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## AN ESP SPIRAL MODEL

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*This paper is an abridgement of an MA thesis entitled "Evaluating the COURSE OF ENGLISH FOR THE STUDENTS IN COLLEGES OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION and Suggesting A New Up-to-date One " The study was carried out by Ahmed Khalis Sha'lan ( first researcher , a member of the Faculty of the College of Languages /University of Baghdad /Iraq ) and Asst. Prof. Sami Abdul-Aziz Almamuri ( second researcher, a member of the faculty of the college of Basic Education/University of Diyala /Iraq ). The thesis was submitted to the Council of the College of Education in Diyala University /Iraq .It was discussed on the 16<sup>th</sup> / 1 /2008 by an appointed examination committee and was marked as(Very Good ) ,and accordingly the researcher was awarded a Master Degree in Education / Methods of Teaching English as A Foreign Language .*

*The study is essentially two-dimensional. On the one hand, it targeted on evaluating the COURSE OF ENGLISH FOR THE STUDENTS OF COLLEGES OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION (henceforth CESCPE ) ,( compiled Abdul-Razzak & Al-mufti 1987) to identify , according to certain criteria and through a critical analysis , the extent this supposed ESP course responds the EFL learners' needs in the colleges of education .*

*On the other hand, it aims at suggesting an alternative ESP course thought to be able to respond the learner's needs.*

*In order to justify their work ,the researchers viewed the steps of the study as follows :*

## *1 - Statement of the Problem*

*English for Specific (or Special ) Purposes (henceforth ESP) has come into view, as a teaching / learning method as part of the mainstream of the English as a Foreign Language / English as a Second Language ( henceforth EFL / ESL ) practice discipline in many parts of the world since the beginning of the post World War II era . However , in Iraq it has come into view much later than this history. As a matter of fact , the ESP history may go back further to the beginning of the 20th century, if the experience of what was called the " Army Method " ( the underlying rationale behind the sprung-up of the " Audio-Lingual Method " in a later period of the Language Teaching / Learning history) can be considered an initial ESP version in terms of the currently usually stated ESP objectives . Naturally, the ESP practice has basically found to meet almost the needs of all learners who find themselves lacking the skills of speaking or writing in English , or both in specific contexts . In other words, the term ESP, of course, addresses all those who have to use English, as a medium in communication in job, career, study, and other integrative social contacts.*

*Although theorists and experts, in the field of English Language Teaching/Learning , have suggested a set of general principles to be used as grounds taking particular role in the designing and planning of any ESP curriculum, it seems that designers and planners' views differ in the point of both theory and practice, i.e. they differ, according to the cultural and academic background of each of them , in the point of methodology and the prospects each of them imagines for the curriculum in question, and let alone the most critical factor of whether the ESP course designer is a native-English speaker or a non-native-English speaker, besides the consequences of the cultural and linguistic supply which may spring up to effect the a adequacy of any curriculum . (Colebrook 1996 cited in Crooks et al. , 1996.)*

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*Here, in the local Iraqi case of ESP phenomenon , it generally seems not only very poor in quality, but also very limited even in quantity, compared with the global practice mentioned somewhere else in this study .*

*The researchers took one of the few ESP courses adopted to be taught in the Iraqi tertiary educational level , as an example of this discouraging Iraqi ESP scene.*

*An examination of the current course materials taught in the colleges of physical education colleges in Iraq ( for the academic years 2005/2006 and 2006/2007 ) , namely the CESCPE , would unfold that only the content comprehension is concerned strongly, while ignoring considerable points of learning EFL , among them ,for instance , in particular the considerations of the learning of language as a communication medium for :*

- *Academic study*
- *The cultural purposes*
- *Social contact*
- *Future career*

*It is true that the CESCPE seemingly appears to satisfy, probably in the least, the academic needs of the targeted audience in the colleges of physical Education, but unfortunately it approximately fails to satisfy the above-mentioned aspects of language learning.*

*This, on the other hand, may give rise to a number of questions such as:*

- *Does learning English mean only learning content?*
- *Is English taught for the purpose of helping the learners to learn subjects of their academic specialization?*
- *Is reading comprehension the only technique available in the bag of any ESP curriculum, or rather , is reading the only skill that the language learning can be summarized in?*

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- *Does the ESP learner in the College of Physical Education ( henceforth CPE ) need the EFL course as a channel to enrich his / her specialization study with extra knowledge only, or he / she needs it also to enrich his / her life style in work in particular, and in his/ her life mainstream in general either?*

*The answer of all the above-mentioned questions would logically and emphatically be “ No ” . Simply , because the prospects of study , profession and life in general have so further dimensions than those above-mentioned .*

*However , this , on the other hand, may give rise , at the same time, to a very important question about the learners’ attitude and motivation towards ESP, i.e., whether it is integrative, or instrumental, or both.*

*In a research recently conducted at the University of Diyala for the purpose of evaluating the English Proficiency Test at the university (Al-Jumaily and Al-Khalidi forthcoming) and a survey of the prospective skills needed for the students , as seen by the Deaneries of the Colleges of Physical Education in the Iraqi Universities , have shown and expressed the need to improve and develop the student training in some language skills , such as creative reading and writing besides speaking and communication skills , at which the CESCPE pay very little attention, if none at all . The Deanery of the CPE / University of Diyala listed the following skills as demands for the learners' interest in any ESP course:*

*A) affective reading skills*

*B) creative writing skills such as:*

- research writing*
- proposal writing*
- self expressing*
- study skills*

- report writing

### C) speaking and communication skills

Unfortunately , a survey of the CESCPE showed that this ESP course does not provide the learners with training in any of the afore-mentioned important skills except that in reading comprehension loaded with heavy content.

Thus , it remains to be seen whether the current materials of the CESCPE will satisfy the above-mentioned needs, besides the growing ones specially with the advent and availability of the International Network and the widely received international TV channels .

It is also imperative that, if the current materials are found to be lacking a creative new modern syllabus, consequently a new up-to-date textbook should be prepared for this purpose.

## 2 - Aims

*The study aims at :*

- identifying CPE students' needs in the University of Diyala , and the types of skills they need in ELL
- evaluating the current CESCPE in the light of needs identification and specification
- suggesting a new type of materials , if any to be used as ground in the view to design a sampling textbook which consists at least of one module with two units of a new up- to-date course
- investigating the effectiveness of the new materials from the points of view of experts and teachers in this field.

## 3 - Hypotheses.

*It is hypothesized that :*

- the current materials of the CESCPE taught in CPE are not efficient enough to respond to the needs of the targeted students .

- the suggested materials are more responsive to the needs in (1) above as seen by experts and course teachers.

#### 4- Value of the Study

Curriculum evaluation, improvement and development have given evident good for the interest of ELT throughout the history of education. Curriculum evaluation always leads to syllabus improvement , beside this , evaluation may take different forms. One of these forms was adopted in this study and based on analyzing the materials included in the CESCPE, with reference to the language skills training it provides, and how much this training is adequate to the learners' needs according to how they were specified by the Deanery of the College of Physical Education / University of Diyala .

Results of such analysis would help to make decisions about the adequacy of the CESCPE as an ESP textbook adopted to be taught in a tertiary educational level as the CPEs. Furthermore, Passing such a judgment may later on justify suggesting a sample of a new ESP course for the CPE, or at least draw the attention of the people who have concern over the ELT to the necessity of marking improvements in the field of ESP practice.

Moreover, the evaluation of the CESCPE may open the door to discuss the role of the ESP practitioner, as a complementary factor in the success of any ESP course .

The study is hoped to be of theoretical and practical significance . the theoretical value tends to provide support to research worker in the field of ESP through presenting survey of both the ESP theoretical setting and practice all over the world in general ,and in East and Southeast Asia in particular for the similarity in many aspects between the nature of the ESP objectives in Iraq and those regions' countries

Furthermore the study is hoped to provide knowledge about the ESP ever-growing practice in all over the world . Therefore , the study may be of a great value to those who are concerned with

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*the teaching of English for Special Purposes and textbook designers in such a field , since the pinpointing of the students' recognition and production of the type of English used is targeted here .*

### *5 - Limits*

*The scope of study is restricted to:*

*- evaluating the current syllabus taught to the students , of the first and second grades in the College of Physical Education / University of Diyala , for the academic year 2005/ 2006 .*

*- suggesting a new ESP course for the first year students of the CPE only .*

### *6 - Procedures*

*The procedures to be followed include the following :*

*1 – Presenting the theoretical background of the study by reviewing the relevant literature besides a survey of the studies in the area of ESP*

*2 – Evaluating the current syllabus taught in the CPE in the light of needs identification and specification .*

*3 – Submitting the suggested types of materials, including one model with two units , of a new up-to-date course to a number of experts in the field of EFL in CPE to modify and give their opinions in this respect .*

*4 – Analyzing the specialists responses by using a proper scheme designed for special purposes of testing validity of the hypotheses put forward .*

*5 – Drawing relevant conclusions from the analysis followed by an outline of the general conclusions and recommendations derived from the results of this study .*

## 7- Definition of Basic Terms

*It is worth mentioning that all the definitions presented below are adopted in the present study operationally . The following terms are defined as follows .*

*1.6.1 ESP : A special type of ELT course is planned and designed to be used in a specific discipline of study or in a specified field of work, and usually loaded as many as possible with vocabulary from the register relevant to the concerned field or discipline.*

*1.6.2 : evaluation: It is the process of making decisions about the suitability and adequacy of an ESP teaching program to the specialization in question, and to judge the extent it responds to the learner's needs.*

*1.6.3 Current syllabus : It is the syllabus taught presently in the CPE , namely “ A Course in English For Students in the College of Physical Education “*

*1. 6. 4 Students of CPE : They are the students in the College of Physical Education / University of Diyala / Iraq , who are taught the CESCPE during the academic years 2005 / 2006 and 2006/2007.*

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*Furthermore , the researchers made shift to give a survey, within the theoretical setting , of the ESP phenomena in many parts of the world in general , but they made a particular stop at the ESP Practice in the East and Southern Asian countries, whose EFL conduct , according to what the research unfolded and the researchers believe , has so many features in common with the Iraq EFL practice , which made it possible for the study to use the research community findings concerning the ESP course , in the said countries , in viewing a new ESP course . Consequently , the*



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*study in this point , though not through a clear-cut detailed comparison , unfolded the terribly wide gap between the global dynamic and ever on-going ESP conduct and the static and poorly conducted ESP Iraqi practice . Hence , evidences have been drawn from the conducting of ESP courses in countries like Japan , Korea , Indonesia , Malaysia , Taiwan , China and other countries to show that so many difficulties have been gone across there , in those countries , for the necessity of developing a sort of advanced ESP paradigms would serve not only to teach English as a foreign language , but also to adopt English gradually as a second language in those countries' communities ( Mahuthir 1991-cited in Vasan & Sargunan 1996) . Such paradigms show the attitude, there , towards adopting hierarchical orders of the four skills of language differ from those adopted before in the process of language learning / teaching ( Izzo 1997 , Yoshida 1998 ,Sinhaneti 1994 Chantrupanth 1993 , Shakur et al 1993 etc. ) , such as the following hierarchical order of language skills :*

*writing ;reading; speaking; discussion .*

*However , a critical evaluation was made to the currently taught course , i.e. , the CESCPE unfolded the inadequacy of the course in general , and in objectives , techniques , content and methodology in particular ,according to the following criteria : purpose of the course , teacher readiness , content validity , methodology , design and after-course prospect . This undoubtedly unfolded also the shortages from which this course suffers in the covering of a supposed integrative language learning process through activities deal with the four skills of language not only with certain ones .*

*Before designing the sample ( a module of 2 units ) of the new suggested course a review of the models , which were put forth in the field of ESP all over the world , was very necessary . Yet , in the point of which of such models the researches concerned more , they chose their concern to be restricted to the following :*

### *1 - Models of AN ESP*

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*It is said that almost all the ESP model designs have emerged from Hutchinson and Water's model . This model (cited in Carreon and Balarbar 1997) consists of the following components: INPUT, CONTENT, LANGUAGE, and TASK.*

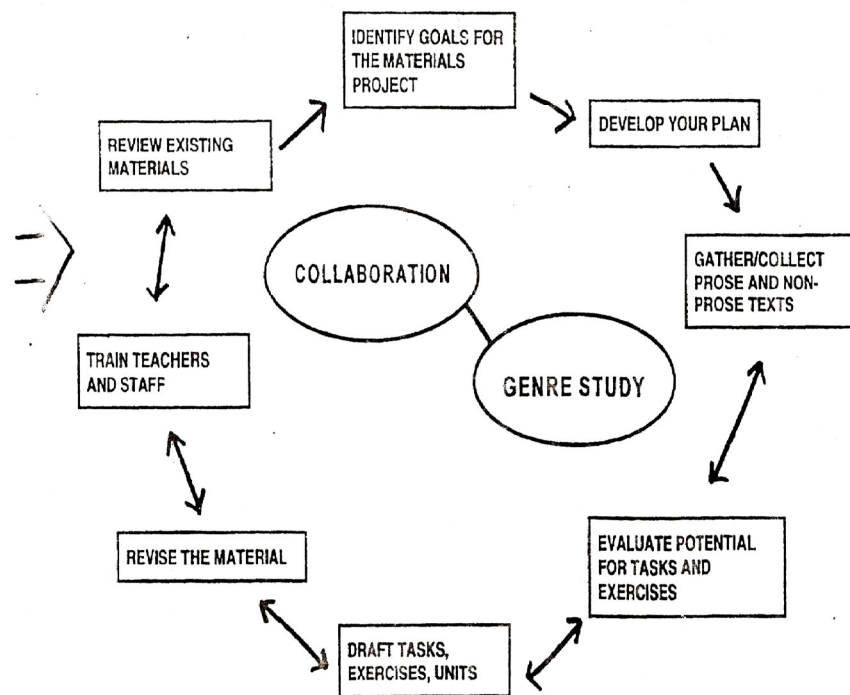
*INPUT is defined as a text (written or oral) used to stimulate students for activities and a source for new language items and correct models of language use.*

*CONTENT is drawn from the input ; involves exercises to stimulate thinking. LANGUAGE is meant enabling students to analyze and manipulate language. Finally, TASK is identified as a tool leads the learners forward using previously learnt content and language in a certain communicative activity. The above-mentioned model, can obviously show or suggest what types of materials can be implied and expressed by sequence of lessons and exercised. It is as Carreon and Balarbar(1997)state " the model " that " answers a major concern of the ESP materials writer ", besides, we add, it can even be of a great help to the ESP materials compiler either.*

*On the other hand, although acknowledging the importance of Hutchinson and Waters' model, Carreon and Balarbar (1997) argues that the model responds only the major concern of the ESP materials, while it does not thoroughly explain the process of conceptualizing, planning and writing materials for a group of learners.*

*Hence, instructors of ESP programs at De La Salle University, Manilla , Philippine ( Carreon (1996 ) , developed a cyclical model , rather than the linear one of Hutchinson and Waters' .The following diagram illustrates their conceptions :*

## A PARADIGM FOR ESP MATERIALS PREPARATION



--based on the paper presented by Edwina Carreon and Corazon Balarbar at the Orlando TESOL (March 14, 1997)

*However, practically, planning and implementing a syllabus for an ESP course entails devising a series of certain detailed practical and cultural needs of the learners. Such needs no doubt, should be translated into sufficient amount of exercises and activities distributed over the most sought after language skills, for the situation, with significantly stricken balance. And, supposedly, the most sought after language skills, which are adopted in our theory for the designing suggested new course, namely the ESP – Course for Students in the Colleges of Physical Education (*

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henceforth ESP-CSCPE ) , can be illustrated , in the following suggested hierarchical order ( successively in importance ) :

{Reading, Writing, Speaking Listening}.

*It is conspicuously obvious that our hierarchy is different from all the hierarchies made before by others, but it may agree with the general Southeast Asian guide-lines hierarchy in giving priority to Reading and Writing successively.*

*The researchers would like to state that this study inclines to adopt no certain methodology as a magical and binding one in mind for the ESP-CSCPE , suggested to be taught in the CPE , but rather they appeal to their talents to imagine innovative one by themselves developed out of Hutchinson and Waters' model , whether in methodology or in drawing the more progressive design model .*

## *2 - The Model this Study Adopted*

*However, it is true that the cyclic model , of the Philippines ESP instructors , is theoretically a more developed one than Hutchinson and Waters linear one , but on the other hand, it is a more complicatedly abstract one, whereas Hutchinson and Waters model actualizes its simplicity, practicality, generality and affordability.*

*Hence , as for the model of the present study , although it adheres seemingly to the general line of Hutchinson and Waters model , it is in a significantly far different one . It is , if it were , a spiral model , developed by the researchers out of the Hutchinson and Water's ( cited in Carreon & Balabar 1997) as thought to be a more responsive one to the learners needs.*

*Consider the following two versions of the spiral model*

### A SPIRAL DESIGN (1) PARADIGM FOR ESP MATERIALS

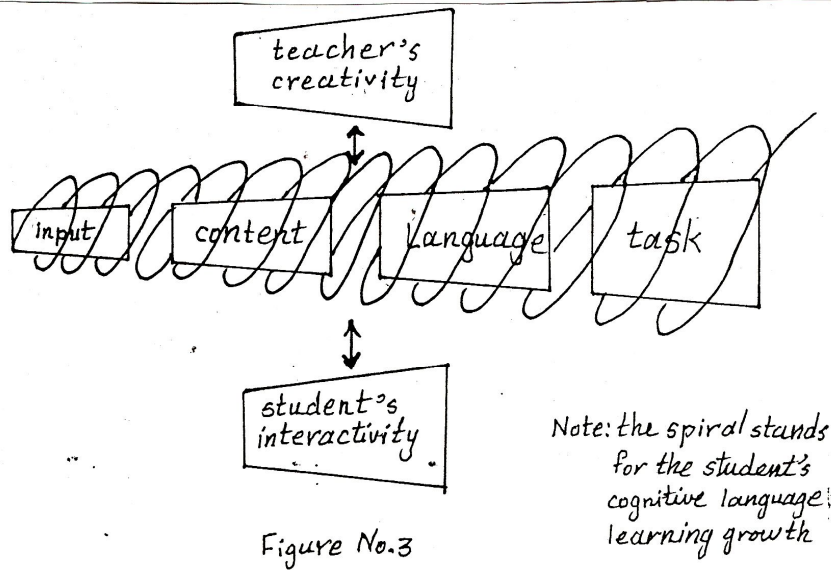


Figure No.3

### A SPIRAL DESIGN (2) PARADIGM FOR ESP LANGUAGE SKILLS HIERARCHICAL ORDER

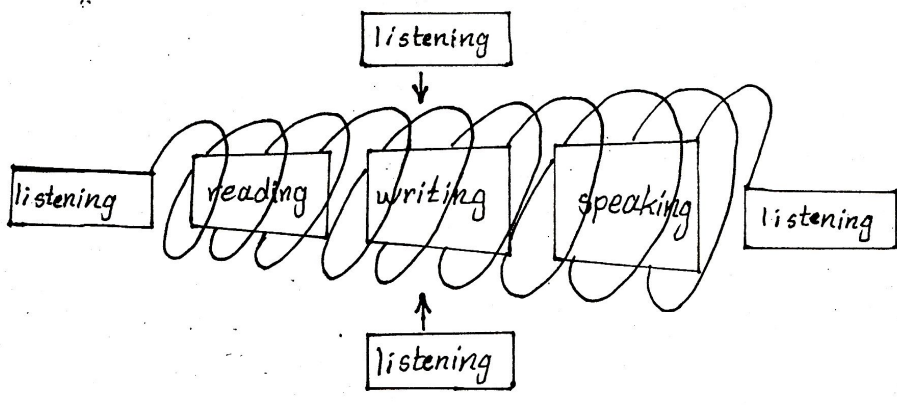


Figure No.4

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*In figure No.3 , the INPUT occupies the spiral's narrowest curves, whereas the TASK occupies the widest ones.*

*Furthermore, the curves, in Figure No.3, are gradually developed into ever widening and advancing connected circles relying most , in this model, on two resources of support ; the practitioner's creativity and the learner's interactivity. The imaginary spiral in the diagram stands for the learner's cognitive growth in language learning , and this largely derived from epistemology. For it is philosophically assumed that man's knowledge has taken a Spiral Course , its sequence connected curves ever widening upwardly.*

*Let us , on the other hand , try to spell out the model's version in figure No.3 into the version in figure No. 4, connected analogically to the language 4 skills, and how they are integrated into the ESP-CSCPE.*

*As it occurs in figure No.4, the listening skill position in the diagram, yet it seems out of the spiral , in fact it is almost accompanying the process from its lower phases to the upper ones, and also from all the sides of the Spiral. Simply, first ; because the learner has only minimum possibilities to practice listening from his/her only model in the classroom ,the practitioner ; whereas he/she has the maximum possibilities with unlimited chances to practice learning outside the classroom depending on his/her motivation ; from the countless resources of the media and other electronic tools from the simplified ones to the more advanced ones such as movies of all kinds , specific English language radio programs , TV programs and CDs programs , and let alone the internet programs in general.*

*Secondly ; there is no existence of a pedagogical or methodological prescription that dare claiming that it can make an undergraduate communicate fluently within months in a non-English speaking background environment like the Iraqi one, else why this goal have not yet been achieved in all the Iraqi pretertiary programs of ELT at least , where the learners are*

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*exposed to English for eight years at least ? More is the pity when we state that even the majority of those who graduated in departments , whose medium of communication in instruction is absolutely English , fall short of achieving such a goal till now .*

*However, back to the diagram in figure no.4 to illustrate the positions of the other three language skills, i.e., reading, writing and speaking. These three skills are largely contained in the INPUT, represented by the Lead-in items at the beginning of each item , of the ESPCSCPE . As a matter of fact, one of the features of this newly suggested Course method is the emphasis on the role of reading and writing skills in determining what the learners encounter.*

*Furthermore, the assumed training in these two skills, in this sample Course, mostly is not programmed only to satisfy the learners needs of study skills which are almost reading and writing skills, but also to propose possibilities of developing and improving upon very poor speaking skills and make them better through two tributaries: first ; a relatively teacher-lead environment , and second by using access accumulation on reading and writing training. In other words , making it possible for the learner to acquire acceptable speech habits accessed by building sufficient verbal competency repertoire through the occurrence of intensive training in reading and writing , whether in CONTENT exercises or in LANGUAGE activities . Therefore , speaking appears , on the one hand, , in our spiral model in figure no.4, as though it is an outcome of reading and writing , while on the other hand it intervenes the whole ESP-CPCPE from the very beginning of the unit to the end of it , as a teacher-led activity. Hence , it needs not to remind the reader about our theory's guidelines meeting the CPE learners' needs of ESP specified by authorities cited in the lines above .*

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