figure 1: Importance of English**



The results indicated that all the students (100%) answered that learning English was important in their field. This is due to the role that English language plays in the worldwide. Pritchard and Nasr (2004, p. 426) point out that “English is of particular importance for engineering and science students because it is the principal international language of science and is looked upon as an effective means of enabling those students to become familiar with professional texts written in English”. More precisely, learning English will help the students to build up the required abilities in order to use them in a specific field of inquiry, occupation or target workplace.

#### **-Students’ Motivation**

**Figure 2: Students’ level of motivation**

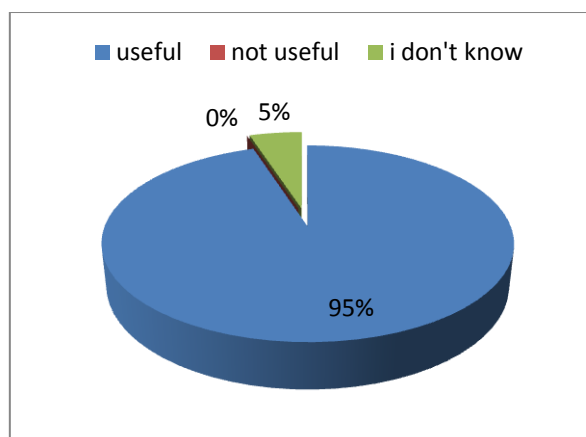


The present figure (2) elicits that more than half of the applicants (65%) were not highly satisfied, (30%) of them responded that they were satisfied, and the rest (5%) were highly satisfied. According to them, their lack of motivation is mainly related to inappropriate syllabus content and materials selection, lack of using technological aids and lack of supportive atmosphere.

#### **-Students’ perceptions about the integration of ICT**

This item of the questionnaire asked the respondents to state whether integrating ICT will be useful for them or not.

Figure 3: Students' attitudes towards the use of ICT



Results (figure 3) show that an overwhelming majority of informants (95%) seemed to enjoy learning through the use of virtual aids. Interestingly, (5%) of the participants showed their neutral reaction towards the usefulness of integrating technological devices within ESP classes.

#### 2.4 Teachers' Interview

The aim of the interview is to investigate the teacher's perceptions about course content, methodologies and teaching strategies.

##### -Dealing with Needs analysis

The aim of this item is to determine whether the English language teacher conducted a thorough needs analysis before designing the ESP courses. The instructor responded negatively. She related this to the fact that she was not specialist in the field and did not receive any ESP training before. She also demonstrated that because of the insufficient time allotted to English module and the large number of class size, it would be difficult to deal with such a complicated process.

##### -Meeting the students' needs

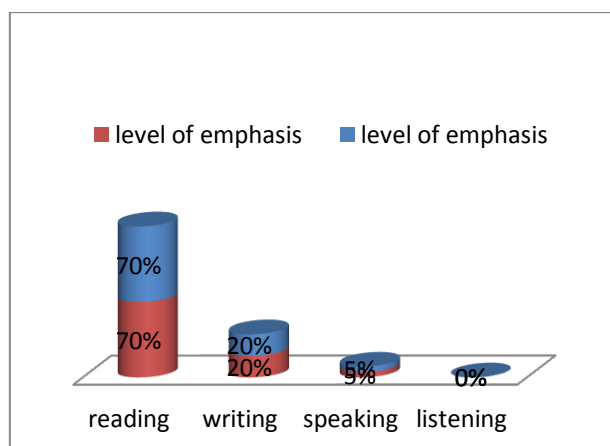
When asking the instructor whether the offered courses best suit and meet the students' needs; she claimed that the course meets to some extent the students' needs and this is referred to the absence of students' predetermined needs and objectives.

##### -Use of teaching aids

This part of the questionnaire aims to know if the teacher integrates any sort of teaching or technological aid as to attract the students' attention. The instructor responded negatively and blamed the administration for the lack of equipments and the offered facilities.

##### -Skills emphasis

#### Bar graph1: Skills emphasis



As shown in Bar graph (1), the reading skills received (70%) of attention and (20%) of emphasis was given to the written skills. Additionally, the teacher gave little consideration to speaking which received only (10%) and ignoring listening skills and related this to the absence of class equipment.

After the analysis of the data, the achieved results led the researchers to suggest some pedagogical implications for instructors and curriculum developers that may bring effective changes and sustain the students' motivation.

The current situation indicates that no prior determined objectives and goals were conducted from both language planners and teachers in order to identify the students' needs and specific purposes. Thus, policymakers and syllabus designers should deal with needs analysis as an ongoing step within the overall process of course development. In this sense, specific programs should be redesigned to better meet all the students' needs and cover the necessary skills. Additionally, the teachers' task is to develop the learners' academic English, that is, the English needed for reading, writing, speaking and listening in the content areas. (Collier, 1999). Indeed, teachers should determine the students' reasons and specific purposes behind learning English and put them at the core of course content as Kennedy and Bothelio (1989, p. 14) claim "It is possible to find out a student's motivation for learning English and match the content of the course of this motivation". They have also to ensure that learners develop the specific academic language they need to participate in the content classroom. (Echevarria, Vgot, & Short, 2004).

Another point that is worth mentioning is that of team teaching and collaboration between teachers. Therefore, collaboration between language and subject teachers should be focused on during the ESP process because it has a favorable effect on both language teachers and students. Language teachers always know little or nothing about the field of study which allows them to refer to subject teachers to solve their encountered difficulties. In this vein, Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p.165) explain the importance of this kind of relationship:

ESP teachers might, for example, find themselves having to work in close cooperation with sponsors and or subject specialists who are responsible for learners' work or study experience outside the ESP classroom. This is not always an easy relationship: suspicion of motives is common. The effectiveness of relationships depends greatly on how it is handled by both parties, but, since it is usually the ESP teachers who have enlisted the help of the subject specialist, it is their main responsibility to ensure that potential problems are



## **INSIGHTS TO SUSTAIN THIRD YEAR INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE STUDENTS' MOTIVATION TO LEARN ESP AT CHLEF UNIVERSITY**

**Samiya ZIDANE / Habib YAHIAOUI**

---

anticipated and avoided, and that a harmonious working arrangement is created. One of the keys to success in this area for ESP teacher is to establish clear guidelines about their and the specialist's separate and join role and responsibilities.

As far as the students' motivation, the gathered data also elicit that the students were partially satisfied with the English classes. It is believed that the relevance of content, materials selection and adopted methodology to the learners' discipline will sustain their interests and motivation. This latter will undoubtedly result in better and effective learning outcomes. In this respect, Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 8) state that "The clear relevance of the English course to their needs would improve the learners' motivation and thereby make learning better and faster". Therefore, instructors should modify and change the traditional methodology used to make English classes more interesting and effective through the introduction and the use of some fundamental and motivating strategies. More precisely, the teachers should realize that integrating technological aids and devices can play a vital role in creating positive atmospheres and new opportunities for learning that can be interesting and therefore improving learner's achievement. Within the same path, the administration should facilitate the ESP teaching task through offering certain facilities and equip the ESP classes with audio visual materials such as data shows, computers...etc. Moreover, the teacher should consider the students' individual differences and learning preferences to attract their attentions. One way to do this is through collaborative learning as it would make learning interesting in a relaxed environment. It also encourages team work and spirit, reduces the stress level in the classroom and makes problem solving easier. By this strategy, the teacher achieves the objective of making the instruction learner-centered since it enhances communication skills, improves performance, stimulates and fosters critical thinking and making students more autonomous. Generally speaking, the students' motivation is generated and stimulated through the introduction of communicative activities and creating a supportive environment. All these strategies would motivate the students, help them acquire the basic skills and improve their level of proficiency to positively respond to the target workplace demands.

### **5. Conclusion:**

The ultimate aims of this study are to investigate whether third year international commerce students were satisfied when attending ESP courses or not and to decide what strategies to be integrated in order to stimulate and foster their motivation. The results reveal the students' dissatisfaction as the realities of ESP classes were so far from their requirements and highlight a need for well- structured English courses for the students. Thus, for an effective ESP teaching/ learning; syllabus designers and practitioners should take into account many considerations and introduce set of motivational strategies that can positively influence the learning process. This includes necessity for implementing needs analysis as the starting point in designing the ESP course to better meet all the students' requirements and satisfy their expectations. They should also provide a pleasant atmosphere through integrating technological devices, create interesting textbooks to gain students' interest and foster their critical thinking and thereby enhance the students' motivation and maximize their chances of success.



## 6.List of references:

- Collier, V. P. (1999). Acquiring a Second Language for School. In I. A. Heath & C. J. Serrano (Eds.), *Annual editions: Teaching English as a second language* (pp. 16-21). Guilford, CT: Dushkin /McGraw-Hill.
- Dudley-Evans, T., & St. John, M.J. (1998). *Developments in English for Specific Purposes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Echevarria, J., Vgot, M., & Short, D. J. (2004). *Making Content Comprehensible for English Language Learners: The SIOP Model*. (2nd ED.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Harmer, J. (2001). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. Oxford: Longman.
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes: A learning-centered approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kennedy, C, H and Bolitho, R. (1984). *English for Specific Purposes*. Hong Kong MacMillan Publishers Limited.
- Pritchard, M., & NASR, A. (2004). Improving Reading Performance among Egyptian Engineering Students: Principles and Practices. *English for Specific Purposes*. (23), 425–445. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2004.01.002>
- Robinson, P. C. (1991). *ESP Today: A Practitioner's Guide*. London: Prentice Hall.
- UR, P. (1996). *A Course in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Zidane, S., & Arabi, M. (2019). Factors affecting ESP Students' Motivation. Case Study: third year students, department of Economy, University of Chlef. Algeria". *Journal of Cultural Linguistic and Artistic Studies*. Germany-Berlin. (5), 333-345.