A MULTIDIMENSIONAL NEEDS ANALYSIS OF A ONE-TO-ONE WORKPLACE ESP COURSE: A CASE STUDY IN THE GREEK PUBLIC POWER CORPORATION

Kiapekaki Ioanna[i]
English Teacher,
Second Chance School
Business English Instructor, PPC,
Greece

Abstract:
This study presents a multidimensional needs analysis (NA) of a one-to-one online Business English course for a mid-level technical supervisor at the Greek Public Power Corporation (PPC). While the course was initially framed as English for General Business Purposes (EGBP) using a standard B2+ coursebook, this research identifies a critical mismatch between generic "carrier content" and the "real content" required for technical supervision. Utilizing a framework that integrates Target Situation, Present Situation, Learning Needs, Strategy, and Means Analysis, data were collected through a mid-course semi-structured interview and analyzed thematically. The findings reveal that the learner's primary communicative demands, specifically technical fault reporting and international coordination, were underserved by the general curriculum. Consequently, the study proposes a genre-based pedagogical intervention centered on a "Status-Cause-Action" discourse framework. The results underscore that effective ESP in corporate settings must move beyond standardized materials to integrate authentic workplace genres and systematic vocabulary retrieval practice. This case study provides a practical roadmap for practitioners to bridge the gap between general proficiency and specialized professional competence in high-stakes technical environments.

Keywords: needs analysis, ESP, workplace English, target situation analysis, strategic competence

1. Introduction

In contemporary professional environments, the role of English as a lingua franca has intensified the need for precise and context-sensitive ESP provision. Technical professionals, engineers, managers, and supervisors increasingly operate in multilingual,

---

[i] Correspondence: email ikiapekaki@gmail.com

international settings where communication breakdowns may have operational, financial, or safety implications. In such contexts, generic business English instruction may not adequately prepare learners for the specialised discourse practices of their fields. This is particularly evident in technical professions, where communication involves discipline-specific terminology, genre conventions, and high-stakes oral interaction under time pressure. Addressing these challenges requires a systematic identification of learners' specific communicative needs.

Needs analysis has long been considered the cornerstone of ESP course design. Since the early work of Munby (1978), who introduced the Communicative Needs Processor, ESP has been defined as an approach in which teaching content and methodology are determined by learners' specific communicative requirements. Unlike general English instruction, ESP does not begin with predetermined grammatical or lexical syllabi, rather it derives its content from an analysis of the target situations in which learners are expected to function (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Over time, needs analysis has evolved from a predominantly target-oriented and linguistic procedure into a multidimensional construct incorporating present proficiency, learning preferences, strategy use, and contextual constraints (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Holliday, 1994).

Despite the depth of existing research on ESP and needs analysis, relatively limited attention has been paid to one-to-one ESP instruction delivered within corporate workplaces. Much of the existing literature focuses on university-based ESP courses or group-based occupational training, however, one-to-one corporate instruction presents distinctive characteristics. It allows for highly individualised course design and close alignment with professional tasks, yet it is simultaneously shaped by workplace constraints such as time pressure, interruptions, and institutional expectations. Moreover, corporate courses frequently rely on general business textbooks that may function as "carrier content" (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998), while the "real content" of learners' professional discourse remains underrepresented.

The present study addresses this gap by examining a one-to-one online Business English course delivered to a senior electrical engineer employed at the Greek Public Power Corporation (PPC). Although the course was officially positioned as English for General Business Purposes (EGBP), the learner's professional responsibilities required specialised technical communication, particularly in meetings with international partners, coordination of maintenance procedures, and reporting of operational faults. No formal needs analysis had been conducted prior to the course; only a placement test had confirmed her general proficiency level. The current needs analysis was therefore conducted mid-course in order to reassess the learner's evolving linguistic and professional requirements and to provide a more systematic foundation for the remaining instruction.

The study is guided by the following research questions:
1) What are the communicative demands of the learner's professional target situation?
2) What gap exists between her present linguistic competence and the communicative requirements of her workplace?

3) What are her learning preferences, strategic resources, and contextual constraints?

4) How can the findings of a multidimensional needs analysis inform the design of targeted ESP instruction in a one-to-one corporate context?

By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to ESP research in three ways. First, it provides an in-depth account of a multidimensional needs analysis conducted in a real workplace environment. Second, it illustrates how theoretical frameworks such as Target Situation Analysis, Present Situation Analysis, Learning Needs Analysis, Strategy Analysis, and Means Analysis can be integrated in practice. Third, it demonstrates how needs analysis findings can directly inform the design of a genre-informed, task-based pedagogical intervention tailored to a technical professional. In doing so, the study reinforces the view that ESP course design is not a static, one-time procedure but a dynamic and ongoing process that requires continuous adaptation to learners' professional realities, evolving goals, and contextual constraints.

2. Description of the ESP Teaching Situation

The present study focuses on a one-to-one online Business English course delivered within the professional environment of the Greek Public Power Corporation (PPC). The course is organised by a private consultancy company contracted by PPC to provide English language training to executives and mid-level managers. This institutional arrangement reflects a broader trend in corporate language training, where external providers deliver customised instruction aligned with organisational goals. In such contexts, language learning is not an academic requirement but a professional development tool aimed at enhancing operational efficiency, international collaboration, and institutional competitiveness.

The learner selected for this needs analysis project is a 48-year-old female electrical engineer employed as a supervisor in a PPC power plant. She oversees a team of engineers and technicians and frequently interacts with international partners and consultants. Her professional responsibilities include coordinating maintenance procedures, supervising generator performance tests, reporting technical incidents, and participating in meetings with foreign specialists. These tasks require not only technical expertise but also the ability to communicate clearly and precisely in English, often under time pressure and in high-stakes operational environments.

Her English language level is B2+ (Upper-Intermediate) according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), and she holds the Cambridge First Certificate in English. The placement process confirmed her overall linguistic competence, particularly in receptive skills and general communicative ability. However, despite this formal certification, she reported difficulties related to fluency, accuracy, and confidence in spoken English, especially during meetings with foreign partners. She expressed a desire to communicate more effortlessly and spontaneously in professional contexts and indicated long-term goals of achieving advanced certification (C2 level). This discrepancy between certified proficiency and perceived communicative competence highlights a

common issue in ESP contexts, where general language qualifications may not fully reflect the discourse demands of specialised professional environments.

Notably, no needs analysis was conducted prior to the course except for the placement test. The absence of a systematic needs analysis is not uncommon in corporate training settings, where courses are often initiated based on institutional expectations rather than a detailed investigation of individual communicative requirements. The current needs analysis was therefore conducted mid-course in order to reassess the learner's evolving professional and linguistic needs and to provide a more structured foundation for the remaining instruction. Conducting the needs analysis at this stage also allowed the learner to reflect on her progress and articulate more clearly the areas requiring further development.

It should also be noted that the student was initially enrolled in a group lesson. However, due to her professional duties and unpredictable work schedule, she was unable to attend consistently and therefore requested private instruction. As a result, she changed both the course format and instructor. This shift from group to one-to-one instruction significantly altered the pedagogical dynamics of the course. While the one-to-one format allowed for greater individualisation and flexibility, it also removed opportunities for peer interaction and collaborative learning, placing greater responsibility on the instructor to simulate authentic communicative exchanges.

The lessons take place twice a week, each lasting one hour, and are conducted online through a Learning Management System (LMS) during working hours at the learner's office inside the power plant. The teaching situation is therefore characterised by authentic workplace conditions, including time constraints, professional interruptions, and cognitive load associated with ongoing responsibilities. Unlike classroom-based instruction in educational institutions, this corporate setting requires constant negotiation between professional obligations and learning activities. Such contextual constraints are central to Means Analysis (Holliday, 1994), which emphasises that course design must take into account not only linguistic objectives but also environmental and institutional realities.

The coursebook used, *Business Partner B2+* by Pearson, provides a general business framework, including units on meetings, negotiations, presentations, and email communication. These materials offer structured input and exposure to authentic business scenarios. However, they primarily represent what Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) describe as "carrier content." Carrier content refers to general thematic material through which language is taught, rather than the specific discourse practices of a learner's professional field. Although supplementary materials are occasionally incorporated, such as technical reports, email templates, or real examples of the learner's professional communication, these are not systematically integrated into the syllabus.

In terms of ESP classification, the course can be situated along Dudley-Evans and St John's (1998) specificity continuum. It falls under English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), and more specifically under English for General Business Purposes (EGBP). The learners in the broader corporate programme are grouped according to language

proficiency level rather than professional discipline, and instruction focuses primarily on cross-disciplinary communicative skills. Consequently, the course emphasises common-core business language rather than discipline-specific discourse. While this orientation provides valuable general communicative competence, it may not fully address the specialised linguistic and genre demands of a technical engineering environment.

This positioning along the specificity continuum reveals an inherent tension within the course design. On the one hand, general business English materials offer transferable skills applicable across professional contexts. On the other hand, the learner's daily communicative tasks involve technical reporting, operational troubleshooting, and coordination with international engineering teams, activities that require specialised vocabulary, structured reporting conventions, and rapid oral processing under pressure. The coexistence of these two orientations, general business instruction and specialised technical communication, creates a pedagogical gap that the present needs analysis seeks to explore and address.

Finally, it should be noted that there are no formal summative assessment procedures in place, as this corporate training programme has a developmental rather than evaluative purpose. Progress is assessed formatively through observation, feedback, and reflective discussion. While this flexible assessment model reduces performance anxiety, it also places greater emphasis on ongoing diagnostic evaluation and adaptation, reinforcing the importance of systematic needs analysis in guiding instructional decisions.

Overall, the teaching situation described above represents a complex ESP context shaped by individual professional demands, institutional constraints, and material limitations. It illustrates the challenges of aligning general business English provision with the specialised communicative requirements of technical professionals operating in international workplace environments. The following section will therefore outline the theoretical framework underpinning the multidimensional needs analysis adopted in this study.

3. Theoretical Framework and Type of Needs Analysis

For this case study, the needs analysis approach adopted is primarily based on Target Situation Analysis (TSA) and Present Situation Analysis (PSA), complemented by elements of Learning Needs Analysis (LNA), Strategy Analysis, and Means Analysis. Rather than relying on a single model, the study employs a multidimensional framework in order to capture the complexity of workplace-based, one-to-one ESP instruction. This integrative approach reflects the evolution of needs analysis theory from early, largely linguistic models to more comprehensive frameworks that incorporate contextual, psychological, and pedagogical dimensions.

3.1 Target Situation Analysis (TSA)
Target Situation Analysis, originally systematised by Munby (1978) through the Communicative Needs Processor (CNP), focuses on identifying the communicative

requirements learners must meet in their future or current professional contexts. Munby's model aimed to provide a systematic and detailed specification of communicative competence by analysing variables such as participant roles, communicative events, settings, interaction types, dialect, and level of proficiency required. Although later criticised for being overly complex and primarily product-oriented, Munby's framework remains foundational in ESP because it shifted the focus from language structures to communicative purposes.

In the present study, TSA is central because the learner is already functioning within her target situation. Unlike pre-service learners preparing for future employment, this participant is actively engaged in professional tasks requiring English on a daily basis. Her target situation includes participating in meetings with foreign engineers, coordinating generator performance tests, supervising maintenance procedures, discussing technical specifications, and reporting operational faults. These communicative events involve not only general business discourse but also specialised technical terminology, procedural explanation, clarification strategies, and precise reporting conventions.

By analysing these communicative events, the teacher-researcher can identify the linguistic functions (e.g., describing processes, reporting incidents, clarifying misunderstandings), discourse structures (e.g., fault-report sequences), and lexical fields required for effective performance. In line with Hutchinson and Waters (1987), needs are therefore interpreted as the gap between "necessities" (what the learner has to know to function effectively), "lacks" (the discrepancy between present competence and required performance), and "wants" (the learner's perceived needs and goals).

3.2 Present Situation Analysis (PSA)

While TSA identifies the demands of the professional environment, Present Situation Analysis (Richterich & Chancerel, 1980) investigates the learner's current level of competence and resources. PSA examines what the learner already knows, what she can do, and how she perceives her abilities. It thus provides a diagnostic baseline against which target requirements can be compared.

In this case, PSA revealed that the learner holds a B2+ level qualification and demonstrates strong receptive skills, particularly in reading technical documentation and understanding written communication. However, despite this certified competence, she reports difficulties in spontaneous spoken interaction, particularly during high-pressure meetings. This highlights an important distinction between general linguistic proficiency and context-specific communicative competence. As Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) argue, ESP learners often possess adequate general English knowledge but lack control over the specific genres and discourse practices of their professional community.

PSA in this study therefore functions not merely as a placement confirmation but as a gap-analysis tool, identifying discrepancies between certified proficiency and workplace performance. The learner's self-reported lack of fluency and confidence in

meetings suggests that the issue is not grammatical knowledge per se, but automatisation, strategic competence, and genre familiarity.

3.3 Learning Needs Analysis (LNA)

While early ESP models focused predominantly on target tasks, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) emphasised that understanding how learners learn is equally important. Learning Needs Analysis (LNA) explores learners' motivations, preferred learning styles, strategy use, and expectations. In one-to-one instruction, LNA becomes particularly significant because course design can be highly individualised.

In the present study, LNA investigates the learner's intrinsic motivation, her preference for structured vocabulary input, her appreciation of role-plays and guided writing tasks, and her tendency to prepare before speaking. As an adult professional, she demonstrates characteristics associated with andragogy (Knowles, 1973), including self-directedness and awareness of her own learning gaps. Her motivation appears largely intrinsic, as she explicitly states that she enjoys learning English. According to Ryan and Deci's (2020) Self-Determination Theory, intrinsic motivation enhances persistence and deeper engagement, particularly in professional development contexts.

Integrating LNA ensures that the course does not simply replicate target communicative situations but aligns methodology with the learner's cognitive and affective preferences. This alignment is especially important in workplace settings where external pressures may otherwise undermine engagement.

3.4 Strategy Analysis

The framework adopted in this study also incorporates Strategy Analysis, drawing on O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) classification of cognitive, metacognitive, social, and affective strategies. Strategic competence plays a crucial role in professional communication, particularly in lingua franca contexts where misunderstandings are frequent and negotiation of meaning is essential.

In analysing the learner's responses, attention is paid to how she copes with communication breakdowns, how she prepares for meetings, and how she monitors her own performance. Her reported use of clarification requests and paraphrasing indicates emerging compensatory strategies, which. However, appear intuitive rather than systematically developed. As Nunan (1988) argues, strategic competence contributes not only to communicative effectiveness but also to learner autonomy. Explicit strategy instruction may therefore be necessary to enhance her performance under pressure.

3.5 Means Analysis

Finally, the study incorporates Means Analysis (Holliday, 1994), which considers the broader institutional and contextual conditions under which learning occurs. Means Analysis moves beyond learner characteristics to examine available resources, classroom culture, scheduling constraints, technological tools, and organisational expectations.

In the present context, lessons are conducted online during working hours within a power plant environment. The learner frequently experiences interruptions and work-related stress. These contextual constraints directly influence concentration, preparation time, and lesson continuity. Means Analysis therefore, informs not only content selection but also decisions regarding task length, cognitive load, and homework expectations. Ignoring such environmental factors would risk designing pedagogical interventions that are theoretically sound but practically unfeasible.

3.6 Rationale for a Multidimensional Approach

The decision to integrate TSA, PSA, LNA, Strategy Analysis, and Means Analysis reflects recognition that no single framework sufficiently captures the complexity of ESP lessons at workplace. Early needs analysis models were often criticised for being overly linear and for treating needs as static entities (West, 1994). Contemporary ESP research, however, conceptualises needs as dynamic, evolving, and context-dependent.

In this one-to-one corporate setting, the learner's target situation is not hypothetical but ongoing. Her present competence evolves as the course progresses, her learning preferences influence engagement, her strategic repertoire affects communicative resilience, and institutional constraints shape pedagogical feasibility. A multidimensional approach, therefore, provides a more holistic and realistic account of her professional language development.

By adopting this integrated theoretical framework, the study positions need analysis not as a one-time diagnostic event but as a continuous, reflective process that informs and reshapes instructional design. The following section outlines the research methodology employed to operationalise this framework and collect data systematically.

4. Research Design

This needs analysis study is designed as a qualitative case study situated within a corporate, workplace-based ESP context. The research design is informed by the theoretical frameworks outlined in Section 3 and aims to produce an in-depth understanding of the learner's needs, preferences, and constraints. Given the one-to-one nature of the course, the research adopts a single-participant design, which allows for a detailed and contextualised exploration of the learner's professional communicative demands and learning experiences.

4.1 Research Paradigm and Approach

The study adopts a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm, which assumes that knowledge is socially constructed and context-dependent. In workplace ESP, communicative needs are shaped not only by linguistic competence but also by professional identity, institutional expectations, and situational pressures. Therefore, the research prioritises the learner's subjective experiences and perceptions while also examining objective requirements derived from her professional tasks.

This approach aligns with the principles of qualitative educational research, where the goal is not generalisability but depth, richness, and contextual validity. The present case study therefore, aims to generate insights that can inform instructional design in similar workplace settings, rather than to make broad claims about all corporate ESP learners.

4.2 Research Instrument: Semi-Structured Interview

Since the course involves a single learner, the primary research instrument for data collection was a semi-structured interview. This method was selected because it offers a balance between structure and flexibility. According to Gillham (2000), semi-structured interviews provide a predetermined framework of questions while allowing participants to elaborate, reflect, and introduce unanticipated topics. This flexibility is especially valuable in needs analysis, where learners' perceptions and priorities may not be fully captured by fixed-response surveys.

Semi-structured interviews also align with Brindley's (1989) argument that qualitative tools are essential for needs analysis because they reveal learners' motivations, perceptions, and priorities—elements that are often overlooked in purely quantitative approaches. The interview allowed the researcher to explore the learner's professional context, her experiences with the course so far, her evolving goals, and her preferences for future instruction.

4.3 Data Collection Procedure

The interview was conducted online via the LMS during the learner's regular working hours at her office inside the power plant. Conducting the interview in the workplace ensured ecological validity, as the learner was situated in her authentic professional environment. The session lasted approximately 30 minutes and was conducted in Greek, the learner's first language, in order to avoid misunderstandings and to encourage rich and spontaneous responses. Conducting the interview in L1 is consistent with McKay (2006), who argues that L1 interviews in needs analysis can yield more accurate and detailed information, particularly when exploring affective and contextual factors. The interview was audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Representative quotes were translated into English for the Results section.

Prior to the interview, the purpose of the research was explained, and the participant provided informed consent for her responses to be used anonymously for academic purposes. With her permission, the session was audio-recorded to ensure accuracy during later transcription and analysis. Additional notes were taken to record contextual information, such as interruptions, emotional tone, and any remarks that were not captured in the audio recording. This triangulation of data collection methods enhances the reliability and richness of the data.

The timing of the interview is also significant. It was conducted midway through the course (November), after lessons had been ongoing since May. Conducting the needs analysis at this stage allowed the researcher to capture the learner's evolving needs, her

reflections on progress, and the challenges she continued to face. This mid-course timing supports the view that needs analysis should be an ongoing process rather than a one-off diagnostic event, as learners' goals and contexts can change over time.

4.4 Interview Design and Structure

The interview questions were designed according to the multidimensional framework described in Section 3, integrating elements of TSA, PSA, LNA, Strategy Analysis, and Means Analysis. The questions were organised into five thematic sections, each corresponding to a specific theoretical framework and research objective.

Questions 1–4 establish the learner's professional responsibilities, the frequency and nature of English use at work, and her self-assessment of current language ability. These questions draw on Richterich and Chancerel's (1980) PSA model, which emphasises the need to understand the learner's existing competencies and language use patterns.

Questions 5–9 investigate the learner's perceived progress since the start of the course, her confidence level, and the strategies she uses to cope with communication breakdowns. These questions draw on PSA, TSA, and O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) strategy analysis framework. They allow the researcher to examine how the learner monitors her own learning and compensates for gaps in linguistic performance.

Questions 10–13 focus on the learner's anticipated professional tasks and priorities for future learning. These questions are grounded primarily in TSA (Munby, 1978) and explore the learner's future communicative demands. They also relate to Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) concept of "wants," capturing the learner's personal goals and expectations for course outcomes.

Questions 14–17 investigate the learner's preferred learning methods, motivation, and perception of the course so far. This section is based on LNA and aims to identify the learner's preferred strategies and the activities that support her engagement and progress. Questions 18–20 examine contextual constraints such as scheduling, workplace interruptions, and available resources. These questions draw on Holliday's (1994) Means Analysis framework, which highlights the importance of understanding the broader institutional environment in which learning takes place.

4.5 Data Analysis Method

Data were analysed using thematic analysis, a flexible qualitative method that allows for the identification of recurring patterns and themes within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is particularly suitable for needs analysis research because it enables the researcher to interpret both explicit and implicit meanings, connecting learners' narratives to theoretical frameworks.

The audio recording was transcribed verbatim, and the transcript was coded using both deductive and inductive approaches. Deductive coding was guided by the theoretical frameworks (TSA, PSA, LNA, Strategy Analysis, Means Analysis), while inductive coding allowed new themes to emerge from the learners' responses. This

combination ensured that the analysis remained theoretically grounded while also being responsive to the participant's unique experience.

4.6 Ethical Considerations and Limitations

Ethical considerations were central to the research design. The learner provided informed consent, and all identifying details were anonymised to protect her privacy. The study also acknowledged the potential power dynamics inherent in workplace research, given that the participant's employer had contracted the language training. To mitigate this, the researcher emphasised that the interview would not affect her employment or course progression, and that the data would be used only for academic purposes.

However, limitations should be acknowledged. As a single-case study, the findings cannot be generalized to all corporate ESP learners. The results are context-specific and reflect the particular professional environment and individual learner characteristics. Nevertheless, the study provides valuable insights into the design of tailored ESP instruction in similar workplace settings.

5. Presentation and Analysis of Data

The semi-structured interview generated rich qualitative data that align closely with the multidimensional needs analysis framework adopted in this study. The learner's responses revealed five core themes corresponding to Target Situation Analysis (TSA), Present Situation Analysis (PSA), Learning Needs and Preferences (LNA), Strategy Analysis, and Means Analysis. These themes illuminate the complex interaction between the learner's professional demands, current competencies, learning preferences, and workplace constraints. The following sections discuss these themes in detail and identify their implications for ESP course design.

5.1 Target Situation Analysis (TSA): Communicative Demands in the Workplace

The learner reports that English is an essential component of her daily professional practice. She uses English daily, both in written and spoken forms, particularly during meetings, project coordination, and technical supervision of international teams. Her work involves continuous interaction with foreign engineers and consultants, often in high-pressure contexts requiring immediate decision-making and technical accuracy. A particularly revealing example is the learner's description of a six-day period during generator performance testing when she communicated exclusively in English for long working hours. She reported: "*I spent six days exclusively with them, all day, every hour of work… doing electrical measurements and speaking only in English.*" This indicates that English functions as a core operational tool rather than an auxiliary skill.

The learner's target situation thus comprises multiple communicative events that demand not only general business competence but also specialised technical discourse. These events include incident reporting, coordination of maintenance procedures, and problem-solving discussions. They require specific lexical fields, precise explanations,

and rapid oral processing, often under time constraints. The findings confirm that the learner's professional environment is characterised by high-stakes communication, where misunderstandings can lead to operational or safety risks.

A key issue emerging from TSA is that the coursebook used (Business Partner B2+) does not fully align with the learner's workplace register. While the book provides valuable exposure to authentic business scenarios (e.g., meetings, negotiations, presentations), it lacks the specialised technical genres required in a power plant environment. This mismatch supports Dudley-Evans and St John's (1998) concept of "carrier content," where general materials serve as vehicles for language instruction but do not reflect the specific discourse practices of the learner's professional community. Therefore, the TSA findings indicate the need for more discipline-specific content, including technical reporting formats, procedural language, and authentic workplace interaction patterns.

5.2 Present Situation Analysis (PSA): Competence, Progress, and Remaining Gaps

The learner described her progress since the beginning of the course as moderate, attributing improvement primarily to enhanced comprehension and confidence. She noted that listening, reading, and writing have improved, while speaking remains a persistent weakness. This self-assessment aligns with PSA principles (Richterich & Chancerel, 1980), which emphasize the importance of understanding learners' current competence and perceived gaps. Although the learner holds a B2+ qualification, her workplace performance suggests that her oral fluency and automaticity do not yet meet the demands of her target situation.

The learner also attributed the limited progress in speaking to restricted study time and intense work pressure. Her professional duties constrain her ability to engage in autonomous study and to consolidate new vocabulary. Consequently, the gap between her current performance and workplace requirements remains significant, particularly regarding oral communication under time pressure. These findings underscore the importance of designing lessons that maximise speaking practice during limited lesson time and support efficient self-study.

5.3 Learning Needs and Preferences (LNA): Methodological Implications

The learner expressed clear preferences for learning activities that support structured practice and preparation. She identified role-plays, guided writing tasks, and listening exercises as particularly effective. She also requested more systematic vocabulary instruction, suggesting the inclusion of topic-based lexical lists (e.g., 10–20 words per lesson) followed by guided practice through sentences or short paragraphs, e.g. "*Role plays are very useful. It's great when I have to study a topic and write a paragraph, then discuss it*," "*I'd like to learn ten new words each time and practice them in sentences or paragraphs related to a theme*." These preferences suggest a reflective learning style and an appreciation for deliberate, scaffolded learning rather than spontaneous interaction.

These findings align with adult learning theory (Knowles, 1973), which highlights the importance of relevance, goal orientation, and self-directedness in adult education. The learner's desire for topic-based vocabulary instruction also reflects a sophisticated awareness of the role of lexical knowledge in communicative competence. As Thornbury (2002) argues, vocabulary acquisition requires deep processing and retrieval practice, and the learner's request for structured lexical input supports this principle.

5.4 Strategy Analysis: Emerging Strategic Competence

The learner reported using compensatory strategies such as requesting clarification, asking for repetition, and paraphrasing when communication breakdowns occur, e.g. *"When I don't understand something, I ask for clarification or rephrase it in my own words."* These strategies indicate an emerging level of strategic competence, which is essential in professional lingua franca contexts. However, her strategy appears intuitive rather than systematically developed. According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), strategic competence includes metacognitive and cognitive strategies that enable learners to plan, monitor, and regulate their communication. The learner's reliance on spontaneous strategies suggests a need for explicit strategy instruction, particularly in areas such as paraphrasing, discourse markers, and response planning.

Given the high-stakes nature of her workplace communication, enhancing strategic competence is essential for maintaining operational efficiency and reducing misunderstanding. Explicit instruction in strategies would not only improve communication effectiveness but also support learner autonomy and confidence.

5.5 Means Analysis: Environmental Constraints and Institutional Factors

The learner highlighted several contextual factors that influence her learning. She described workplace scheduling constraints, frequent interruptions, and a heavy workload, which limit her capacity for autonomous study and reduce her concentration during lessons. These constraints align with Holliday's (1994) Means Analysis, which emphasises the importance of institutional and environmental conditions in shaping learning.

The one-to-one online format also presents both benefits and challenges. While it allows for personalised instruction and immediate feedback, it reduces opportunities for peer interaction and collaborative learning. To address this limitation, the instructor must design tasks that simulate authentic interaction, such as role-plays, simulations, and structured communicative activities.

6. Proposed Pedagogical Intervention

Based on the findings of the multidimensional needs analysis, a targeted pedagogical intervention was developed to transition the learner from general business English to the specialized communicative demands of her technical role. This intervention consists of a sixty-minute one-to-one online session specifically focusing on the high-frequency tasks

of technical incident reporting and fault management. The primary goal of the lesson is to enhance oral fluency and strategic competence by intentionally compensating for the lack of specialized material in the current curriculum. Specifically, it replaces the generic "carrier content" of the standard *Business Partner B2+* coursebook with the "real content" derived from the learner's actual professional environment at the Greek Public Power Corporation (PPC). To achieve this, the lesson utilizes authentic workplace materials, including photographs of power plant components and specialized technical incident cards, to ensure situational authenticity and high learner engagement.

6.1 Lesson Overview

The session is structured into six progressive stages designed to move the learner from heavily scaffolded support toward autonomous, time-pressured performance. The lesson begins with a five-minute lead-in utilizing visual prompts of technical failures to activate professional schemata and trigger an immediate, spontaneous linguistic response. This is followed by a ten-minute scaffolding stage where the teacher introduces a functional three-step discourse framework consisting of system status, root cause, and required action. To reinforce this structure, a ten-minute controlled practice task requires the learner to complete a matching exercise that links specific technical malfunctions with appropriate cause-and-effect prepositions, such as "due to," "triggered by," or "resulting in."

The core of the intervention is a fifteen-minute communicative task involving a simulated high-stakes phone report, where the learner must describe incidents from cards while simulating the pressures of a real-time radio or telephone call. To address the learner's need for professional precision, a ten-minute language focus stage follows, transitioning the learner to formal written communication through the application of the passive voice in technical summaries. The lesson concludes with a ten-minute consolidation phase, featuring a "Rapid Incident Report" retrieval task where the learner must summarize three unseen technical incidents within a strict two-minute limit. This final stage is coupled with a strategic reflection session to ensure that the newly mastered structures and vocabulary can be effectively transferred to her professional responsibilities at the PPC.

6.2 Justification of the Lesson Plan

The lesson plan refers to a 60-minute one-to-one session that focuses on developing the learner's oral communication skills and professional fluency in fault-reporting scenarios. Each stage of the lesson aligns with ESP theory, adult learning principles, and the findings of the needs analysis. It also allows the learner to engage in authentic workplace communication through meaningful and goal-oriented tasks, reflecting the principles of Task-based language teaching (TBLT) (Ellis, 2003).

The ESP course as a whole consists of 50 hours of instruction and can therefore be characterized as extensive in nature. Its overall orientation is broad, as it aims to develop general professional communication skills applicable across varied workplace situations

(Sifakis, 2018). However, the lesson plan presented here adopts a narrow focus, targeting a specific and high-frequency communicative task, namely professional fault reporting. This distinction is consistent with ESP course design principles, which allow for lessons focused on specific communicative tasks within broader instructional frameworks (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998).

Moreover, this lesson plan adopts a genre-based approach, focusing on the professional communication needs of the learner rather than general language forms. Following Swales (1990), members of a discourse community rely on specific genres to accomplish shared professional goals. In the context of the Public Power Corporation (PPC), the Technical Incident Report is a central genre that ensures operational safety and effective fault management. By structuring the lesson around this genre, the teacher helps the learner grasp not only the language required but also the reasoning and conventions behind professional reporting. This focus on genre is reinforced in Stage 4, where the emphasis on the passive voice addresses a key finding of the TSA regarding the requirement for technical objectivity in professional reporting. Consequently, the lesson does not merely provide grammatical instruction, but it also guides the learner through the essential steps and moves needed to participate successfully in real workplace communicative events. It also enables her to use language as a functional tool within her professional role.

The vocabulary instruction in this lesson is further guided by Thornbury's (2002) principles of memory, particularly the concepts of cognitive depth and retrieval. By having the learner categorize technical faults and match them with appropriate cause-and-effect prepositions, the lesson ensures that the vocabulary is processed with the level of depth necessary for long-term retention. Additionally, the inclusion of a "Rapid Incident Report" at the end of the session provides essential retrieval practice. As Thornbury (2002) emphasizes, the effortful act of recalling a word from memory, rather than simply repeating it, greatly enhances its durability. This is especially important in the learner's high-pressure environment at PPC, where arousal and attention are heightened. By linking technical English to imagery through authentic photos, the lesson helps build a strong mental network that allows the supervisor to access professional language quickly and intuitively during critical situations.

From a pedagogical and ESP perspective, the lesson is highly vocabulary-driven. However, the speaking stages are designed to treat speaking as a procedural skill which requires automation under pressure. As Bygate (1987) notes, professional oral proficiency depends on the ability to produce language fluently in time-constrained and high-stakes contexts. This approach is also consistent with Skill Acquisition Theory (DeKeyser, 2007), which emphasizes the gradual development of automaticity through repeated, meaningful practice. In such contexts, learners must be able to access and deploy language rapidly and efficiently. The lesson, therefore, progresses from structured scaffolding to a timed "Rapid Incident Report," enabling the learner to move from controlled to more automatic processing.

As the Needs Analysis identified speaking as the learner's weakest skill, particularly in high-stakes situations, the lesson incorporates simulated pressure to develop her strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). This involves equipping the learner with strategies to bridge the gap between her technical expertise and her linguistic lacks, notably through the use of standardized lexical chunks and rephrasing techniques. Consequently, the speaking tasks function not merely as opportunities for vocabulary practice, but as rehearsals for the target situation. Their purpose is to reduce the hesitation reported in the PSA and to foster the communicative fluency required for effective supervision at PPC.

7. Conclusion

This case study has demonstrated the critical importance of conducting a multidimensional needs analysis within the specific, high-stakes environment of one-to-one corporate ESP instruction. By examining the professional communicative demands of a senior electrical engineer at the Greek Public Power Corporation, the study revealed a significant discrepancy between the general business curriculum initially provided and the highly specialized discourse required for technical supervision and fault reporting. The findings confirm that even for a learner with a high level of general linguistic proficiency (B2+), effective professional performance depends on the mastery of discipline-specific genres and the ability to deploy strategic communicative resources under operational pressure.

The proposed pedagogical intervention illustrates how theoretical frameworks—such as genre analysis and Task-Based Language Teaching—can be integrated to bridge this gap. By intentionally shifting from generic "carrier content" to the "real content" of the power plant environment, the lesson plan provides a roadmap for making ESP instruction more authentic, workload-sensitive, and goal-oriented. Furthermore, the transition from scaffolded support to timed retrieval practice addresses the learner's specific need for automated oral production, demonstrating that ESP course design must be treated as a dynamic, ongoing process rather than a static, one-time procedure.

Ultimately, this research underscores the role of the ESP practitioner as a collaborator who must navigate institutional constraints and professional realities to deliver value. While this study was localized to a single technical supervisor, the implications are broader: for corporate language training to be truly effective, it must move beyond standardized textbooks and adopt a more granular, context-sensitive approach. Future research could further explore the sustainability of such tailored interventions over longer periods and across different technical sectors, continuing to refine our understanding of how language instruction can best serve the evolving needs of the international professional community.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

About the Author

Ioanna Kiapekaki is an experienced English language educator with 15 years of teaching practice. She is currently completing her M.Ed. in TESOL at the Hellenic Open University, specializing in the Teaching of English as a Foreign and International Language. Her extensive professional background includes delivering Business English courses internationally, having taught in diverse contexts such as Chile, China, and Ukraine. For the past four years, she has specialized in corporate language training at the Greek Public Power Corporation (PPC) and has also taught at Schools of Second Chance (SDE). Her research focus lies in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), adult education, and the communicative demands of technical professional environments.

References

Brindley, G. (1989). The role of needs analysis in adult ESL programme design. In R. K. Johnson (Ed.), The Second Language Curriculum (pp. 63–78). Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.ro/books/about/The_Second_Language_Curriculum.html?id=sidbZZzpdy0C&redir_esc=y

Bygate, M. (1987). *Speaking*. Oxford University Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.ro/books/about/Speaking.html?id=XozCwaqSJFIC&redir_esc=y

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics, 1*(1), 1–47. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/I.1.1

Carrell, P. L., & Eisterhold, J. C. (1983). Schema theory and ESL reading pedagogy. *TESOL Quarterly, 17*(4), 553–573. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ291769

DeKeyser, R. M. (2007). *Practice in a second language: Perspectives from applied linguistics and cognitive psychology*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667275

Dudley-Evans, T., & St John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in English for Specific Purposes: A multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.ro/books/about/Developments_in_English_for_Specific_Pur.html?id=FY5ChNRKtxwC&redir_esc=y

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching*. Oxford University Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.ro/books/about/Task_based_Language_Learning_and_Teachin.html?id=coO0bxnBeRgC&redir_esc=y

Flowerdew, J., & Peacock, M. (2001). *Research Perspectives on English for Academic Purposes*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524766

Gillham, B. (2000). *Case Study Research Methods*. Continuum. Retrieved from https://books.google.ro/books/about/Case_Study_Research_Methods.html?id=B0UdlaxwiX0C&redir_esc=y

Holliday, A. (1994). *Appropriate Methodology and Social Context*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.ro/books/about/Appropriate_Methodology_and_Social_Conte.html?id=2V436wj18iQC&redir_esc=y

Holliday, A., & Cooke, C. (1982). *Developing a learning centre in the language classroom*.

Honey, P., & Mumford, A. (1986). *The Manual of Learning Styles*. Peter Honey. Retrieved from https://books.google.ro/books/about/The_Manual_of_Learning_Styles.html?id=CkiTQgAACAAJ&redir_esc=y

Honey, P., & Mumford, A. (1992). *The Learning Styles Questionnaire*. Peter Honey. Retrieved from https://www.ilfm.org.uk/cms/document/ILFM_Learning_Styles_Resource_TK_09Oct17_Ver1.0.pdf

Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes: A learning-centred approach*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://assets.cambridge.org/97805213/18372/excerpt/9780521318372_excerpt.pdf

Kolb, D. A. (1976). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Prentice Hall.

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (2nd ed.). Prentice Hall. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235701029_Experiential_Learning_Experience_As_The_Source_Of_Learning_And_Development

Knowles, M. (1973). *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species*. Gulf Publishing. Retrieved from
https://books.google.ro/books/about/The_Adult_Learner.html?id=IeqeAAAAMA AJ&redir_esc=y

McKay, S. L. (2006). *Researching Second Language Classrooms*. Lawrence Erlbaum. Retrieved from https://www.routledge.com/Researching-Second-Language-Classrooms/LeeMckay/p/book/9780805853407

Munby, J. (1978). *Communicative Syllabus Design*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from
https://assets.cambridge.org/97805212/82949/excerpt/9780521282949_excerpt.pdf

Nunan, D. (1988). *The Learner-Centred Curriculum*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from
https://books.google.ro/books/about/The_Learner_Centred_Curriculum.html?id= TKiH80Q4JKYC&redir_esc=y

O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://catdir.loc.gov/catdir/samples/cam031/89009770.pdf

Richterich, R., & Chancerel, J. L. (1980). *Needs Analysis and Programme Planning in Adult ESL*. Pergamon. Retrieved from https://books.google.ro/books/about/Identifying_the_Needs_of_Adults_Learning .html?id=9pwH5PMQ-8gC&redir_esc=y

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2020). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation from a self-determination theory perspective: Definitions, theory, practices, and future directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2020.101860

Sifakis, N. (2018). Course and materials design, development and evaluation—I: Important considerations. In N. Sifakis (Ed.), *AGG33: Teaching English for Specific Purposes*. Hellenic Open University.

Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://archive.org/details/genreanalysiseng0000swal

Thornbury, S. (2002). *How to Teach Vocabulary*. Longman. Retrieved from https://books.google.ro/books/about/How_to_Teach_Vocabulary.html?id=Qf0qE DcypCIC&redir_esc=y

West, R. (1994). Needs analysis in language teaching. *Language Teaching, 27*(1), 1–19. Retrieved from https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/language-teaching/article/abs/needs-analysis-in-language-teaching/3A0AA342947388957E960EBD31B17FBD