Designing an ESP course in Oral English communication for Undergraduate Students

[1]Mrs. Pratibha Misra,   [2]Dr.V.N.Sudheer
[1]Research Scholar, Social Sciences and Humanities, CMR University, Bangalore.
[2]Associate Professor of English, Social Sciences and Humanities, CMR University, Bangalore.
Email - [1]pratibha.p@cmr.edu.in   [2]sudheer.v@cmr.edu.in

Abstract: Skill enhancement courses for undergraduates' students are designed keeping the potential employability of the students. Among all skill enhancement courses professional communication course has been prioritized as oral communication plays very important role when it comes to the placement. However, when it comes the communication courses lot of emphasis is given on the written aspects. Less focus has been given on the speaking aspects even lots pf activities have been conducted in classroom but it is not incorporated in the syllabus because of which students are not paying lot of attention on that. Hence this paper is trying to identify the gap between current level of the undergraduates' freshers and the desired level from the corporate perspective inn speaking skills on the four criteria-Task achievement, Language accuracy range, Fluency and Pronunciation.

Key Words: Communication skills, Employability, Skill Enhancement, Task achievement, Language accuracy range, Undergraduates students. Etc.

1. INTRODUCTION:

English is the language which is in one of the most critical languages when it comes to the professional communication. It is widely used in all countries, academic disciplines, and occupations including science, business, engineering, and technology. So ever university an ad colleges universities have English for Specific Purpose (ESP) and English business communication related courses in the core curriculum for students of all programs to strengthen their proficiency in spoken and written communication. This subject has been incorporated not only with the academic's point of view but also employability. Recruiters are recruiting based on the English communication especially oral communication.

When it comes to the undergraduate English professional communication courses. Lots of activities for the speaking prospective have been incorporated in their courses. Moreover, Teachers are also putting lot of effort in fostering the speaking skills of the students.

Nevertheless, it has been found out that after putting lot of emphasises on the oral English oriented courses communication for the undergraduate students, there is the gap from the desired level from corporate perspectives and the current level of the students. Therefore, the current Professional communication courses (ESP) especially oral communication contents need be checked and revised to bring current level of the students closer to the company expectations.

1.1 Background of the Study:

The specific purpose for Learning English and the needs of the students in their present and target demands can be investigated through conducting needs analysis (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Munby, 1978; Widdowson, 1983). What type of needs analysis needs to be undertaken in what contexts one of the major underlying questions is probed for understanding the purpose of language learning (Edwards, 2000; Oanh, 2007; West, 1994).

1.2 Analysis:

The main aim of this study is to recognize the gap in English oral skills between the current level of students and desired level required by the organisation. The gap will be identified through the survey which is based on the B2

level (Intermediate level) in speaking skills on 5 rubrics and 4 criteria. In addition, survey should be rated on both the current and desired level by recruiters of different organisation.

Criteria-1 Task Achievement:
In speaking skills, the first table i.e., Task achievement attempt to measure the fresh graduate's capability to answer the question appropriately with the degree of the language.

Criteria	Excellent Rating-5	Good Rating-4	Average Rating-3	Borderline Rating-2	Needs Improvement Rating-1
Task Achievement	Achieves task fully without any relevant omissions and with consistently appropriate register (degree of formality of language.)	Manages all components of the task with correct register. (Degree of formality of language)	Manages nearly all components with correct register. (Degree of formality of language	Manages nearly all components but with inconsistent register (degree of formality of language)	Manages to meet only some of the components with inconsistent register (degree of formality of language)

Criteria-2 Language Accuracy Range:
The second criteria i.e. Language accuracy range tries to analyse the effectiveness of using the grammar, vocabulary and the ranges of the complex sentences.

Criteria	Excellent Rating-5	Good Rating-4	Average Rating-3	Borderline Rating-2	Needs Improvement Rating-1
Language accuracy range	Can use paraphrase effectively. Shows awareness of style and collocations. Uses a range of complex sentences accurately. The in	Most sentences are error free with occasional error e.g., Problem with collocation. Is able to connect ideas logically give clear description	Error free sentences are frequent but there are some grammatical mistakes e.g., some lack of plural is able to connect ideas logically. Description and justification are usually clear.	There is some idiomatic language but it has been used repetitively i.e. there is limited vocabulary range. Complex sentences have error.	Some inappropriateness in vocabulary but various topics can be discussed complex sentences have grammatical mistakes but meaning is clear.

Criteria-3 Fluency:
The third criteria are Fluency which tries to measure the level of hesitation and fluency of the topic while speaking.

| Criteria	Excellent Rating-5	Good Rating-4	Average Rating-3	Borderline Rating-2	Needs Improvement Rating-1
Fluency	Topics are fully and appropriately developed. Speaks fluently and naturally; hesitation is minimal, natural and usual content - related	Topics are well developed and the student can speak fluently about almost any topic with ease	Can speak at length *without noticeable* effort. There is some hesitation but they speak at a fairly even tempo. There is some repetition and self-correction but this does not cause any problems for the assessor in terms of understanding.	May not paraphrase (use other words to simplify/clarify their meaning). Able to correct *some* of his/her mistakes. Hesitates when speaking about less familiar topics/ideas but is able to continue with some effort	They are willing to speak at length but with repetition, self-correction and hesitation. uses a range of connectives and discourse markers but not always appropriately

Criteria-4 Pronunciation:

The last criteria are pronunciation where the fresh graduates will, be analysed on the capability of using the range of Intonations, Word Stress and Accent.

| Criteria	Excellent Rating-5	Good Rating-4	Average Rating-3	Borderline Rating-2	Needs Improvement Rating-1
Pronunciation	Uses a range of pronunciation features — pausing, chunking, intonation, rhythm etc. consistently and effectively. Sentence and word stress is placed accurately. Accent has minimal or no impact on intelligibility	May have an accent but there is *never* any difficulty in understanding them i.e., they are clear and use intonation well	Can be understood throughout and sound natural i.e., may produce short forms. Linguistically aware in that s/he can correct *most* of his/her mistakes.	Can be understood most of the time and sound natural sometimes	Adequate but with occasionally strain for the listener i.e., assessor can determine what the speaker means after *some* thought.

Data collection and analysis :
Speaking- Task Achievement:
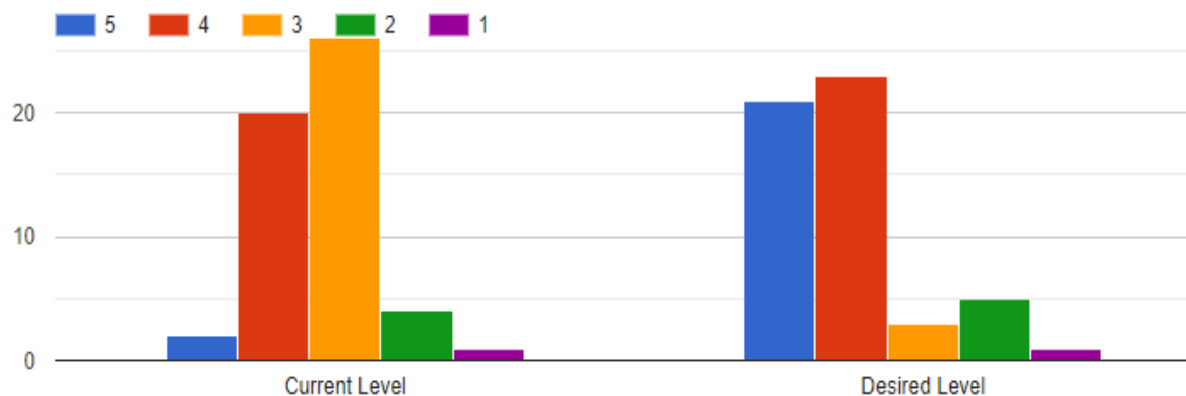
Based on the response from the corporate responders, the desired speaking Task achievement is 4.09 whereas the current level for the same skill is 3.39.
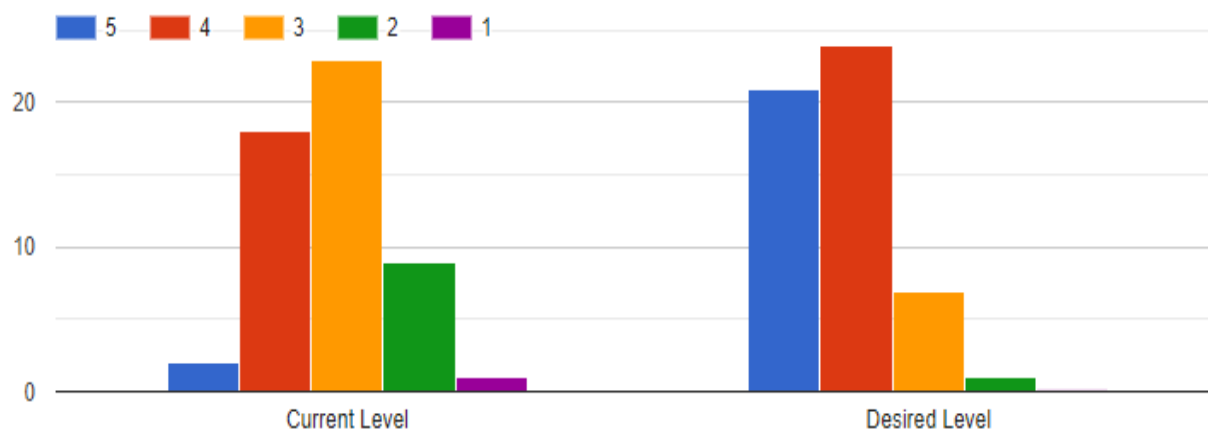
Speaking- Language Accuracy Range:
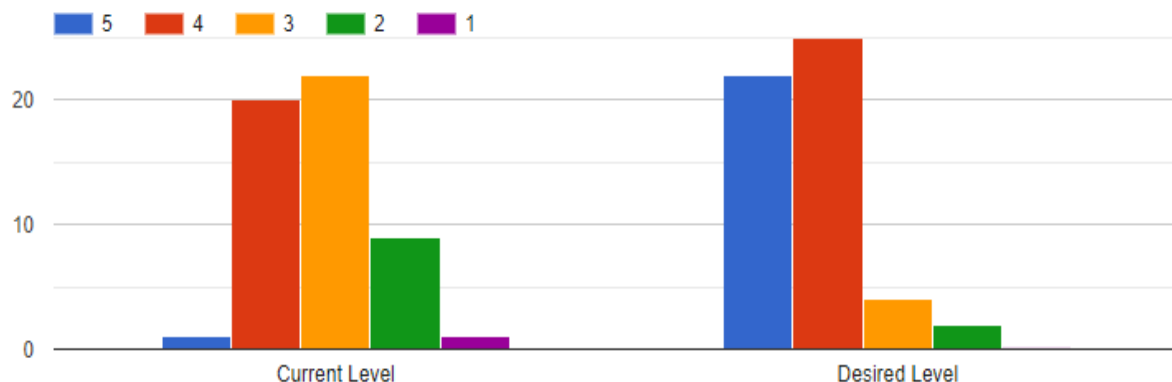
The survey data which is based on the corporate responders shows that the, the desired language accuracy range is 4.26 on the other hand the current level for the same skill is 3.20.
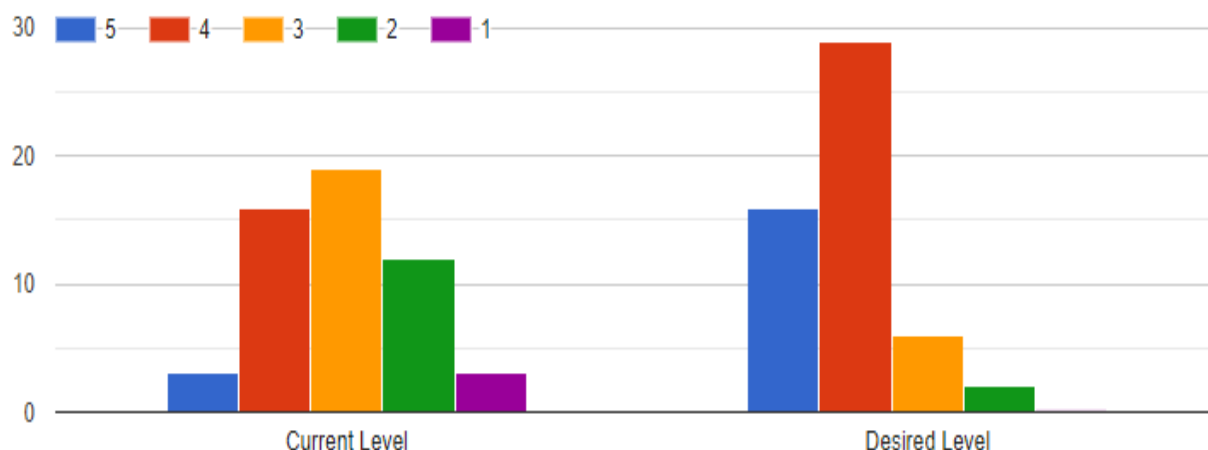
Speaking-Fluency:

On the basis of the responses in criteria 3 i.e., Fluency it has been analysed the desired level of the fresh graduates in speaking skill is 4.26 whereas the current level of the fresh graduates is 3.20. Hence, there is a gap which need to be fill by taking certain measures.

Speaking- Pronunciation:

The survey data which is based on the corporate responders shows that current level of the fresh graduate in pronunciation range is 3.75 whereas the desired pronunciation skill is 4.11.

Conclusion:
Based on the corporate responder's data and the above analysis it is clear that in all speaking criteria i.e., Task achievement, Language accuracy range, fluency and Pronunciation there is the gap between the fresh graduate current level and the desired level from the organisation which need to be filled. Hence, in the Professional Communication courses for the undergraduate courses some customization is required in which focus should be given on the following.

Methods:
Project Based Approach:
The project might be Role -Play, Group discussion or a Presentation.

Lexical Syllabus:
Some vocabulary which is specific to the students need should be incorporated in their syllabus.

Task Based Approach:
Some activities related to English to daily conversation like "ordering in a restaurant, review any book, talk about daily routine etc.

REFERENCES:
Books:

1. Bosher, S. and Smalkowski, K. (2002). From needs analysis to curriculum Development: Designing a course in health-care communication for immigrant students in the USA. English for Specific Purposes, 21, 59-79.
2. Braine, G. (2001). When Professors don't cooperate: A critical perspective on EAP research. English for Specific Purposes, 20, 293-303.
3. Edwards, N. (2000). Language for Business: Effective needs assessment, syllabus design and materials preparation in a practical ESP case study. English for Specific Purposes, 19, P. 291– 296.
4. Hutchinson, T., and Waters, A. (1987). English for specific purposes: a learning centred approach. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
5. Bowyers, R. (1980). War stories and romances. In Projects in materials design (ELT Documents Special, PP. 71-82) London: British Council.