

Teaching a Second Language: How Multi-Lingual Collaboration and Munby's 'Needs and Needs Analysis' Work

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Manuscript Received: 27 June 2019 - Revised: 09 Sept 2019 - Accepted: 30 Sept 2019

ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the teaching and learning process of English as a second language, especially in the context of Bangladesh where students in any academic institutions like colleges or universities are taught and instructed by teachers supposedly trained and skilled in teaching English as Foreign Language (EFL). It explores how an EFL teacher—using English as the primary mode of instruction—might deploy a methodological combination, where teacher transmission and student collaboration can be used as an effective method to teach this particular content-based subject to non-native English speakers. This methodological procedure is arguably influenced by the teacher's EFL background having an undeniable effect on students' input in the lesson, resulting in a syllabus which integrates students' beliefs as well as experiences regarding the use of language in society and deploying a multilingual collaboration among the students in the lectures themselves. Such a version of traditional lecturing and student interaction, which is termed here as "collaborative dialogue", has, to some degree, firstly succeeded in raising the general class level of comprehension and, secondly yet more significantly, lowering the general anxieties about interaction in class. Furthermore, it has also resulted in pooling student input about language use to create a rich, contrastive perspective on sociolinguistic topics.

Keywords: Teaching, Second Language, Multi-Lingual, Collaboration, Munby's 'Needs and Needs Analysis'

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INTRODUCTION

It is important for teachers to find out what each learner needs or lacks, and what they want to learn so that they can ensure a certain level of success for ESL learners. This is usually done through needs analysis, a process—which is used to find out the needs and usually the lacking of a second language learner wanting to learn a language to assist the learner in learning a second language in a better way—is called 'Needs Analysis'. David Nunan, an

Australian linguist, has proposed a theory to find out the needs of students aiming to learn a second language. He then analyses such needs to assist students in learning a second language in a more convenient way. This paper explores various aspects of Nunan's 'Needs and Needs Analysis Theory,' examines its role, applications, and limitations, compared with other related models and theories. This paper also tries to consider the role of Nunan's theory in the context of Bangladesh. Furthermore, this paper will try to explore the content-based teaching of sociolinguistics to Bangladeshi students. With the application of the 'needs analysis model, firstly, it may be possible to outline the syllabus in terms of its aims, methods used in students' evaluation, and the rationale for its topic choice. Thus the main focus of this paper is on the methodology used to teach the syllabus, a combination of transmission and collaboration. The paper thereby tries to make a discussion and draw a conclusion concerning the concept of collaboration among students in the teaching context.

AIM OF THE EVALUATION

This paper throws a light on the substance based instructing of sociolinguistics to Bangladeshi understudies in Bangladesh. Right off the bat, it attempts to assess and diagram the schedule as indicated by the students' needs, as far as its points, techniques utilized in understudies' assessment and the method of reasoning for its theme decision. At that point it portrays the primary focal point of the paper that of the system picked to show the schedule, a blend of transmission and joint effort. A talk and a few ends concerning the idea of joint effort among understudies in this instructing setting at that point pursue. The second piece of the schedule moved the attention on to giving understudies a more extensive point of view on the best way to research the idea of "culture" (utilizing social models and analogies), how good manners and terms of location are communicated and utilized in social relations, how pictures convey distinctive relationship crosswise over societies, how language can be investigated through its different discourse acts (presenting down to earth and talk mindfulness), lastly, how non-verbal language (motions) contrasts crosswise over societies. In synopsis, the prospectus substance were masterminded so as to give understudies experiences into the manner in which they use language in the public arena and how it very well may be seen by others (perlocution) inside a similar locale or nation and in different nations. The course likewise endeavored to empower understudies to wind up scaled down analysts into the language through the reasonable utilization of discourse acts and interactional coding in talk investigation, supporting that examination utilizing interpretative systems (social models like Geertz, 1973; Hall, 1977 and Holliday, 1994). Examination into the course content was taken from two sources, in English by Holmes (1992), *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*, and furthermore in Japanese by Tanaka and Tanaka (1996), *An Invitation to Sociolinguistics*. This reference to both English-language and Japanese assets gave the instructor access to some data which was less somewhat English driven, giving the educator instances of sociolinguistic utilization of language in the Asian setting.

NEEDS AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

"From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs" (Marx, 2000).

'What do we mean by needs?' (Hutchinson & Waters 1987) say that "in the language-centered approach, the answer to this question would be 'the ability to comprehend and produce the linguistic features of the target situation,' for example, the ability to understand the passive voice." According to (White 1988), language needs can be described in terms of "Who? Where? When? Why? What? And How?"

He also says that a rounded picture of needs can be obtained only by checking with the user community and with the learners themselves. On the other hand, Nunan (1988) defines needs analysis as ‘techniques and procedures for obtaining information from and about learners to be used in curriculum development.’

When Hutchinson & Waters (1987) say that “the most characteristic feature of ESP course design – needs analysis ... is a complex process, involving much more than simply looking what the learners will have to do in the target situation.” “Needs analysis is not a once-for-all activity. It should be a continuing process, in which the conclusions drawn are constantly checked and re-assessed.” “The answers to the analysis will probably be different, but the questions that need to be asked are the same.” Now according to White (1988), “in needs analysis, the teacher or planner investigates the language required for performing a given role or roles ... The resulting needs analysis specifies the ends which the learner hopes to achieve. What a needs analysis does not specify is the means by which the ends will be reached.”

HISTORY OF MUNBY’S NEEDS ANALYSIS

White (1988) tells us that “the impetus for needs analysis came from recognition of the link between language code and language use as manifest in the notional-functional approach.” Also, as indicated by Richards and Rodgers (2001) in the second period of the improvement of CLT, the emphasis was on strategies for distinguishing students' needs, and this brought about the proposition to make needs examination a fundamental segment of informative technique. Lastly, John Munby (1978)'s *Communicative Syllabus Design*, Hutchinson and Waters (1984) state, "denoted a watershed in the improvement of ESP. With the improvement of the CNP ... the hardware for distinguishing the necessities of any gathering of students had been given: all the course originator needed to do was to work it."

MUNBY’S NEEDS ANALYSIS

In his *Communicative Syllabus Design*, John Munby (1978) proposes a model for specifying communicative competence. In his model, Munby (1978) says that "one begins with the individual (a language member or class of member) and examines his specific correspondence needs as indicated by the sociocultural and complex factors which interface to decide a profile of such needs.

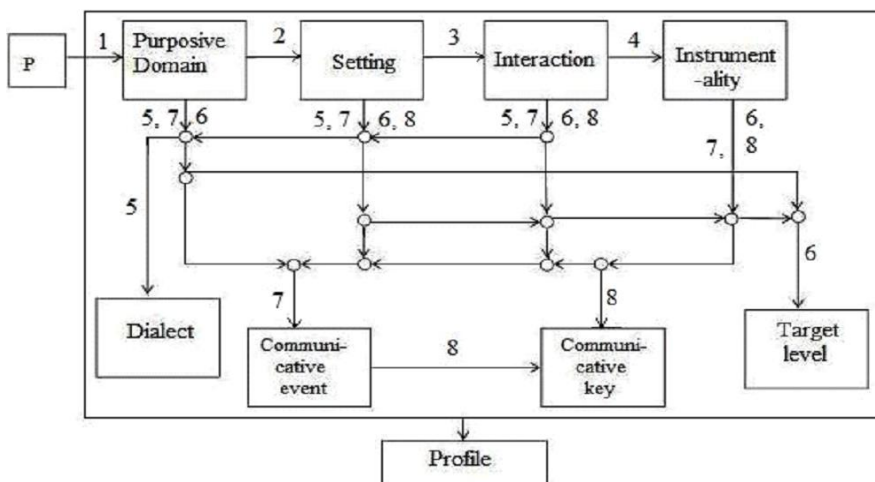


Figure 1: Communication Needs Processor

This profile is in the long run converted into the ESP particular that shows the objective informative skill of the member." In this model, needs analysis is a sub-model, which as White (1988, p. 88) tells us, involves "systematically working through a series of steps in a *Communication Needs Processor*." According to Munby (1978), "in the Communication Needs Processor (CNP) we take account of the variables that affect communication needs by organizing them as parameters in a dynamic relationship to each other... These parameters are of two kinds, those that process non-linguistic data and those that provide the data in the first place; or put another way, one set of constraints (a posteriori) that depend upon input from another set of constraints (a priori) before they can become operational... The a priori parameters are: purposive domain, setting, interaction and instrumentality. The a posteriori parameters are: dialect, target level, communicative event, and communicative key."

STRUCTURE AND SYSTEM OF THE PARAMETERS

Participant

According to Munby (1978) "this input consists of a minimum amount of potentially relevant information concerning identity and language. The data relating to identity tells us the participant's age, sex, nationality, and place of residence. The data concerning language identifies the participant's target language and the extent, if any, of his command of it, his mother tongue, and any other languages that he knows, including the extent of such command."

Purposive Domain

According to Munby (1978), "in this parameter one first establishes the type of ESP (English for Specific Purposes) involved and then specifies the occupational or educational purpose for which the target language is required. After the ESP type has been identified ... questions are asked which establish the general occupational classification, the specific occupation, and the central and other duties. If the purpose is educational, questions are asked which identify the specific discipline, the central area of study, etc."

Setting

"This parameter," Munby (1978) tells us, "deals with features both physical and psychosocial setting ... Questions are asked on the spatial and temporal aspects of the physical setting in which the target language is required for use. This includes place of work and study settings, as applicable. Then a selection has to be made from a list of psychosocial settings which are seen as different environments in which the target language is to be used."

Interaction

According to Munby (1978) "[i]n this parameter one first states the participant's position ... Then ... one identifies the participant's role-set, i.e. the different people with whom he will interact in English in the enacting of a particular role. The role-set identity is also specified here in terms of the size of participation, age-group, sex, and nationality of its members. The interaction of the participant's position with a member of his role-set produces a role-relationship, e.g. assistant master-head master ... [I] interaction relationships ... , here will be specified in terms of the social relationships, e.g. subordinate-superior ..."

Instrumentality

"Here"—Munby (1978) tells us—"one is concerned with identifying constraints on the input in terms of the medium, mode, and channel of communication. One needs to know if the required medium of communication is spoken or written or both, and if the type of command is receptive or productive or both." One needs to know "whether the mode of communication is,

for example, 'monologue, written to be read' (e.g. books of non-fiction) or 'monologue, written to be spoken' (e.g. news bulletins). The channel of communication ... ranges from the commonly required print and face-to-face channels (both unilateral and bilateral) to the rarer radio contact for navigators and the police."

Dialect

According to Munby (1978), "to process the input for dialect" means "to specify whether it is British or American English, or a regional variety of either, that is more appropriate for the participant to produce or understand. The main dimension of dialect with which we are concerned is the regional/non-regional ... although matters of social class and temporal dialect are also dealt with here."

Target Level

Munby (1978) says that "at this stage of the CNP, the participant's target level of command should be stated in terms that will guide the further processing through the model." According to White (1988), the target level "is specified in some detail, including the size, complexity, speed and flexibility of language for receptive and productive purposes, together with the conditions under which it is used, such as tolerance of error and stylistic failure."

Communicative Event

According to Munby (1978), "this parameter is concerned with what the participant has to do, either productively or receptively. The events systematically arrived at are what might be regarded as macro-activities, such as 'waiter serving customer in the restaurant'. The parts, such as 'attending to customer's order' which make up these events, can then be regarded as micro-activities or simply activities. Events consist of communicative activity and subject-matter the term activity includes discourse activities, such as 'note-taking from lectures' or 'writing up experiment', from which specific language skills derive and for which such skills are required. Events, then are broken down into their constituent activities. The subject-matter of an event consists, initially, of topics or referential vocabulary categories for the communicative activities, thus acting as the central generator of the lexical items that the participant has to be able to understand or produce."

Communicative Key

According to Munby (2002), "this parameter is concerned with how (in the sense of manner) one does the activities comprising an event (the one does)." White (1988), tells us that communicative key means "the style of interaction, such as sociable, co-operative, thoughtful." According to Nunan, "here, the syllabus designer needs to specify the interpersonal attitudes and tones the learner will be required to master."

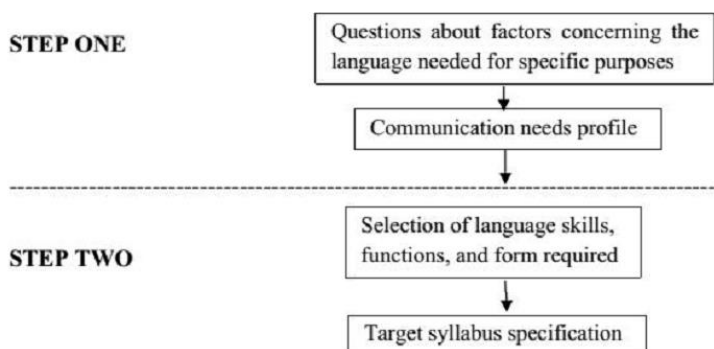


Figure 2: The Munby Processing Model, Source: Munby (1978)

CRITICISM OF MUNBY'S NEEDS ANALYSIS

One positive side of Munby (1978)'s model of needs analysis is that it justifies his claim of using a system to arrive at the specification of the English deemed appropriate for different purposes. Another positive side of his model which once again justifies his awareness of the importance of taking into account "the environment and social relationships obtaining between" the participant and his interlocutors. On the other hand, a negative side of Munby (1978)'s model is his willingly not taking the facts of materials production into account. Unlike, Hutchinson & Waters (1984) who advocates for learning-centered approach, Munby willingly neglects facts like "the number of trained teachers available, the quantity of instruction, the expectations of the institution, traditional strategies of learning, etc."

Many critics have criticized Munby (1978)'s model.

Richterich & Wilkins (1975/80) in White (1988) point out that a person about to learn a foreign language "has only a vague idea, if any, of his future needs" and they advocate surveying the learner group "in order to discover their motivations and their opinions as to their needs." On the other hand, Richterich & Chancerel (1977/80) in White (1988) point out that needs analysis will contribute information not only before the course but during it as well.

Hawkey (1979) commenting on Munby (1978)'s model, says that

Hymesian notions of contextualized language use and Hallidayian views on the functions of language were thus reflected in a systematically organized, sequential, cumulative and comprehensive set of procedures for defining the communicative needs of a particular potential language user.

Swales (1980) in Holliday (1994) "accuses those who put off dealing with the constraints until as late as possible of *calculated procrastination*." The "constraints" which Swales talks about are nothing but, as Holliday (1994) tells us, "the socio-political, logistical, administrative, psycho-pedagogic and methodological constraints" which Munby (1978) "[i]n the epilogue to his book on communicative syllabus design ... describes ... as factors which should be dealt with after rather than in conjunction with the design stage." Holliday (1994) expresses his dissatisfaction with Munby (1978)'s model of needs analysis regime. Widdowson (1984) in Holliday (1994) finds out two problems with Munby (1978)'s needs analysis: "i) there are other things going on in target situations than the utterance of prescribed language functions; ii) students often have far wider aspirations than to be able to operate in limited target situations. This type of linguistically narrow ESP, Widows argues, sees students as slaves to syllabus design and implementation..."

Davies (1981) in White (1988) makes the point that "the Munby (1978) model does not address itself to the political, economic, administrative and personal factors which inevitably influence planning and outcomes."

Mead (1982) in White (1988, pp. 88-89) makes the point that-

the exclusion of implementation constraints, is the tendency of the Munby model to encourage needs analysis in the study or office instead of on the shop floor ... Munby's model seem to encourage a 'hands-off' approach whereby the needs analyst, using the 'Communication Needs Processor', analyses by remote control. The danger is that the analyst will impose his or her own perception and interpretation of needs on the learner.

Johnson (1982, p. 81) in White (1988) points out that needs analysis “enables us to discriminate between various learner types, and to produce syllabus inventories (and courses) especially geared to their needs’, although he observes, this only works satisfactorily ‘as long as we are dealing with groups having the same needs.’”

Hutchinson & Waters (1984) make some points which are as follow:

- “By taking the analysis of target needs to its logical conclusion, Munby’s model shows the ultimate sterility of a language-centered approach to needs analysis.” (p. 54)
- “... [W]hat the CNP produces is a list of the linguistic features of the target situation. But there is much more to needs than this.” (p. 54)
- “... [I]t is quite possible that the learners’ views will conflict with the perceptions of other interested parties: course designers, sponsors, and teachers.” “It is naïve to base a course design simply on the target objectives, just as it is naïve to think that a journey can be planned solely in terms of the starting point and the destination. The needs, potentials and constraints of the route (i.e. the learning situation) must also be taken into account, if we are going to have any useful analysis of learner needs.”
- “Analysis of the target situation can tell us what people do with language. What we also need to know is how people learn to do what they do with language. We need, in other words, a learning-centered approach to needs analysis.”

White (1988), while commenting on Munby (2002)’s needs analysis speaks about a positive side of Munby (2002)’s needs analysis, which is that it makes us realize that equal weighting for all four skills is not appropriate to all learners. He also says that “the principles of needs analysis are sociolinguistic ally based, and procedures involving both the user community (i.e. the target language users) and the learner have evolved.” His thought is that “although needs analysis has tended to be regarded as a pre-course stage, I see it as an on-going process which will help both learners and teachers by providing feedback according to which succeeding stages of a programmer can be modified, and in doing so, needs analysis can make provision for the unexpected outcomes which ... are seen as to be such an important aspect of education.” White (1988) points out a defect in Munby (1978)’s model by saying that it begins by ignoring the current situation, which may prove to be the most important factor in the whole equation. White (1988) also points out that gaining access to the user community whose language use forms the basis of the learners’ needs may be a practical difficulty. White (1988) also suggests that ‘having the informants talk through those situations and episodes in which they are required to use the target language may prove more enlightening to the needs analyst.’ Nunan (1988) informs us that Munby (1978)’s model pays “too little to the perceptions of the learner. As it is also developed with reference to individual learners, it may ultimately be self-defeating for classroom teaching.” He also says that Munby (1978)’s model “has led, in some instances, to syllabuses with a narrow focus. The assumption behind the development of some such syllabuses is that there are certain aspects of language which are peculiar to the contexts in which it is used and the purposes for which it is used. The idea that a given language is divided into lots of subordinate and discrete ‘universe of discourse’ or ‘mini-languages’ is unsatisfactory. Whatever learners’ final communicative purposes are, they should be taught those elements that represent a ‘common core’ of language”. He tells us that “the great majority of learners want ‘general English’ rather than English for the sorts of specific purposes indicated above.”

AN EXAMPLE OF MUNBY'S NEEDS ANALYSIS

It is very much possible to apply Munby (2002)'s needs analysis in Bangladeshi context. Let us see how the profile of needs of a Palestinian young man—who has come to study at the Department of Mass Media and Communication in Dhaka University—looks like:

Participant	Twenty-five years-old; Arabic-speaking male; Present command of Bangla-very elementary; Elementary command of Hibru.
Purposive domain	Educational- to study mass media and communication
Setting	Educational institution in Bangladesh; Intellectual, quasi-professional psycho-social setting
Interaction	Principally with teachers, other students, and shopkeepers.
Instrumentality	Spoken and written, receptive and productive; Face-to-face and print channels
Dialect	Understand and produce standard Bangla dialect
Communicative event	Studying reference material in Bangla, reading current literature, taking Bangla lessons to develop ability to understand subject material of mass-media and communication
Communicative key	Learner to Instructor

METHODOLOGY: TRANSMISSION AND COLLABORATION

A course was instructed in Basic English with some Bangladeshi students. Understudies were urged to utilize their favored language in gathering and pair exercises and discourses, implying that Bangla was not viewed as an illegal language in the homeroom. The language of addressing, albeit essentially English, much of the time exchanged among English and Bangla for resulting gathering and pair work among understudies for association with the instructor. The motivation behind such a multilingual methodology, which regularly shows itself in code-exchanging between dialects, was to bring down the tension of correspondence with the educator in an unknown dialect. In spite of the fact that the target of the course was to build consciousness of sociolinguistics, the side-effect of this procedure could be contended as one having the capacity to improve understudy to understudy English relational abilities. Following this substance based, instead of semantic, objective, much accentuation was set on understudy coordinated effort. This is fundamentally what I, as an educator, saw as having extended from EFL preparing and practice. It was essentially an exchange of convictions about guidance (or maybe better communicated, the development of learning) from EFL into substance put together showing centering with respect to the understudies not just as beneficiaries of information, however as co-constructors. This is taken from my encounters in staggered EFL classes where understudy elicitation of lexis and sentence structure and the trade and understudy coordinated effort to arrange implications are considered as standard practice.

CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to make it noticeable that how multi-lingual coordinated effort in a sociolinguistics course has made a functioning air where the talk and arrangement of substance based importance, or "synergistic exchange" (Swain, 2000, p.97) in "networks of students" (Miller, 2002), have been assessed as being rousing to the understudies. It ought not to concede to any discussion here that such association is essential in the instructing of sociolinguistics, initially, as the topic in the prospectus is best upgraded by understudy encounters and points of view, and besides, since it raises and supports the general dimension of understanding for

conceivably difficult subjects. Furthermore, the evaluative framework, in its turn, has also contributed to this motivation, since it is based on active participation in this process rather than accuracy alone. This methodologically hybrid approach to teaching and learning may be argued, in this case, as being a direct influence from the language-sensitivity and group-work orientation in the EFL training and experiences of the instructor. Future courses should, however, take into consideration the academic culture shock of the demands on students of the interactive lecture requiring students to adopt a student-centred, collaborative learning mode. It is also clear that in an LSP context Munby (1978)'s model is applicable in Bangladesh. But, Munby (1978)'s model is not powerful enough to be used in designing syllabus of SSC or HSC or any other type of academic syllabus. In Bangladeshi context, eclectic syllabus will work well in the academic level and only Munby (1978) model is not enough for designing any multi-strand syllabus. So, the limitations of Munby (1978) model, it seems are universal.

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