Issues in education of English for specific purposes in the Tunisian higher education

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Abstract:

This paper scrutinizes the international aspect of the English language and its relation to the ESP context. It highlights the major constraints to English language teaching and learning in the Tunisian higher education. Data were collected by the means of questionnaires for students and interviews with teachers of different institutions of the Tunisian higher education. The answers of both students and teachers are of paramount importance to us since they help locate the positive sides to be endorsed and the main obstacles that need to be overcome. Finally, our study aims at finding the main ways that help improve the English language educational situation in Tunisia.

1. Introduction

The importance of English as an international language continues to increase as more and more people are wanting or being required to learn English. For example, governments are introducing mass education programmes with English as the first foreign language; the growth of business and increased occupational mobility is resulting in a need for English as a common medium of communication. In fact, in the new world order, discourses are grounded on one and only consideration – globalization. These discourses are mostly in English and the media plays its role in making them available throughout the world. In periphery and expanding circle contexts (Wenger, 1998), having no access to English may mean not only difficulty of access, but also total impossibility of participation, with exclusion as a result (Moita Lopes, 2005).

If we adopt a reflective approach to education, we will take advantage of wider opportunities of choice and will certainly accept and adapt to the limitations and contradictions of the new contemporary order. Within this educational framework the English language teacher has a very special role to play as a mediator in enabling learners to become full participants in the international discourses and social practices circulating in the wider world outside the classroom. For this to become an educational experience for both the learner and the teacher, neither exacerbated chauvinism nor tacit submission (Rajagopalan, 2005) is recommended. The well-balanced construction of critical social awareness regarding language and particularly regarding the role of English in the contemporary world should be the major aim to be achieved (Appadurai, 1996; Holliday, 2005). To what extent this construction affects the teaching–learning situation in terms of capabilities to be developed will depend on local conditions and mostly also on the social role of the particular language in question.

All these demands and requirements have resulted in the expansion of one particular aspect of English Language Teaching namely the teaching of English for Specific Purposes. An ESP perspective means learning for a purpose and learning within a framework which makes reasons for learning not only clear, but also meaningful at the outset both for learners and teachers. It has a wider educational implication, as it is concerned with the learning process (Allwright, 1982; Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Robinson, 1991).

Making the teaching–learning of English meaningful in the university context is of primary importance in a rapidly ''glocalising" world (Canagarajah, 2005). One of the main implications as far as teachers are concerned is the possibility of acting in a framework in which needs are not dictated by the textbook, as they very often are, but are dictated by the social context. In this panorama, content, teaching materials and methodology are determined by the interests, the social context and the previous knowledge of the learners. In this way, the language is not the object of learning, but the result, the product of mutual interaction between the learner and the outside world, which in the case of English is a really wide world full of challenges and unforeseen demands and constraints.

In Tunisia, the teaching of English for Specific Purposes has started recently within a limited number of universities and higher institutions such as the Biotechnology Institutes, University of Chemistry, the preparatory Institutes, Health Institutes … etc

It is to be noted that there is no specific training for the teachers of English for specific purposes in all the examples of institutes listed above. Indeed, teachers are faced with learners who already had some knowledge of English acquired in a school situation. Moreover, most of the materials and courses available were appropriate for those coming to the study of the language for the first time, suitable for younger learners, and were written as 'general' English, thus a gap in materials had to be filled for these specific purpose learners.

Thus, knowing the opinions of teachers and learners in this specific domain is important to identify the positive aspects in order to reinforce them and the weaknesses to ameliorate them.

2. Literature review

At the university level, English language teachers and learners often encounter different issues that might hamper achieving a successful teaching/learning function. One of the most important issues is the teacher/learner interaction within specific contexts of English language which is English for Specific purposes. In this context, Hyland (2002, p. 394) argues that ''effective language teaching in the universities involves taking specificity seriously. It means that we must go as far as we can''

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For teachers this means introducing learners to the relevant genres with the purpose of allowing them to participate in a discourse community organized around specific and purposeful activities. This can be approached in pragmatic or critical ways, and there has been a considerable amount of discussion about the need to avoid uncritical induction of students into disciplinary discourses and identities (Canagarajah, 2002; Harwood & Hadley, 2004; Pennycook, 1997).

Hyland (2002, p. 385) argues that the question of transferable skills and features of language "lies at the heart of what our profession is and what we do in classrooms". English has to be taught in specific ways in relation to specific purposes because, it is implied, transferability from one discursive context to another is limited. In EAP, transferability tends to be considered mainly from the perspective of what is transferable from generic classes to disciplinary contexts, or what can be ''reliably and usefully'' transferred ''across disciplines'' (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002, p. 7).

Robinson (1991, 9) formulated 'a present situation analysis' as uncovering 'what the students are like at the beginning of the course', their 'strengths and weaknesses'. Widdowson's concept of subjective needs asks 'what the learner' must 'do to actually acquire the language whilst objective needs reflect what they need to do with language' once that learning is complete (Widdowson, 1984, p. 2). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) give the needs analyst scope to both uncover the target situation needs of a group and the learning processes that it requires.

Tudor (1996) also gives learning needs a central position in his approach, whilst Richards (2001) configures syllabus design as a response to 'needs' and 'situation', with the latter including such factors as the cultural and societal background of the learner, and their preferred learning-styles.

Teachers have to develop the learners' academic English; that is, the English needed for reading, writing, speaking, and listening in the content areas (Collier, 1999; Cummins, 2001). They have to ensure that learners develop the specific academic language they need to participate in the content classroom (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994; Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2004).

Learners need to be fully involved participants in their learning, which includes demonstrating what they know. In other words, learners need to produce comprehensible output (Swain, 1985). This output is needed from learners for lesson planning and for assessment purposes. Oftentimes, learners know information but have difficulty expressing their knowledge in English.

My own need to address issues related to this context has arisen out of my work as an ESP teacher at a number of higher education institutions in Tunisia. In fact, the recent advent of English in Tunisia has made the situation more complicated (Battenburgh, 1996; Champagne, 2007; Daoud, 2007; Walters, 1996). In the 1980s, only 54% of higher education institutions in Tunisia offered English courses (Hemissi, 1985). By the 1990s, more than fifty science, business and engineering departments taught English and it is only by the 1998 Reform that the teaching of English at the undergraduate level in all higher education institutions was generalized. So what are the repercussions of this situation on the education of English as an international language and for specific purposes in the Tunisian higher education?

2. Methodology

Questionnaires are administered to thirty three third year chemistry learners and interviews are carried out with teachers in different institutions in order to know their points of view towards teaching and studying English for specific purposes. The interviewed teachers are Mr. Ali HADROUG at the preparatory Institute for engineering Studies in Monastir, Mrs. Nedra KERKNI at the Higher Institute of Biotechnology, Mrs. Mounira BESBES at the University of Chemistry, and Mrs. Hanen MAHJOUB at the higher School of health in Monastir.

3. Results

3.1. Teachers

In an attempt to identify their constraints in general these teachers say that they are now writing their own material, and have to select the appropriate material from a bewilderingly wide range on offer. Indeed they argue that the factors influencing ESP teaching and learning start at the role of English at the community level. For instance the role of English in West Africa is much more extensive than in the Arabic-speaking Middle East in general and Tunisia in particular.

In fact in the former area, English is used as a medium of communication in business government and education whereas in the case of the latter it plays a more restricted role as a subject on the school curriculum and as a medium providing access to technology and science.

3.1.1. Institutional constraints :

All the interviewed teachers state that the number and nature of facilities available greatly influence programmers; the physical realities affect deeply the designing of courses. Questions that have to be considered are, for example, the ease of access to materials, the availability of audio-visual aids and the amount of time available for English.

First, it is very important to note that all the interviewed teachers had to adapt the materials themselves. They argue that in the absence of a precise programme, they have to design a syllabus appropriate to the needs of the learners. In this respect Mrs. Nedra says that the syllabus of English is dependent on the syllabus of other subjects. In fact learners should be familiar with the themes selected for study in the English subject. Indeed, these teachers state that they have to select and adapt learning materials for a class from the plethora of published materials. Mr. Ali says that he is 'faced' with a huge library that includes ELT, civilization, science and many other types of books, and he adds that a problem occurs when the teacher doesn't find the materials suitable or adaptable to the needs of a particular class, so he will have to select and exploit suitable texts and to write suitable exercises.

Moreover skills and activities constitute an important part of the materials. In fact these teachers argue that some of the skills cause problems for them. For instance, the reading passages should meet the reader's purpose in coming to a text as well as the level of comprehension he is operating at.

Indeed the interviewed teachers are worried about the lack of coherence in the learner's productions of writing which means that the teacher must decide whether he has the time and resources to undertake the necessary far reaching remedial work. Mrs. Mounira BESBES argues that due to the fact that most students have difficulty in listening, it is up to the teacher to create his own way of giving instructions and highlighting important information as well as

choosing the simple and efficient listening passages. She adds that the difficulties in teaching listening can be due to the lack of exposure to the language of native speakers.

Mr. Ali HADROUG and Mrs. Mounira BESBES say that the audiovisual aids are inexistent. Mr. Ali adds that there are no headphones, no tape recorders for English teachers at his institution and this is why listening is most of the time neglected. On the other hand, Mrs. Hanen MAHJOUB argues that there are no English-course specific audio-visual aids. For instance if the teacher wants to use these aids, he needs to inform the administration in advance to use the laboratory, and this is after making sure that no other subject is taught at the same place. Here it becomes clear that, in such institutions, the other subjects are given more importance at the expense of English; for example a physio-therapy teacher has the priority to use the laboratory whenever the time coincides with that of the English teacher. As to Mrs. Nedra KERKNI, she says that she can use the T.V, the video and the tape-recorder occasionally to design her courses. She adds that this has a positive effect on her lessons since learners are more interested in video-taped topics than others. However this is not always the case because these materials are shared by all the teachers in the institute.

As for the amount of time available for English, in the Preparatory Institute for Engineering Studies, the High School of Health and the University of Chemistry, Students study English during two hours a week. In the High Institute of biotechnology, the amount of time available of English depends on the level of the learners. For, in the first and second forms learners study English during one hour a week, while learners at the third and fourth forms study English during two hours a week. Hence, it is the administrators who decide the amount of time every subject, and it is up to the teacher to set up the convenient programme. Indeed all these teachers state that this amount of time is not sufficient compared to the needs of the learners who need extra English hours.

Programme objectives vary according to whether students are in an institution where English is the medium of instruction or in one where English is just an additional subject on the curriculum. The interviewed teachers argue that, in their institutions, English is simply an additional subject on the curriculum. For instance in the High Institute of Biotechnology of Monastir, the plan of study shows that English does not exist in an independent module, as is the case for Physics or Maths, but it rather co-exists with Information Technology in the same module. Thus the study of English has to compete in terms of time and commitment from the students with other subjects. This amounts to saying that students don't have enough time to

read any textbooks in English. They gain subject qualification by just referring to lecture notes and previously distributed handouts.

These teachers suggest that assessment can be an important factor that contributes to the primordial role of English in these institutes, by making a pass in English a pre-requisite for obtaining the subject qualification which is being sought. They add that this is rarely a decision which the English teacher can make himself, though he is in a position to recommend it.

As far as the use of texts is concerned, authenticity is an important criterion. In fact, an authentic text is one written for a specific audience and its purpose is the communication of subject content rather than the language form. It aims to convey information and ideas rather than the use of language. All the interviewed teachers use authentic texts. For example, Mrs. Nedra uses texts taken from magazines such as the New Scientist and books of Micro-Biology as well as some internet resources. As for Mrs. Hanen, she uses texts taken from magazines such as *Woman's Own* especially the part dealing with health, and books such as *English for science and Technology*. Mrs. BESBES on her part uses authentic texts taken from books such as *English in Basic Medical Science*, while Mr. Ali thinks that the texts should be authentic, motivating and up-to-date. His texts are taken from newspapers, magazines such as *The Scientist* as well as some internet resources. In this context, these teachers argue that since an authentic text is one written with a specific readership in mind, it is important to match intended readership with real readership. In this respect Mrs. Mounira says that if second language learners are being taught English and Chemistry at a low level, then texts could be drawn from books written for native speakers of English studying in the first year of a chemistry course.

However, these teachers state the problem that an ESP teacher may be able to discover what texts are used in subject areas or in jobs, but he may not know how they are used especially in the way their use relates to the previous knowledge of the student, and how they fit into the course scheme whether they are used especially in the way their use relates to the previous knowledge of the student, and how they fit into the course scheme whether they are used as reading prior to a lecture, as supplementary reading or used only as a reference point to solve problems. According to Mrs. Mounira, authenticity is also related to a student's purpose and activity, she suggests that one way of ensuring that the text is relevant to the student is to get

learners bring in texts or portions of texts that they have found difficult in their subject area and to work on such texts.

All the interviewed teachers argue that the material is purely personal and subjective; for instance Mrs. Nedra says that she sets up the programme, Mr. Ali and Mrs. Mounira say that there is no boundary to the choice of the programme, texts or tests. As for Mrs. Hanen, she says that a slight guide is offered by the administration. In fact, except the Students' book and Teacher's notes including samples of exercises, everything else is done on her own.

They add that an ESP teacher has to familiarize himself with a range of published material which he draws on to meet group and individual needs. These teachers express their worries about limitations of time: they say that it may take several weeks or even longer to search for and present the required language. So these teachers say that they have to select the necessary material themselves: they prepare the programme as well as the course outlines. In this respect Mr. Ali says that the language teacher has to integrate his materials with the methodology of the subject class, and adopt techniques such as the simplification of vocabulary and structure, as well as checking procedures, while Mrs. Mounira, Hanen and Nedra argue that they have to exploit suitable texts and exercises in spite of the tack of the materials adaptable to the needs of the learners.

3.1.2. Constraints encountered from the learner
The older a learner is, the more likely he is to have his own definite ideas on why he is learning English. Thus these ESP teachers state that the problem revolves around matching the needs of the learner as he sees them with his needs as perceived by his teacher. Moreover it is the task of the teacher to settle the agreement on needs between him and the student with defined purposes.
Mr. Ali, Mrs. Mounira, Mrs. Nedra and Mrs. Hanen argue that a balance has to be maintained between the linguistic and the conceptual level of the learner in ESP programmes. For example the learner may be a trained scientist or technocrat able to operate within his field in his own language but not in English. In fact the students' standard of English is quite low. They just have a basic knowledge of common core grammar and vocabulary.

Thus, Mr. Ali and Mrs. Nedra say that the teacher's task here is to teach language, and the chosen texts must be significant to the student in their content. While Mrs. Mounira and Mrs.
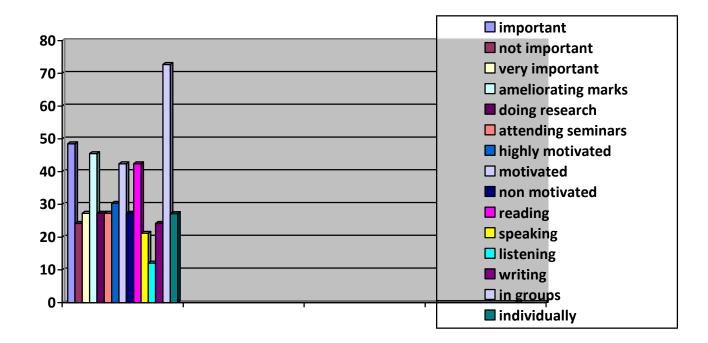
Hanen say that this presents problems to the teacher who may be insecure or lacking in specialist knowledge when faced with specialist texts. They add that alternatively, the learner may be lacking in linguistic skills and the ways of thinking appropriate to his particular discipline. This they argue that a teacher's role is inevitably to teach language and content with or without the co-operation of specialist subject teachers.

3.2. Learners

Questionnaires are given to thirty three third year chemistry learners. The table below contains their answers. The graphic is used to deduce the rates and facilitate interpretation.

Questions / Pupils	Do you think English is			What is your purpose in studying English			How motivated are you?			Which skills do you like to study				Do you prefer to study	
	Important	Very important	Not important	Doing research	Attending seminars	Ameliorating marks	Highly motivated	Motivated	Non motivated	Reading	Speaking	Listening	Writing	In groups	Individually
1	*				*			*		*				*	
2	*				*			*		*				*	
3		*		*			*			*				*	
4			*			*			*				*	*	
5	*			*				*			*			*	
6	*			*				*		*				*	
7		*		*			*					*			*
8			*			*			*	*				*	
9	*			*				*		*				*	
10		*		*			*					*			*
11	*			*				*		*				*	
12		*		*			*			*					*
13		*		*			*						*	*	
14	*					*		*			*			*	
15	*					*		*		*				*	
16			*			*			*		*			*	
17	*					*	*			*					*
18			*			*			*		*			*	
19			*			*			*		*			*	
20	*					*		*		*					*
21	*					*		*		*					*
22		*		*			*					*		*	
23			*			*			*		*			*	
24	*			*				*					*	*	
25	*			*				*			*			*	
26		*			*		*						*		*
27	*					*		*					*	*	
28			*			*			*	*				*	
29		*		*			*					*			*
30			*			*		*	*	*				*	11
31	*					*		*					*	*	
32		*			*		*						*		*
33	*			*			*						*	*	

Total	16	9	8	9	9	15	10	15	8	14	7	4	8	24	9

Graphic

3.2.1. Attitudes to learning English

With reference to the graphic we notice that 48% of the learners think that English is important inasmuch as it facilitates research, ameliorates their marks and helps them to understand international seminars and conferences. Twenty seven percent of the learners, however, view English as not important ; many of these learners affirm that they are very busy in preparing a wide range of basic subjects namely Maths, physics…etc for learners of scientific institutes, and Physio-therapy, pharmacology…etc for students of Chemistry, health, medicine …etc.

Moreover, these learners state that they did not pay attention to English courses from the secondary school because they were concentrating on the scientific subjects at the expense of the literary ones including English.

Indeed, others argue that the timetabling of English is always a bad one: "It is usually placed as the last one or two hours in the afternoon, so this makes it difficult for to concentrate after exhaustive courses". Says one student. As a matter of fact students find it difficult to maintain interest in the English course, and thus they feel depressed over their lack of progress in this subject.

Furthermore, these students say that they have difficulties in mastering some of the skills of the English language. For instance, listening constitutes a major problem. In fact students argue that while listening: "we find it difficult to control the flow of information and hence to process it and distinguish details". Some of them say that "It is due to the speed of the teacher who speaks so fast that we can't comprehend the course". Others stress the considerable use of weak forms as is the case for unstressed prefixes which adds to their confusion.

Another skill that presents a trouble for these learners is that of speaking, they say: "we don't know to express specific ideas in English". In fact this can be due to the lack of exposure to the native language as well as the lack of its practice. As for as examination questions are concerned, learners say "Most of the exam questions are ambiguous and confusing. This leads us to misunderstand them".

3.2.2. Purpose in learning English

Most of the learners learn English for the sake of getting a degree qualification. The advanced learners want to learn English in order to accomplish their research attend seminars and handle the computer. They also want to use English as an advantage in the job market. More obviously they are motivated to learn such a language in order to master its skills. For instance these advanced learners say that through the reading skill they aim at reading specialist journals and books very closely via skimming and scanning. They also want a training to use diagrams and graphs.

On the other hand, the less motivated learners state that they don't have the capacity to change their reading strategies. Thus their prior purpose in learning is how to extract the required specific information from a Reading Comprehension text. As for writing, most students argue

that they need to be trained in writing experiments because the latter present a primordial section in all their studies and projects.

3.2.3. How motivated are the learners

There are three levels of learners classified according to their motivation: highly motivated learners, motivated learners, and non motivated ones. With reference to the graphic the highly motivated learners represent 30,3%, 42,4%are motivated learners while 27,3% are non motivated ones. That means that 72,7% of the learners are aware of the importance of English ; they say that English is essential to obtain a degree, it is a privilege in the job market, it can influence career prospects positively.

Yet, the other 27,3% say that they aren't capable of ameliorating their level because they have a weak proficiency in English inherited from secondary school learning. Most of these students are influenced by their previous learning of English which was not successful. So it is this negative feeling towards containing something which in the past has connotations of failure that hampers their motivation to learn this subject now.

3.3. Learners, teachers and ESP programmes
3.3.1. Problems in approaching English courses

Most learners say that the main problems stem from the lack of satisfying their needs. In fact most of them approach ESP courses with heightened expectations. They think that it is the remedy for their weak proficiency in English. However the ESP teachers state that they are really worried about this lack of proficiency. This makes it difficult for them to live up to these heightened expectations. They add that they are compelled to monitor their own productivity and effectiveness as never before. Indeed most teachers are realizing that purpose-built ESP courses lacking some general components can be boring and not motivating to the very students they were specially designed for.

3.3.2. Demands on the teacher

It is important to state that most ESP teachers are primarily teachers of general English. Thus this change from general to specific highlights new demands on the ESP teacher. In fact the latter is expected to carry out needs of his learners and consequently design a syllabus on that basis. Moreover, most of the ESP teachers argue that they have to find the suitable materials to the needs of the learners via exploiting texts, writing exercises as well as preparing course

outlines. Also, they have to develop knowledge of the students' subject in order to establish a link between language and subject content, consequently resulting in a rise in the level of motivation.

3.3.3. Changes in the teacher-learner relationship

The learner usually expresses needs and wants while the teacher is there to use the resources of his institution to provide the necessary service. In this relation, learners are almost totally dependent on their teachers in everything. However, the prime concern of all the interviewed ESP teachers is to enable a student to become more and more autonomous in his learning. They suggest that a balance between class-time and self-access time can enable the needs of individual learners to be catered for within a realistic framework. On the other hand learners (especially the advanced ones) ask if they can have self-access programmes at least to be more independent, and accustom themselves to ways of finding appropriate information.

4. Discussion

This paper represents a scrutiny of the ESP teaching and learning situation in different institutions in Tunisia. It is also an attempt to ameliorate the weaknesses and reinforce the positive points. An analysis of this situation shows that many teachers are not trained in ESP. They are simply adapted from ELT teaching. This is due in great part to the decision to move ESP experts out of the institutes where ESP should be taught into University Departments of English. In fact, the very opposite is required; more ESP experts moved out of the English departments into faculties of medicine, science and business. That means that there is a serious mismatch between official statements about the importance of English and decisions concerning the placing of ESP experts.

As far as teacher preparation is concerned, if we believe that ''glocal'' knowledge (Canagarajah, 2005) is becoming more and more important in education, what used to be recommended as an ESP teacher's profile is also needed for GE teachers. It is generally recognised, and not necessarily only within an ESP context, that teachers should be researchers of their own practice, materials producers, evaluators, experimenters of new approaches, explorers of reality, syllabus builders, teachers of not only language but also of strategies, builders of social contexts inside and outside the classroom, open to change, adaptable, ready to continuously review their own practice (Freeman, 1992; Freeman, 1998/1999).

It is the public educational institutions' responsibility to offer literacies in various media in English (Benesch, 2006), which are crucial in the world today so as to enable learners to appropriate English for their own more clearly defined needs and purposes later in life. So, one might say that needs in Tunisian general education can be defined by the sociocultural purpose of particular educational institution, area, region contexts, the aim being the construction of critical citizenship in a ''glocalised'' world (Canagarajah, 2005). The defining factor is the outside social context which is brought into the classroom and which also depends on the social role of English learning in Tunisia as part of general education.

Institutes have to provide the necessary funds to sustain seminars workshops around the country, and ensure logistics for their implementation. Means and funds are needed for those who work in ESP Resource Centers in order to publicize and coordinate tasks. Communication networks such as the Tunisia ESP Newsletter and the Maghreb Annual conferences have to be revived in order to ameliorate the weaknesses and exchange ideas.

Time-tabling of English has to be modified in all the institutes. Extra hours and self-access programmes are more and more required in order to maintain learner autonomy.

Even, the learners who feel ambitious to learn the language in other institutions find rapidly that they are having facilities' problems. In this respect, Professor Ayet Laabadi, head of the IBLV (Institut Bourguiba des Langues Vivantes) states that the Bourguiba School turned away 200 potential students of English in the fall of 1997 because of lack of facilities in its programme. This highlights the fact that language learning represents a costly, non-transferrable investment of time and money. For instance, the British Council, Amideast and a host of private schools and programmes now offer English lessons of varying quality but they are at a very high price which makes it difficult for the learners to afford them.

The coefficient assigned to English has to be higher. In fact as is likely the case in all university systems based on the French model of education, the relative importance of academic subjects differs, and a fact reflected in the coefficient each is assigned. In Tunisia, English generally carries a coefficient of one in higher education especially in institutions other than literary. Thus the low coefficient assigned to English in comparison to other subjects and languages is a clear statement of its relative merit in the eyes of the country's policy makers. Were there to be a concerted effort by the political elite to increase the role

that English plays in these institutions, one might expect the coefficient English carries to be a site of intervention.

5. Conclusion

In a brief contribution to the ESP Newsletter, Seymour the former Tunisia ESP project leader positively stated that:

> In Tunisia there are often no clear purposes for the study of English. The English taught is for General Purposes, but is called ESP whenever. The students are not Language or Arts specialists. (Seymour, 1994, p. 26)

If this is the ESP situation in Tunisia, in general and in the formerly listed institutions in particular, it will be our task as ESP militants and language planners to be a truly professional body representing the interests and serving the needs of the English teaching community. We must address the needs of both teachers and learners.

The first priority is a clear presentation of the teaching mission which all contracting parties should adopt. Without this common goal, those who are invoked in the process will be unable to gear their effort to the same target.

Secondly, the appointment of a programme coordinator would be a sign of its sincere co-operation. Naturally Tunisian teachers and learners should back up the process. A matching is needed between the curricula and methods used in Tunisian post-secondary education on the one hand and the needs of the learners on the other. Tunisian students in these institutions who major in English should be trained so that they can use their language skills and cultural knowledge in the private sector.

Finally, material and human resources are not enough to solve the problems of teaching English for specific purposes in Tunisia. These factors are important but they may be completely inefficient if the structure, the energy and the mission are not well established.

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