Creating Effective Electives: A Needs Based Approach in Curriculum Design

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Santa Clara, CA
Introduction

* A number of linguists including Stevens (1977) and Coffey (1984) have agreed on the “centrality of Needs Analysis as the starting point for any teaching material development and any future English program.”

* Ananyeva (2014) states due to the individual approach for each Needs Analysis situation, there is no replicable established needs analysis procedure in ESL programs.
Goal of Presentation

To share one’s methodology using Needs Analysis to create an IEP course for a population of students as a case study for others to learn from and utilize.

At the end of the presentation, attendees should be able to:

* identify uses of needs analysis
* select appropriate assessment tools
* analyze needs assessment results to determine class content and instructional needs
* develop needs assessments for their own classes
Situation

International English Institute

- IEP, Nashville, TN
- 7 week terms
- Differentiated skill curriculum: writing, grammar, conversation, listening lab, reading lab
- 50 minute classes

- Highest level students
- Already placed out of some classes (6 level program)
- Waiting for Graduate School admission
- F1 visa requirement: 12 hours
- Reading skills lower than other skills
Stages of ESP

- Evaluation
- Needs Analysis
- Assessment
- Course Design
- Teaching/Learning
What Is Needs Analysis?

* The process of determining the needs for which a learner or a group of learners requires of a language and attending to the needs in accordance with priorities.

* Part of syllabus development and is normally needed before the development of teaching materials.

Goals

To know...

* learners as people, language users, and as language learners

* how language and skills learning can be maximized for a given learner group

* the target situations and learning environment in order to interpret the data appropriately
# Types of Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs</th>
<th>Derived by/ from</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Necessities/ Wants/ Lacks</td>
<td>what is necessary to function/deficiencies/ what learner feels is needed for a “target situation”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Situation Analysis</td>
<td>(objective, perceived, product oriented)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Situation Analysis</td>
<td>(subjective, felt, process oriented)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Situation Analysis</td>
<td>what learners know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means Analysis</td>
<td>environment of course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sources of Information: Utilizing Your Stakeholders

* Who will benefit from the needs assessment project?
* Who interacts with people who speak English as a Second Language?
* Who are the people who speak English as a Second Language and may need language training?
Brainstorm:

Sources of Data for...

1) An IEP wanting to start a graduate prep class

- or -

2) A community college wanting to start an Adult ESL program
Choose Your NA Tools

Brainstorm:
What are some methods/ways to collect data?

Main Data Collection Methods:

- Discussions
- Questionnaires
- Face-to-face Interviews
- Checklists
- Assessments
- Focus Group Interviews
- Surveys
- Analysis of authentic spoken and written tests
- Observations
My NA Methodology

My sources:
* the learners (students)
* employers
* ESP/NA research in the field
* Student Data (assessment scores, grades, course levels)
1. Why do you want to create this elective?

2. What are your goals for the course?

3. Should the course have a broad or narrow focus (one vs. many skills)?

4. What kind of assessment do you think would be most effective?

5. How should the course be graded?

6. Will the course be repeated?

7. Should the course focus on immediate or delayed needs, why?

8. Are there any restrictions for my material choice?

9. What should the role of the instructor be for this course?
Findings

(Question #1) Why do you want to create this elective?

- would rather students take an elective rather than a second lab (not making good use of this hour)
- students need more reading practice
- students reading scores and levels are lower than their other levels
- students need to satisfy visa restrictions

(Question #2) What are your goals for the course?

- provide students with more reading practice
- help students become better readers
- motivate students to read more
Course Parameters

Pre-Determined

Intensive

Student Population: Heterogeneous Group (all pre-university students)

Needs Focus: Immediate and Delayed Needs

Course Frequency: Repeated (if successful)

Role of Teacher: Provider of Info/ facilitator

Material Selection: open: inexpensive, reading focus

Broad Focus: multiple skills (focus on reading)

Determined after Interview with Stakeholder (Directors) Questions #3-9
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I can...</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree or Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>guess meaning of new vocabulary using other information from the text.</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify main ideas, details, time order, and simple transitions in texts.</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use parts of the word to guess the meaning</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read and understand multi-paragraph selections from a variety of genres.</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compare information presented in two or three different sources.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recognize and understand common idioms.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify a writer’s purpose.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distinguish between literal and figurative language,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>use details to understand ideas better.</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read to compare and contrast information on familiar subjects</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>follow specific written directions/ instructions to perform an activity.</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skim for main ideas and scan for detail in prose text and on documents.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interpret information in an authentic paragraph or text to answer a question.</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infer (“read between the lines”) and understand meanings that are not directly stated.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read at the same speed I speak.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use a flexible reading speed depending on what the material is.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand __ of everything I read in English.</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Tool #3: Student Reading Questionnaire

**Interviewees: Students Enrolled in Course**

#### Which of these best describes your attitude towards reading…?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I love reading</th>
<th>I like reading</th>
<th>I read because I have to</th>
<th>I avoid it if possible</th>
<th>I don’t read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Which of these best describes your attitude towards assigned reading?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assigned reading</th>
<th>I generally read assignments and other things.</th>
<th>I read assignments, but I don’t read other things.</th>
<th>I don’t read assignments, but I read other things.</th>
<th>I don’t read assignments.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### How important is each type of reading for you…?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Reading</th>
<th>Extremely Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>Not important at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>study reading (to learn new subject matter)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pleasure reading (to enjoy as a hobby)</td>
<td></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social reading (to communicate through social media)</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Open Ended Questions

What did you read in English this week?
Grammar book  Newspaper  Articles on Facebook  Book

What is the best thing about reading?
learn new vocabulary  good stories  good way to learn vocabulary  fun stories  good hobby

What words come to mind when you think about reading a book?
torture  fun  relaxing  boring  story  difficult

How do you find books you want to read?
reading lab teacher  reading lab  the table  friends tell me in reading lab  movies  teacher

What is the best book you have ever read?
don’t know  The Quran  The Godfather  i don't like books  Agatha Christy  ?
What's the Next Step...?

Ask yourself:

* How will you analyze the results of your needs assessment?
* How will you incorporate the needs assessment activity into your class?
* What will you do with the results?

Then analyze the results:

* Look for grouping, patterns, and similarities
* Identify priorities and importance
Successful students will be able to...

**Reading:**
- read a novel intensively (extensively)
- increase reading speed
- guess vocabulary from context
- recognize and understand common idioms
- distinguish between literal and figurative language idea, keep a vocabulary journal to record and learn new words
- interpret information in an authentic passage or text to answer a question
- complete comprehension quizzes to recall information from the novel

**Writing:**
- write reflection journals related to novel and film
- write essays exploring themes in the novel and film
- use figurative language (simile metaphor, etc) in descriptive writing
- develop a broader academic vocabulary
- express complex ideas with correct grammar, editing as needed

**Conversation:**
- lead and participate in group discussion
- make predictions about film/novel
- give oral summaries of novel/film
- debate on issues related to film/novel
- be able to give, support, and defend your opinion
- use a full range of verification, conversation management and expansion strategies
- speak fluently and accurately
- synthesize all of your skills: grammar, vocabulary, reading, and listening
Use a systematic approach and organizing framework that...

comprises the target events and tasks that the ESP learners need and want to perform

+ associated rhetorical awareness needs

→ associated skill areas and linguistic realizations (genre moves, grammar, vocabulary, micro-skills)

+ materials, carrier content topics, learning processes and classroom interactions
Course Design Process

- Take whatever info you have; don’t order it
- Group key items and order them in a way that enhances learning
- Choose materials
- Order key events (what is needed first, what is a building block, and what increases confidence)
- Timetabling: a final order for the course outline and a time allocation

(Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998)
### 35 Day Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Reading Activity</th>
<th>Listening/Speaking Activity</th>
<th>Writing Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intro</td>
<td>Review Homework/Activity: Discussion ?s (related to themes)</td>
<td>Reading Skills Self-Assessment</td>
<td>PPT: Guessing Meaning from Context Activity: Meaning from context with first page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attitude Towards Reading Survey</td>
<td>Reading Fluency Check #1: Introduce/ Explain Rationale</td>
<td>Begin book: use new strategies while reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Icebreaker</td>
<td>Start</td>
<td>Share Reading Attitude/ Skills Self-Assessment Results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homework: research “Themes”</td>
<td>Chapter 1: Vocabulary Quiz</td>
<td>Journal #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Predictions: watch video</td>
<td>Watch film</td>
<td>HW: Read Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>discussion Handout (Chart):</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review: Characters and Setting</td>
<td>Chapter 1: Vocabulary Quiz</td>
<td>Journal #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictions</td>
<td>Activity: Group work: Fill out charts (worksheets)</td>
<td>Watch film</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurative Language Activity:</td>
<td>Chapter 5: Vocabulary Quiz</td>
<td>Reading Fluency Check</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intro</td>
<td>Watch Film</td>
<td>Begin chapter 7/ Vocabulary Assignment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurative Language Activity: intro</td>
<td>Fluency check</td>
<td>Journal Writing #3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worksheet</td>
<td>Activity: Fill out charts (worksheets)</td>
<td>Watch film</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>production activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Discussion Activity:</td>
<td>Reading Fluency Activity: Chunking</td>
<td>Symbolism Activity: intro</td>
<td>Journal #4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change &amp; Growth Katniss</td>
<td>Chapter 7: Vocabulary Quiz</td>
<td>worksheet group activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partner activity with worksheet/ discussion</td>
<td>Watch Film/ Group Discussion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin Chapter 11/ Vocabulary Assignment</td>
<td>Meaning from Context Activity: PPT/ Worksheet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Watch Film/Group Discussion</td>
<td>Journal Writing #5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 11: Vocabulary Quiz</td>
<td>Essay Brainstorm Day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch Film</td>
<td>Essay Draft Day</td>
<td>Journal Writing #6</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>Party: Watch HG2</td>
<td>Party: Watch HG2</td>
<td>Final Exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party:</td>
<td>Watch HG2</td>
<td></td>
<td>End of Term Meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Material Selection

Four reasons for using materials:

1. **As a source of language:** materials play a crucial role in exposing learners to the language; materials need to present real language.

2. **As a learning support:** materials must involve learners in thinking about and using the language.

3. **For motivation and stimulation:** materials need to be challenging yet achievable to encourage fun and creativity; offer a reason to communicate.

4. **For reference:** self-study materials for reference.

(Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998)
## Reader vs. Novel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reader (extensive)</th>
<th>Novel (intensive)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* opportunity for extensive reading</td>
<td>* more authentic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* helps develop fluency</td>
<td>* more choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* comes with supplementary support and materials</td>
<td>* enables students to develop strategies for long, complex and unsimplified texts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Phillips and Shettlesworth, 78)*
## Reading Selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>September/October 2015</th>
<th>November/December 2015</th>
<th>January/February 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text/Film</td>
<td>Hunger Games, S. Collins, Scholastic</td>
<td>Bourne Identity, R. Ludlum, Penguin Reader</td>
<td>Hunger Games, S. Collins, Scholastic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation

**Ongoing:**
determining what information to gather -> ends with bringing about change in current activities

**Concerned with...**
the effectiveness and efficiency of learning achieving the objectives

**Types of Evaluation Used:**
- Course evaluation
- Student Questionnaire
Thank You!

Questions and materials requests:
  rachelmillermail@gmail.com