

Learning the Fundamentals of Legal Language through Teaching and Testing Method of the Framed Syllabus

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Abstract: English for Specific Purpose (ESP) which has emerged in 1960 is the branch of English language teaching. In this present situation, students of law need a specific set of language skills for their success in education field and profession place (court) also. Students are unable to write perfect words for their specific task due to lack of training and practice. The objectives of the present study are to correct the mistakes and learn sort of dates and numbers, Foreign terminology, doublets and triplets, how to avoid ambiguity and sexist language, legal terms. The main purpose of this study is deal with enhancement of specific set of legal terms, legal writing skills through framed syllabus which helps them to attain their level properly. Technology acts as an important role in this research. This study aims at making the law students aware of the need for improving their legal writing skills through English for specific purpose.

Key words: Legal aid, to confiscate, verdict, de facto, purpose, terminology

INTRODUCTION

According to Hutchinson (1987), English for specific purpose was first emerged in the 1960's. After World War-II, when United States became the World Trade Center and paying attention a rush of immigrants from around the world. So that newcomer needed to learn English skills to further their higher studies or to communicate at working in the unknown place. In the late 1960, there were lots of attempts to explain English for Science and Technology (EST) to meet up the learners needs. Gradually, the developments of linguistics and learning psychology have mostly contributed to enhancing the dignity of ESP studies. The first issue of ESP Journal was published in 1980, further made it a globally accepted field of research. English is one of the largest spoken languages around the world. "Lesiak (2014) considers ESP as English instruction based on actual and immediate needs of learners who have to successfully perform real life tasks unrelated to merely passing an English class or exam". ESP means English for specific purpose it involves teaching and learning the specific set of skills and language required by particular learner for a particular purpose. The P in ESP stands for Professional Purpose. A set of skills that learners currently require in their working place or it requires in their professional careers (Gatehouse, 2001). The English language is the current lingua franca of international

business, science and technology. It is spoken by billions of people in the world and the number is still increasing gradually. Law students should master English language because countless number of legal books, legal documents, video lectures and conference presentations are available in English only. Without English fluency, they may find it difficult to appreciate the ideas conveyed by the researcher and lots of modules in law students require writing academic reports. For this reason, a good fluency and grasp of English language is essential. English language is considered as an international language. Therefore, it is mostly used for communication.

Reading triggers a person's creativity and imagination as, it is agreed by many literary scholars and as well as neurologists. When a law student gets exposed to comics which deal with moral and interesting courtroom scenes, the student can also attain some critical thinking skills. It happens as reading makes the reader to imagine things in the way he/she feels. It helps the reader to acquire their subconscious mind without any external influence. So, the researcher encourages the students to read the comics which have consist moral and court room situations (Ramesh and Ajit, 2016).

In the present situation, students of law need a specific set of language skills for their achievement in their field of learning and in the working place like courts, firms and organizations. So, they need to develop their legal terms, legal phrases, draft writing, grammar and

critical thinking skills. This study will attempt to develop the specific set of language skills for the law students, with the help of framed syllabus which can improve their vocabularies, phrases and maxims related to law field and critical thinking skills.

Research questions:

- Does the framed syllabus enhance the legal writing skills
- Does the framed syllabus develop essential grammar

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants: This research study adopted experimental research method. Data was gathered from a group of students through two specific methods, qualitative and quantitative method. The participants in this study were the second year, LLB students at Government Law College, Tiruchirappalli. In order to achieve the objectives framed for this study, 75 students were selected for sample by using purposive sampling method. In interpretation and discussion part, the researcher discussed their sample performance in pre and post-test.

Instruments: Questionnaire consisted 28 questions were closed-ended questions. In total, 28 questions consisted 40 marks. The materials used in the study are the syllabus framed by researcher. It could help the sample group to acquire new legal words and make them use it on appropriate places. The framed syllabus which had five units also has space to enrich the student's legal terms and basic grammar skills. In the third and fifth unit, researcher used smart classroom.

Procedure: The study is done by conduction a pre and a post-test. The participants were tested individually. In the beginning, the participants were told that the study is focused on legal terms, phrases, documents writings.

Pre-test: Initially, the participants completed a pre-test, which was helpful to assess their knowledge in the target skills. The questionnaire consisted close-ended questions. In this session, the participants were given vocabulary tests to find out or choose the meanings of few words and phrases related to legal terms. The questionnaire had been administrated in order to test the student's knowledge on legal words, phrases.

Post-test: The post-test was conducted among the students after teaching legal words, comics, some movies and grammar. Later, the questionnaire was provided to

the students. The data from both the pre and the post-test were then presented together and interpreted.

Instructional sequence: The researcher taught the framed syllabus in forty hours. The syllabus was taught in such a manner as to lay emphasis on the legal terms, literary texts and comics. So that the participants learnt specific words, legal writing skills properly. The framed syllabus has five units. Those units are given below.

UNIT-I (basic standards of legal writing):

- Dates and numbers
- Latin terms
- Abbreviations
- British and American English

In this unit, the researcher taught these basic writing procedures which are used in the court. It was very helpful for the students to learn legal writing. Later, the researcher gave role play activity to the participants.

UNIT-II (legal writing skills):

- Business buzzwords
- Constantly litigated words
- Legal drafting (basic ideas about legal drafting)
- Legal terms

The participants learnt some specific words like prosecutor, de facto, abuse, victim and homicide and testify, etc. In this unit, the researcher taught some the court terms and the method of writing affidavit appropriately. When the researcher taught this unit, he gave a lot of information on legal writing.

UNIT-III (comics):

- Akbar and birbal
- Tenaliraman

The researcher continued to teach the same second unit which helped the law students to learn legal writing in proper way. Later, the research taught the third unit, which consists some literary text and moral comics to enhance their critical thinking skills through technology. Researcher used technology in this unit which was smart classroom and some YouTube videos.

Example of tenaliraman story: The man gets some amount from a crooked man as debit out of compulsion. As, they were business rivals, that crooked. The crooked man created a bond that would be a threat to his life if he failed to return the money. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the innocent man couldn't return the

money, so, the crooked man wanted to take 1 pound of flesh from the innocent man body as part of the bond. The case moves to the court. Act as a lawyer for the innocent man and frame arguments and also act as a judge how will you give a verdict for this case (Vishal, 2012). These kind of activity is given to the students.

UNIT-IV (essential grammar and legal editing):

- Punctuation marks
- Tenses
- Active and passive voice
- Simple, compound and complex

In this unit, the researcher taught essential grammar, which helped the students to write legal documents precisely. When, the researcher taught this unit, he gave a lot of legal oriented examples. Researcher showed some videos which helped them to understand the rules and regulation grammar undoubtedly.

Unitv (excerpts from classic movies and some experts lawyers speech):

- Angry men by reginald rose
- Speech from some experts

In this unit, the researcher used a movie related to law field and experts speech videos which were very motivational for the students. When researcher taught this unit, he gave some extra information about the speaker which made the students to pay more attention to the content. So, all the students in class got engaged with the class attentively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis

Inference1: From Fig. 1, it is evident that the Performance of pre-test. out of 40 marks two students scored 19 (2.7%) marks, four students scored 18 (5.3%) marks, Four students scored 17 (5.3%) marks, six students scored 16 (8%) marks, seven students scored 15 (9.3%), seven student scored 14 (9.3%) marks, five student scored 13 (6.7%) marks, Nine students scored 12 (12%) marks, each marks six students, totally 24 students scored 11, 10, 9, 8 (8%) marks, each marks two students, totally two scored 7.5 (2.7%) marks and finally, three students scored 6 (4%) marks. In Table 1, maximum mark was 19 and minimum mark was 5.

It is divulged from Fig. 1 that the respondents (Law students) level of understanding was tested with the help of specially framed syllabus for technical terms and grammar. Their progress on these two areas were tested

Table 1: Performance of pre-test

Pre-test				
Valid	Frequencies	Percentage	Valid (%)	Cumulative(%)
5.00	2	2.7	2.7	2.7
6.00	3	4.0	4.0	6.7
7.00	2	2.7	2.7	9.3
8.00	6	8.0	8.0	17.3
9.00	6	8.0	8.0	25.3
10.00	6	8.0	8.0	33.3
11.00	6	8.0	8.0	41.3
12.00	9	12.0	12.0	53.3
13.00	5	6.7	6.7	60.0
14.00	7	9.3	9.3	69.3
15.00	7	9.3	9.3	78.7
16.00	6	8.0	8.0	86.7
17.00	4	5.3	5.3	92.0
18.00	4	5.3	5.3	97.3
19.00	2	2.7	2.7	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

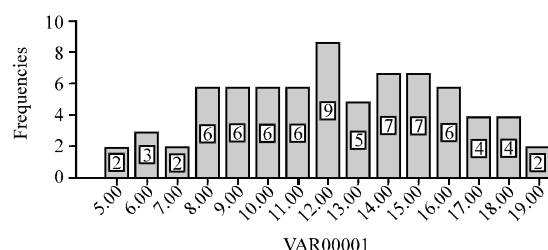


Fig. 1: Frequency analysis of pre-test; frequency table and bar chart: x-axis: mark of the students, y-axis: number of the students

before teaching the syllabi and after teaching the syllabi. The analysis clearly pinpointed that there is a vast difference in the progress. in the pre-test, the students have had scored minimum 2 marks out of 40 and maximum marks 19 out of 40 (Fig. 1).

Inference 2: From Fig. 2, it is evident that the performance of pre-test.out of 80 marks two students scored 37 (2.7%) marks, 5 students scored 36 (6.7%) marks, 9 students scored 35 (12.0%) marks, 4 students scored 34 (5.3%) marks, 6 students scored 33 8%), each marks 3 student, totally 15 students scored 32, 28, 26, 24 and 19 4%) marks, each marks four students, totally eight students scored 31, 20 (5.3%) marks, 10 students scored 30 (13.3%) marks, 6 students scored 29 (8%) marks 3 students scored 28 (4%) marks, 5 students scored 22 (6.7%) marks, each marks 1 student, totally five students scored 27, 25, 23, 21 and 18 (1.3%) marks, in Table 2 maximum mark was 18 and minimum mark was 37 (Fig. 2). It is divulged from the above table that the respondents (Law students) level of understanding was tested with the help of specially framed syllabus for technical terms and grammar. Their progress on these two areas were tested before teaching

Table 2: Performance of post-test

Post-test				
Valid	Frequencies	Percentage	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)
18.00	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
19.00	3	4.0	4.0	5.3
20.00	4	5.3	5.3	10.7
21.00	1	1.3	1.3	12.0
22.00	5	6.7	6.7	18.7
23.00	1	1.3	1.3	20.0
24.00	3	4.0	4.0	24.0
25.00	1	1.3	1.3	25.3
26.00	3	4.0	4.0	29.3
27.00	1	1.3	1.3	30.7
28.00	3	4.0	4.0	34.7
29.00	6	8.0	8.0	42.7
30.00	10	13.3	13.3	56.0
31.00	4	5.3	5.3	61.3
32.00	3	4.0	4.0	65.3
33.00	6	8.0	8.0	73.3
34.00	4	5.3	5.3	78.7
35.00	9	12.0	12.0	90.7
36.00	5	6.7	6.7	97.3
37.00	2	2.7	2.7	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

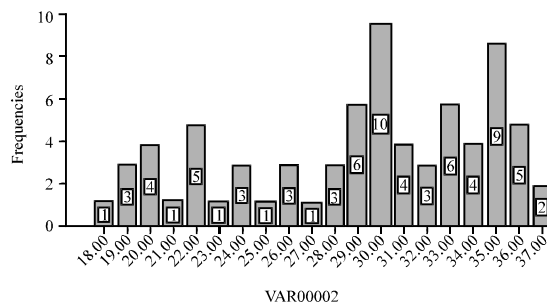


Fig. 2: frequency analysis of ppost-test; frequency table and bar chart: x-axis: mark of the students, y-axis: number of the students

the syllabi and after teaching the syllabi. The analysis clearly pinpointed that there is a vast difference in the progress. After intervention of framed syllabus, in the post-test, the students have had scored minimum 18 marks out of 40 and maximum marks 37 out of 40.

Closed-ended questions: In this study, a total number of 75 participants attended the pre and the post-test. It consisted 28 close-ended questions for 40 marks. The data from both parts of the test were presented together. In the close-ended questions, pre-test minimum mark was 5 and maximum was 19. In the post-test, the minimum mark was 18 and the maximum was 37. Through the close-ended questions, the participants were able to enhance their understanding of specific words legal phrases, draft writing, grammar and practice moot court activities. Two test (pre and post-test) samples were taken for comparison. Minimum mark for pre-test was 4 and maximum mark was 33. In the post-test, minimum mark was

34 and maximum mark was 37 out of 40. In the post-test, all the participants scored more marks than the pre-test. So, this special syllabus which includes legal writing skills, expert's speeches, literary texts and comics books was very helpful for the law students to enhance their professional skills. In this research, second year LLB law students learnt a lot of technical words, phrases and critical thinking skills from the framed syllabus. from the analysis, it is concluded that there is a good difference observed in their progress before and after teaching technical terms and grammar. Through this research, the researcher suggested that this special syllabus will help all the law students to enhance their legal English skills.

Research topic; learning the fundamentals of legal language through teaching and testing method of the framed syllabus

Choose the appropriate meaning of words

Confession:

- Rejection
- Truthful
- Declaration of guilt
- Acquit

Banned:

- Permit
- Request
- Stopped
- Encourage

Defendant:

- Corruption
- An individual against whom a lawsuit is filed
- Blackmail
- Public inebriation

Verdict:

- Judgment
- Information
- Agreement
- Imprisonment

Capital offense:

- Provide relief from blame
- Accuse formally
- Order
- A crime punishable by death

Define the following:

- Plea
- An incarceration
- An ex parte
- Non-suit
- A jurisdiction

What do you mean by the following latin terms:

- Latin terms
- Null and void
- habeas corpus
- Abbreviation
- WP
- CRLP
- MACMA

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

- Appraise-apprise
- Credible-credible

Grammar

Preposition:

- The bus will stop here (on, at, in) 5:45 p.m
- My daughter is coming (on, at, in) Monday
- We started the job (on, at, in) 1971

Tenses:

- Bar council (announce) several new rules and regulations last week
- Legal representative (handle) this civil case for 5 years
- Judge (give) parole to Suresh

Punctuation:

- The boy's friend sat in a corner
- What are they doing next Sunday
- He shouted at them go away they hate you
- Change direct into indirect speech
- Dinesh said, "I am going to temple"
- "Alas! I have broken my sister's pen" said she

CONCLUSION

The result of this experimental research method is very positive. Last three units, researcher used the technology appropriately. With the help of technology, Law students learnt each and every aspect of legal information undoubtedly. In the post-test, all the participants scored more marks than the pre-test. The purpose of the framed syllabus is to develop the legal terms, legal phrases, draft writing and critical thinking skills for law students. The afore-mentioned text and comics are an essential for the students to enhance their critical thinking skills and also they attained some knowledge for their specific field. It is learnt from the

analysis of the data that the process would help the English learners to enhance the repertoire of specific terms pertaining to legal use in particular and improve their critical thinking skills in general. The students have learned the essential legal proceedings like contractual agreement and the phrases like void ab initio, conflict between liberty and equality through the prescribed literary text and comics. Through this research, Researcher suggests that this framed syllabus enhance their legal writing and critical thinking skills very accurately. So, every law students might go through this syllabus, they are able to know how to enhance legal writing and critical thinking skills. When, the researcher taught the syllabus to the students they felt it a little bit difficult to cope with. Since, the students were studying general English for a very long time in their school and college education, this special English syllabus gave them a new and effective perspective. After attending some regular classes the students got involved with the subject. Because the syllabus focuses on all the four skills (LSRW) of a language. This study focused on second year law students. The researcher gave some moot court activities which made the students to get involved to the subject actively. Through this study, the participants learned a lot of things related to their field. So, the researcher highly suggested that this special syllabus could be added on to the government law college's general curriculum for the student's career development.

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