

## **ANALYZING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING NEEDS IN ESL CLASSROOM**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Needs analysis is an important means of conducting research prior to designing and evaluating lessons/materials/syllabus and it helps draw a profile of students/course in order to determine and prioritize the needs for which students require English (Richards et al, 1992). This paper presents a needs analysis project we have developed for the English as a second language learners at Uzbekistan state world language university. Our needs analysis project aims at investigating students' needs and expectations from English courses with regard to technological resources both for in-class and out-of-class activities, supplementary materials for both in-class and out-of-class activities, assessment and evaluation techniques, and teacher-student interaction.*

**Keywords:** *learning strategies, authentic materials, overgeneralization, principle eclecticism.*

### **АННОТАЦИЯ**

*Анализ потребностей является важным средством проведения исследования до разработки и оценки уроков/материалов/программы и помогает составить профиль студентов/курса, чтобы определить и расставить приоритеты в потребностях, для которых учащимся требуется английский язык (Richards et al, 1992). В этой статье представлен проект анализа потребностей, который мы разработали для изучающих английский как второй язык в Узбекском государственном университете мировых языков. Наш проект по анализу потребностей направлен на изучение потребностей и ожиданий студентов от курсов английского языка в отношении технологических ресурсов как для занятий в классе, так и внеклассных занятий, дополнительных материалов для занятий как в классе, так и внеклассных занятий, оценки и методы оценивания и взаимодействие учителя и ученика.*

**Ключевые слова:** *стратегии обучения, аутентичные материалы, свержобобщение, принцип эклектизма.*

## INTRODUCTION

Needs Analysis report, collecting data about the learner’s language skills, his or her purpose for learning English, learning strategies, styles and identifying some problems that the learner is experiencing in foreign language acquisition. The Needs analysis took place in UzSWLU and my learner was a second year student Shohista Imomaliyeva. While observing the lesson, I paid attention each student’s participation and I found this learner very sociable and responsible for her each task. Therefore, I decided to work with this student.

The learner’s profile

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Name: Shokhista Imomaliyeva</li> <li>•Gender: Female</li> <li>•Contact: (998) 90 957 29 46</li> <li>•Nationality: Uzbek</li> <li>•Date of birth: 17.04 1998</li> <li>•Place of Birth: Tashkent</li> <li>•Occupation: Student</li> <li>•Major: Foreign language and literature (English)</li> <li>•Hobbies: cooking, reading detective books</li> <li>•Native language: Uzbek</li> <li>•Languages can speak: Uzbek, Russian as a second language, English as a foreign language, French not fluently.</li> <li>•Career aspirations: wants to work foreign investment company</li> <li>•Travel: never been in English speaking countries</li> <li>•Personality: sociable, enthusiastic for learning</li> </ul>	
Reasons for choosing learning English as a major	Wants to learn more about foreign countries, people and their lifestyle.
Writing skill	Tries to brainstorm ideas, structure of a composition prior to writing, uses dictionary to use academic vocabulary
Speaking skill	Always takes preparation before presentations, brings her speech ready made phrases, tries to

	participate each speaking activity
Reading comprehension	Doesn't manage her time to fulfill all required comprehension questions, spends much time for comprehension, analysis of materials. Generally, understands the main points.
Listening skill	Has better ability for listening than other skills, sometimes has problems with speed of listening.
Grammar	Obeys all grammar rules, produces grammatical correct sentences both written and oral discourse, sometimes can not use complex structures when time is limited.
Vocabulary	Used passive grammar translation approach to learn vocabulary. Currently learning academic vocabulary in context.
Transferable skills	Tries to approach all her assignments creatively, has good organization, problem solving, thinking skills.

## **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

I used the following sources to obtain information about the learner:

- interview
- questionnaire
- classroom observation
- samples of student writing.

I believe that interview and questionnaire can give background information about the learner. They help to define learner's personality and learning goals. Classroom observation and writing samples provide facts to define learner's academic field. For instance, through observation I would know directly learner's readiness, activeness in the lesson and language skills. Student's writing

demonstrates her writing structure, grammatical competence and lexical source. My student is considered adult learner, therefore I took consent form from herself after the first day of observation. I explained her my project and stages for fulfilling it. Then we decided to meet for the interview.

## **DISCUSSION AND RESULTS**

To begin with the interview that I had with Shokhista, it covered 10 questions. In the first question as usual she had to introduce herself and her occupation. The second question requires more specific information about the learner's learning styles, strategies and how she uses them in learning process. According to her response, Shokhista is not an autonomous learner, she is used to learning language with the guide of a teacher but currently she has noticed the benefits of self study endeavors to learn English independently. So that she considers that she is mostly a visual and kinesthetic learner. In addition, when I asked about English skills that she needs to develop she answered writing and speaking without hesitation. Because she has difficulty with writing, assignments and communicating fluently in target language. With regard to fourth and fifth question, she believes both vocabulary and grammar are essential for learning English. Shokhista informed me that she regularly uses textbooks, dictionaries and listening audios as a language learning material. As far as I am concerned, she learned and still learning English grammar explicitly and tries to learn by heart academic words from vocabulary books. However, after some days when she wants to use these words in her speech, she will not remember. This is one of the main problems of her learning strategy. The underlying cause of her situation is that she is not learning vocabulary in context, she is learning them passively. Furthermore, she acknowledges that she has really developed her team work skills, presentation, time management and organization skills which can be helpful in a long run. In terms of individual, pair or group work, she prefers working individually. Because she believes that this gives her full responsibility and she prepares the assignment without relying on others' approach and considerations. Finally, when we talked about her learning problems and further studies to improve her English and learning strategies, I made sure that now she is aware of new language learning tools, necessity of using authentic materials like reading English newspapers, magazines and articles, communication with friends outside of the classroom. And then she mentioned about her problems with fluency and accuracy while speaking and word choice while writing.

During the interview, I noticed that the student wasn't overly conscious of herself when she spoke. In some places she confused her words. She avoids teacher's immediate correction method, because she worries about her mistakes and teacher's comment can cause lose her following ideas. That's why she prefers after correction method. If I inform about the student's oral mistakes, they were her sentences structure, pronunciation and lack of vocabulary. She overgeneralized one rule for one item of the language to another item. For example: she added –s to uncountable nouns in order to make plural form.

Another important source that I used for needs analysis is questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 12 statements based on learning process and the learner had to read each statement and choose one of the three options that describes her well. From the conducted interview and questionnaire, I discovered that the learner needs interaction with others while learning target language. she adopted only individual tasks, therefore, she has poor communication skills. If I were her teacher, I would encourage her to learn and use language in collaboration. The questionnaire demonstrated that the learner always understand what the speaker is saying about in daily situations, however, she can not catch the full meaning of the listening at the first listening the recorder. It means that she needs to learn about listening strategies and practice them more. The same thing happens with her reading skill. She reported that sometimes she uses prediction, before reading. But she doesn't know where she should use prediction, inferring or reading for details.

Overall, I observed 3 "Listening and speaking" lessons of the group 213. There I tried to figure out Shokhista's attitude towards specific subjects, motivation, activeness and her groups knowledge and needs. Moreover, I filled observation form by focusing on her speech. This student is considered as an active learner because she always tried to do all tasks on time. She kept good eye contact when speaking and used body language. During her presentations because of excitement, sometimes she confused some words. I noticed that she used correct grammar and sentence structure but couldn't produce complex sentences, had difficulty to ask grammatically correct questions. I told her overgeneralization errors and advised enlarging her vocabulary. After a week I began to observe her participation of lessons again. After that I noticed that her self-confidence increased, while speaking sometimes she was able to correct her own mistakes, she was losing overgeneralizing plural forms of nouns. I thought that more practice helped to develop her speaking skills, presentation and teamwork skills. She said that she was losing her anxious before answering questions or present some project works. Nevertheless, she couldn't produce complex sentences. I advised

this student to speak English in her daily life with other people, friends, teachers and to focus her attention on native speakers talk. In this way, she can learn new phrasal words, take ready sentence structure. The members of the group have their own ideas, they use their higher order thinking skills, but they couldn't devote themselves learning target language. I didn't feel their any effort or attempt to learn English better. In fact, while expressing their point of view, it they couldn't find English equivalent they easily use their L1. I don't think that the teacher is using natural method because she required using their English time to time. I would use direct method in order to teach this group, encourage the students to communicate only in English. Although I only observed the group's LS lessons, I had a chance to look through my learner's writing compositions to gain more information. In the student's first reading log I came across grammatical errors about reported speech. In some places almost all her reading log and writing tasks she skipped writing to be forms are, was, were and etc. they are not significant errors but they should be corrected. Next errors are about tenses. Overall, especially she made mistakes while using past tenses. For example: apologize – should be apologized, bring bad luck to the ship – brought bad luck. In addition, she didn't correctly noun prepositions and verb prepositions. She used relative closes effectively but in some sentences she didn't choose right relative pronouns. Her second reading log was written much better than former one, because there were less grammatical mistakes. However, again we can see there mistakes of relative closes and passive forms. If I tell about her writing tasks, she similarly simple words, in some sentences she couldn't find appropriate words in order to express her point of view. In her second writing task, she confused writing some articles. Also her grammatical errors include modal verbs. This student should try to use more modal verbs in her speech or essays. Generally, all her writing samples, including Critical report on stories and poem, sample for IELTS writing task 1, samples of complaint and informal letter written in satisfactory level, but not meets or exceeds the standards. Because, she obeyed grammar rules, used appropriate linking words, there were coherence and cohesion in her written discourse. Nevertheless Shokhista repeated the same grammatical structures and vocabulary. She didn't use academic format, any complex sentences. On the other hand, these were not significant errors, admittedly, the learner was able to deliver her message to the reader. The most important fact is that she has her own view and perspective and she always tries to share it with others.

## **CONCLUSION**

Through this study I discovered how we can apply theory into practice. I had some methods for data collection but I learned using them in different situations. This study showed me that it is difficult to meet learners' demands because each learner of the same group has different needs. Furthermore, the learner's needs may change continuously, after fulfilling the previous one. I would suggest teaching this learner and group through principle eclecticism. Integration of necessary aspects from direct, content based instruction and communicative language teaching methods would be effective to acquire the target language. I will make this kind of group busy under different projects, require them daily oral reports and increase language skills through practice. During observing the class I learned where we should use particular methods and techniques. The lesson plan designed for the second year students of Uzbekistan state World Languages University. Topic of the lesson "National festivals" was selected based on the original version of Listening & Speaking course syllabus. In fact, 4 hours of the course devoted to the topic "Cross cultural communication." Having considered the results of class observations, students' needs, the topic which focuses on culture is more specified. As students' major is teaching foreign language, they implicitly learn culture together with language. Language and culture are interrelated to each other and students should increase their cultural understanding during the input session of the course. Moreover, it is not challenging to address content and language objectives of the lesson under the topic of culture. The topic is interesting enough for the second year students to develop their listening and speaking skills. The content of the lesson plan based on student-centered approach and includes activities that promote students' interaction and cooperation through using authentic materials. Pre-task activity of the lesson is called Match up. Students are distributed various pictures of festivals and they have to find the descriptions of the pictures from the cards around the walls in the classroom. After finding the descriptions, students share their viewpoint about national festivals and their roles. The aim of the activity to prepare the students to the main listening part, energize them, activate their schemata and increase their attention to detail. This also helps students to interact as they try to find similarities and differences of the pictures and descriptions in peers in order to find their own. This activity can be adopted and modified according to the level, interests of the class and can cover a range of topics across all key learning areas, including numeracy, literacy, technology, history, science for English for specific purposes classes. There is differentiation provided for our target learners as well. In this stage rather than sticking the description cards

around the walls in the classroom, teacher can distribute cuts of all festival pictures and descriptions and students work in pairs to match them. This variation can be applied in adult learners class who don't prefer total physical response or in order to alter mode of interaction. Because differentiated instruction suggests pair work rather than the whole work. Main activity starts with Harmer's Silent viewing technique . currently, with the development of technologies, the implementation of video assists students in their language learning. The application of video as an audiovisual authentic material in foreign language classrooms with the focus on communicative language teaching has influenced both language learners and teachers and it is obvious that the use of such a useful learning tool is helpful for language learning. Initially, students watch the video without its voice. Observations showed that the teacher sometimes has challenges to encourage the students to answer her questions because the students prefer keeping quiet or they have no idea regarding to the teacher's question. To make it more precise, questioning technique prior to playing the listening is not always appropriate to be used in the classroom. Therefore, considering Harmer's point of view, silent viewing was chosen to invite the students actively participate in learning process. Silent viewing can motivate the students to predict what information that they are going to receive. The students' willingness to engage in the lesson can be easily activated when they can observe something. The next phase of the main task "Listen and restore" is one-way listening, mainly focuses on listening for global understanding and listening for details. Students watch the video and take notes. Then they are supposed to correct the details in the written text. Herron (1994) states that video has the advantages of allowing students to see authentic linguistic and cultural interactions between native speakers.

One way listening tasks need students to understand the core meaning of what is said without demanding to give immediate responses. According to Vandergrift (2012) et al., students listen to various kinds of spoken texts that are recorded or read aloud by the teacher. After that they use the information to get different listening outcomes or products, for instance, sorting out the information, diagrams, notes, pictures, individual or group answer. Prior to increasing participatory listening tasks, it is important for this group to develop their one-way listening individually. It helps students practice different listening skills for a specific product. Video as a learning tool, Mckinnon (2014) considers it can help and increase the listening experience of the learners and admittedly, as learners can observe many characteristics of real language like emotions, gestures and others, it is preferable to be practiced in the classroom. Post activity Group presentation includes differentiated instruction for



students. Needs analysis proved that the group has multilevel students and they have different learning styles. Based on the students' individual learning differences, various ways of delivering presentation was preferable. This instruction help students reveal their ability without being much pressurized. Some students are introverted and they can't perform role play or deliver public speech. Therefore, this activity suggests conveying ideas in written way. From other point of view, role play can be good activity for tactile learners. Furthermore, encouraging students to make presentations are great way to have students practice all language skills and subskills. Presentation skills are very useful and necessary both in and outside of the lesson. After completing the tasks, presentation is a bridge for students to share with others what they have learned. It is also an opportunity to challenge and enlarge their understanding of the topic by having others ask questions. Presentations are considered main part of task based learning and they are the most practical way to revise the unit and group/pair work. To sum up, the lesson plan involves sequential, interrelated activities that don't contradict each other. Each activity has its own purpose and most of them support students' interaction and enrich their knowledge on intercultural competence. The activities emphasizes to practice students listening, speaking and writing skills. The lesson plan includes use of peer evaluation, constructive-corrective feedback, differentiated instruction which is essential in today's classroom.

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