



International Journal of Economic Research

ISSN : 0972-9380

available at <http://www.serialsjournals.com>

© Serials Publications Pvt. Ltd.

Volume 14 • Number 15 (Part-II) • 2017

Enrichment of Legal Vocabulary Skills of Economically Deprived Law Students through a Customised Syllabus-A Quasi Experimental Study

M. Ramesh¹ and I. Ajit²

¹ Research Scholar, School of Social Sciences and Languages, VIT - Chennai Campus, Chennai, India

E-mail: ramesh.cmrk@gmail.com

² Assistant Professor, School of Social Sciences and Languages, VIT - Chennai Campus, Chennai, India

E-mail: iajit63@gmail.com

Abstract: 'English for Specific Purposes (ESP)' emerged in 1960s as a branch of English Language Teaching. As an aftermath, ESP had its foray into the domain of legal education too. The students of law need a specific set of language skills for their success in their profession and place of work (court) also. They are unable to use suitable words and expressions for their specific tasks owing to lack of training and practice. The aim of the present study focuses on the enhancement of legal language skills of the less fortunate students of law. The objectives are to correct their mistakes in the use of Dates and Numbers, Legal Terms, Foreign Terminology, Doublets and Triplets. The main purpose of this paper is deal with the enhancement of a specific set of legal terms and vocabulary through a customised syllabus which helps them to attain their level of proficiency at expected levels.

Keywords: Legal Aid, Foreign Terminology, Economically Deprived Students.

INTRODUCTION

People who are underprivileged have more to grieve and have more to overcome.

— Sheryl Sandberg

The purpose of this research is to enhance the basic legal language skills through a draft syllabus under the domain 'English for Specific Purposes (ESP)'. In 1960s, ESP developed into a popular field of EFL teaching. At this moment, its improvement is reflected in the rising number of universities proposing Master of Arts in ESP programs (e.g. University of Aston and the University of Birmingham in the UK) and in the number of ESP programs recommended to learners in various professional courses offered in institutions of higher education across nations. There is at present a well-established worldwide journal devoted to

ESP discussion, “English for Specific Purposes: An International Journal”, and also the ESP gatherings of the IATEFL and TESOL which are constantly dynamic at their national level seminars in the West. In the countries of the East like Japan, ESP progress has demonstrated a moderate however clear development in the course of recent days. In particular, increased curiosity has been impelled because of the Mombusho’s choice in 1994 to generally hand over the control of university syllabus or curriculum to the universities themselves. This has prompted a quick development in English programs or courses gone for particular courses or disciplines, for instance, ‘English for Chemists’ rather than the usual ‘General English’ program. The ESP group of people or community in Japan has additionally turned out to be more characterized, with the JACET ESP SIG started in 1996 (presently with 28 persons) also the JALT N-SIG started later and conducted conferences in the University of Aizu.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the article titled “A General View on the Relationship between ESP and EGP,” **Alexandra-Valeria Popescu (2010)** presented a study as an attempt to inquire succinctly into the relationship between English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English for General Purposes (EGP). In particular, the general purposes as well as their distinctive features were elaborated upon and examined. According to the findings of this research, a parallel scheme could be drawn between ESP and EGP in order to present their common and specific characteristics in appropriate ways.

Devika Malini (2011) attempted to evaluate English Language Teaching in India. According to the findings of her research, out of 74% of literates in India, only 13% of them might possibly read and write English well. A minuscule of them goes for professional studies; economically well-off students form majority of numbers in medical education while most of the less-fortunate learners pursue legal studies. The economically deprived students in the professional colleges, especially in law colleges, are mostly first generation scholars and a majority of them lack communication and language skills in English.

The researcher went through some articles and theses on ELT and ESP. With the help of these studies, a research gap was found out so as to frame the following hypothesis.

HYPOTHESIS

The researcher conducted the experiment in Government Law College, Tiruchirappalli (TN). The formulated hypothesis of the research is as follows:

Hypothesis

There is significant difference between the mean score performance of economically deprived learners of the Experimental Group and the Control Group in the exit-test on the use of legal terminology.

SAMPLE OF THE RESEARCH

The sample of the research consisted of sixty students studying second year LL.B. Students from Government Law College, Tiruchirappalli. This sample size consisted of 60 students. They were classified into two different groups as follows:

1. Experimental Group - 30 Students - Economically Deprived Students - Rural Background
2. Control Group - 30 Students - Economically Deprived Students - Rural Background

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research study consists of two parts in terms of methodology used. The first and main part is the quantitative study. This quantitative part of the study employs a paper-pencil test to collect the data from the sample.

The second part is qualitative part of the study. This part serves as the supplement to the first part of study. It makes use of a questionnaire on the attitude and Judgmental Skills, perception of the needs and abilities of the learners.

Instruments

The paper-pencil test made use of a test paper containing 28 closed-ended questions which carried a maximum of 40 marks. The questionnaire used in the quantitative study for this research.

Materials

The materials used in the study are write-ups and presentations on the topics in the syllabus framed by the researcher. They could help the sample group to acquire new legal words and terms and use them aptly. The draft syllabus, which is in four units, has scope to enrich the students' knowledge and application of legal terms and basic grammar skills. The syllabus contains the following units:

1. Basic Standards of Legal Writing,
2. Essential Grammar & Legal Editing,
3. Legal Writing Skills, and
4. Judgmental Skills.

The researcher made use of areas relevant to this study, viz. legal vocabulary, terms of art, foreign terminology and basic grammar as suggested in the first three units of the syllabus.

Procedure

The study began with an entry-test and concluded with an exit-test. The participants were tested individually. In the beginning, the participants were told that the study would focus on legal words, phrases, terminology and basic grammar items such as tense forms, preposition and speech.

Entry-Test

Initially, all the participants completed an entry-test, which was helpful to assess their entry level knowledge in the target skills. In this session, the participants were given vocabulary tests to find out or choose the meanings of few words and phrases related to legal terms. They were also asked to make use of them in

appropriate contexts. The test was administrated in order to test the students' knowledge and usage of legal words, phrases and terminology, and a few grammar items.

Instructional Sequence

The researcher taught the topics related to vocabulary and terminology in the draft syllabus to the experimental group in forty hours. The control group had their instruction on these aspects as stipulated in the prescribed syllabus based on the principles of EGP. The experimental group was taught in such a manner as to lay emphasis on the legal terms and vocabulary based on the principles of ESP. So the participants learnt specific words and legal writing skills properly.

Exit-Test

The Exit-test was conducted among the students after teaching legal words, phrases and foreign terms. Later a questionnaire based on Likert model was also administered to the students. The data from both the entry-test and the exit-test were then presented together and interpreted.

Finding Mean Value

Mean is the simplest measurement of the central tendency. It is also known as arithmetic average. During the data assessment of the research, mean values are found for the parameters of the knowledge and usage of legal vocabulary and terminology based on the performance of the economically deprived learners in the entry test and the exit test.

RESULTS AND INFERENCE

Homogeneity

The sample taken for the study had two groups of 30 students each. All of them hailed from families each of which had a monthly income below Rs. 10,000/-. The purposive sampling saw to it that all of them came from rural areas. The entry-test performance was used to analyse whether these two groups – control and experimental – were homogenous in nature as regards their knowledge and use of legal vocabulary and terminology.

Table 1
Performance of Experimental and Control Groups at the Entry-test

	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>T</i>
Experimental-Entry-Test	30	23.11	7.13	.703*
Control-Entry-Test	30	24.12	9.12	

* Significant at 0.05 level.

Inference

From Table 1, it is evident that there is markedly slight difference between the performances of the control group and the experimental group at the entry-test. The *t* – value is .703, which is significant at 0.05 level. It shows the mean score of the control group (24.12) is slightly higher than the mean score of the

experimental group (23.11) at the entry-test. Since there is not a wide variation, these two groups can be construed as homogenous in the aspects of the knowledge and usage of legal vocabulary and terminology.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 2
Performance of Experimental Group and Control Group at the Exit-test

	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>T</i>
Experimental Group-Exit-Test	30	68.30	9.212	32.225*
Control Group-Exit-Test	30	15.73	4.241	

* Significant at 0.05

Inference

From the above Table 2, it is evident that the difference between the performance of the control group and the experimental group at the exit-test is highly significant. The *t* – value is 32.225, which is significant at .000 level. It shows that the mean scores of the control group and the experimental group differ significantly. The mean score of the experimental group is 68.30 and the control group is 15.73, the difference between both the scores is. In this context, the hypothesis, ‘There is significant difference between the mean score performance of economically deprived learners of the Experimental Group and the Control Group in the exit-test on the use of legal terminology’ is accepted.

CONCLUSION

Economically deprived students can enhance their language skills and even public speaking skills if there is a right curriculum framework in place. With the help of a customised syllabus based on the principles of ESP, the experimental group in this study performed well in enriching their knowledge and use of legal vocabulary and terminology, having received career oriented instruction and materials. The result of this quasi-experimental research method is positive. The special English syllabus gave them a new and effective perspective. Though EGP and ESP focus on all the four skills (LSRW), the principles of ESP score better from the perspective of application. This aspect gives the learners confidence and scope in using the language actively. Through this study the participants learned a lot of things related to their field. Hence, the researcher suggests that a customised language syllabus based on the principles of ESP could be given its due place in the general curriculum of Government Law Colleges for the career development of the students of law.

REFERENCES

- Dudely-Evans, Tony (1998). *Developments in English for Specific Purposes: A Multi- disciplinary Approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hutchinson, Tom & Waters, Alan (1987). *English for Specific Purposes: A Learner-centered Approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ramesh M. & Ajit I. (2016). *Enhancement of Legal Writing and Advocacy Skills through ESP for Law Students*. Serials Publications. Man in India.
- Haigh, Rupert. (2009). *Legal English*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge-Cavendish.
- Goyal Vishal (2012). *Fix Your Problems - the Tenali Raman Way*, V & S Publishers, New Delhi. ISBN-978-93-815883-5-2.

ANNEXURE

Test Paper

I. Choose the appropriate meaning of words:

- 1) Guilt
 - a) Denial
 - b) Acceptance
 - c) Confession
 - d) Acquittal
- 2) Banned
 - a) Isolated
 - b) Delayed
 - c) Stopped
 - d) Discouraged
- 3) Defendant
 - a) An individual who argues cases for the government
 - b) An individual against whom a lawsuit is filed
 - c) A person who blackmails others
 - d) A person who prevents attacks from others
- 4) Verdict
 - a) Judgment
 - b) Information
 - c) Traditional values
 - d) Custody
- 5) Capital offense
 - a) Provide relief from blame
 - b) Accuse formally
 - c) Order from the headquarters
 - d) A crime punishable by death

II. Explain the following:

- 6) Parole.....
- 7) De facto
- 8) To Confiscate
- 9) Legal Representative.....
- 10) Habeas Corpus.....

III. What do you mean by the following Latin terms?

- A) Latin terms
- 1) null and void –
 - 2) Mens rea –

Expand the following:

- B) Abbreviations:
- 1) F.I.R. -
 - 2) CPCID -
 - 3) CCR(SC) -

IV. Read the following confusing words and frame sentences using each of the words in them:

1. Conduct – Contact
2. Principal – Principle

V. Grammar:

a) Preposition:

1. The van will stop here (on, at, in) 2:30 p.m.
2. My daughter will come home June next year. (On, at, in)
3. He started this work (on, at, in) 2010.

b) Tenses:

1. The Bar Council..... (frame) some new rules next year.
2. The lawyer in that firm (handle) my civil case for the last two years.
3. Kumar..... (file) a complaint against Suresh last week.

c) Punctuation:

1. The uncles friend sat in the park
2. what is your name
3. He shouted at them go away they hate you

d) Direct into Indirect Speech:

1. Raj Kumar said, "I am going to Chennai."
2. "Alas! I have broken my uncle's pen," said he.