Business Management Learners' Academic and Professional Needs for English and its Current Practices

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the research findings on needs analysis conducted through a questionnaire survey, among students and teachers of management colleges across Assam in India. Independent variables related to the research questions as curriculum design and syllabus related needs in language learning context were taken into consideration. These variables were selected to analyse the data. The responses of students' questionnaire are calculated on SPSS 16.0 software. The quantitative data was collected from Items 1-11.The findings relating to the research questions are discussed in detail. The sample size is 309 collected from various rural, urban and peri-urban part of India with the help of a questionnaire and structured interview.

Keywords: Business English, English for Specific Purposes, Need Analysis, Academic Needs, Professional Needs.

INTRODUCTION:

New developments in education psychology have given new interpretations for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and language-as-discourse which contribute to our understanding of Business English. Managerialism and academic professionalism in English has become fundamental to any management schools as it exploits strategies to manage and reconstitute their self-concept within an evolutionary context. As such, they are instrumental in realigning power relations and sustaining managerialism in their future endeavours. English for specific purposes (ESP) begins by charting unending deliberations on key topics like needs assessment and its goals, specificity in instructional methods, and the role of subject knowledge in instructor expertise. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) offers a functional frame for teaching Business English. The discourse view help us to see and go through the process of interaction between business and language, including business jargons i.e. the activities of business participants, intricate networks of interpersonal relations, strategies and also tactics that are taken up for pursuing precise goals, the dynamics of discourse, and features of linguistic realizations. And it is designed in such a way so that it meets specific needs of the learner (Strevans, 1988).

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Needs analysis is the key essence of ESP.Most definitions of ESP(e.g.Robinson1991,Strevans 1998,Munby 1978,Johns and Dudley-Evans 1991)use ESP as an umbrella term .It embraces two key capacities ,one is the English for Academic Purposes (EAP)and the other is English for Occupational Purposes(EOP).EAP has been recently the area of greatest activity and refers to the language and skills required by non-native speakers for the purpose of study .It is widely acknowledged in India that many students are able to pass grueling the grammar and reading tests. However, when it comes to their language skills the students lack to withstand even the most basic conversations in English. It has been observed that the science and engineering undergraduates in India are known, in particular, to have low motivation towards language learning and show

little improvement in later years. There is a pressing need to tackle this issue if India wants to be in the rat race of scientific research and development. TSA (Target Situation Analysis), LSA (Learning Situation Analysis), PSA (Present Situation Analysis), MA (Means Analysis) and Language Audit are some of the prominent types of needs analysis in any ESP context. In the ESP arena, we find a number of models of needs analysis such as Munby (1978), McDonough (1984), Hutchinson & Waters (1987), Robinson (1991), West (1994), Jordan (1997) and Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998). These theoretical models are related to a certain extent that they aim at identifying the English language needs of the learners. Hyland (2006, p.1) explains that EAP covers a wide range of practices in academic institutions, including writing and classroom interactions. English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) can be distinguished from a specific approach (ESAP) in that practices which students must get used to, such as note taking, group discussion and presentations. These are common to all disciplines in EGAP.With all the academic study skills and language knowledge thrust upon the students still the students fail miserably to reach the basic objective that is to carry on a basic conversation and discussion in English. The academic and professional needs of the students are not high according to the survey and unfortunately even those needs are rarely achieved. In a study, Haissinski and Maury from the Université Paris-Sud (1990) report in their study of businesses in the Paris area that oral expression (in English) posed the major problem for business people, whereas reading was rated as the least problem area. Although Springer (1992) from the GRETA Language Center at the Académie de Strasbourg, France, did not actually conduct a study of current language usage, he emphasizes the difference between English language courses in general and the need to explore English for specific purposes. Motivation and attitude influence the extent to which students are involved in learning a foreign language. Lombardo (1988:14) states if "students are saying things intended to be understood and writing things intended to be read by someone who is interested in what they have to say, they will be involved in the new language and much more likely to make it a part of their repertoire" but this kind of teaching approach means investigating student interests, experiences, content of other courses, and career plans. Holden (1995) developed a language-focused needs assessment to enable corporations to define their particular training needs and develop criteria to identify the individual and group's language needs in the workplace.

Furuya (1998) identified the following areas as the most difficult for Japanese and non-Japanese engineers at Japanese corporations abroad: General adult conversation, listening comprehension, general English vocabulary, work-related speaking skills, presentation skills, pronunciation, email writing, technical terms. Moody (1993) did an assessment of language needs for technical communication in the multilingual speech community of Papua New Guinea and surveyed the language skill use and language needs in the workplace of Papua New Guinea Technical University graduates in the applied sciences, engineering fields, and forestry; but his results focus mainly on the use of language patterns accommodating Tok Pisin and English. In Hong Kong, Pennington (1993) from the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong presents a general overview of the language research in Hong Kong. She reports on the lack of research data from the workplace and the problem of the agendas, including "culturally appropriate" agendas, "academically correct" philosophical agendas, and the general lack of rigor in past research in terms of questionnaire design, problems with construct validity and insufficient piloting. She also notes the "problem of contamination of research by specific political liberal or conservative agendas" (p. 8). Wongsothorn (1992), from the Chulalongkorn University Language Institute in Thailand, conducted a survey in the early 1980s to identify

1. The extent of use of the English language and the types of English used and required by personnel in Thai government and state agencies and enterprises.
2. The expanse and the purpose of using the four essential skills like listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation was also discussed at length.
3. The correctness of English skills achieved from educational institutes. (p.3)

A total of 486 managers and administrators in Bangkok were included in the study. Results of the study indicate that the government agencies and state enterprises used English moderately whereas business sectors used more English. The ratios of those who needed English at work and those who did not was 1:4. Among the five skills; reading was used most, writing ranked second; listening came third; speaking ranked fourth and translation was fifth....Furthermore, administrators felt that the English skills their personnel had obtained from educational institutions ranged from inadequate to quite adequate."(pp. 3-4)

The evaluation methods should also be specific .Students are assessed during the entire semester in terms of their participation in classes; they take a mid-term examination and also an end-term examination which covers the syllabus. The evaluation methods should be essentially specific.

METHODOLOGY:

This paper presents the research findings on needs analysis conducted through a questionnaire survey, among students and teachers of management colleges across Assam in India. Independent variables related to the research questions as curriculum design and syllabus related needs in language learning context were taken into consideration. These variables were selected to analyse the data. The responses of students' questionnaire are calculated on SPSS 16.0 software. The quantitative data was collected from Items 1-11.The findings relating to the research questions are discussed in detail. The sample size is 309 collected from various rural, urban and peri-urban part of India with the help of a questionnaire and structured interview.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:

In this study the researcher attempted to present a few aspects of her own teaching experiences related to Business English. The major issues and challenges confronted with while designing the syllabus and the course for students in business administration was the lack of need analysis of the students. There is an urgent need for a continuous assessment and the necessity of focusing more on the use of language than on specialist vocabulary. However, the issue is still open to discussion and the researcher believes that the authority concerned should re-assess the needs of the students, and reconsider the content of the courses as well as more modern techniques that would be suitable to this kind of course and to the needs of future management graduates. While framing the syllabus, apart from the subject expert, involvement of the students and industry specific experts can bring a profound and notable transformation in framing and execution of the syllabus. The process of syllabus framing needs to be directed towards achieving the goal and objective of not only language learning but primarily surviving in the professional front and excelling as well.

Table 1: Distribution of the Student Sample According to Urban, Semi-Urban and Rural Areas in Percentage.

CATEGORY	SEBA		CBSE		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Rural	72	23.6	5	1.6	77	25.2
Urban	55	18.0	75	24.6	130	42.6
Semi-Urban	85	27.9	13	4.3	98	32.1
Total	**212**	**69.5**	**93**	**30.5**	**305**	**100.0**

Figure 1: Distribution of the Student Sample according to the Boards SEBA &CBSE (English Language Learning Background of Respondents in Percentage)
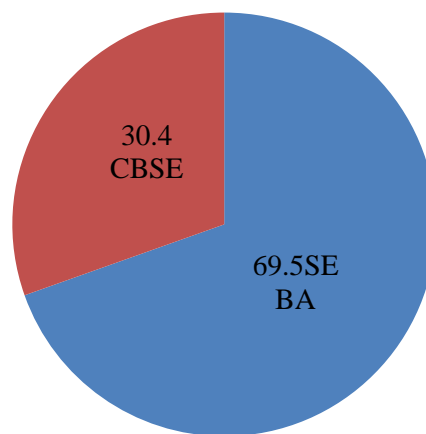
RESULTS OF THE STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRES:

Students' Views on the Research Question (Data Drawn from Section I, Items 1 – 11):
Which areas according to you of the present English language course (goals, content, materials used, method, technology involved etc.) in management colleges of India need to be modified to meet the management students' communicative needs to apply it in real life situations?

<div align="center">**Table 2: Frequencies of Academic Needs as Reported by the Students in Percentages**</div>

Items	Disagree		Disagree to some extent		No idea		Agree to some extent		Agree	
	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
1	22	7.2	83	27.2	10	3.3	65	21.3	125	41.0
2	44	14.4	55	18.0	34	11.1	95	31.1	77	25.2
3	60	19.7	57	18.7	26	8.5	86	28.2	76	24.9
4	43	14.1	72	23.6	15	4.9	45	14.8	130	42.6
5	78	25.6	120	39.3	9	3.0	49	16.1	49	16.1
6	44	14.4	66	21.6	16	5.2	82	26.9	97	31.8
7	23	7.5	84	27.5	33	10.8	60	19.7	105	34.4
8	53	17.4	27	8.9	16	5.2	48	15.7	161	52.8
9	53	17.4	31	10.2	71	23.3	47	15.4	103	33.8
10	29	9.5	23	7.5	53	17.4	80	26.2	120	39.3
11	23	7.5	10	3.3	9	3.0	44	14.4	219	71.8

SYLLABUS DESIGN AND OTHER RELATED ISSUES:

In the first section of the questionnaire, out of the eleven items 1, 2 and 3 enquire the lacunas existing in syllabus design from students' point of view:

1) 41 % of the students felt that the syllabus has been overcrowded to be completed within one semester.
2) 25.2 % of students agree that they needed individual attention in understanding the unfamiliar concepts included in the syllabus, 31.1% agree to some extent.
3) An average of 24.9% agree that the goals and objectives of the course have not been achieved even after completion of the syllabus before the term-end examinations. 28.2% agree to some extent that the goals and objectives of the course have not been achieved even after completion of the syllabus, 8.5% have no idea while 18.7% disagree to the statement and 19.7% disagree. The key gap identified from Section 1 (Items, 1, 2 and 3) is Item 1 - the syllabus is overcrowded to be completed within one semester.

<div align="center">**Figure 2: English syllabus is overloaded to be completed in the time-duration provided**</div>
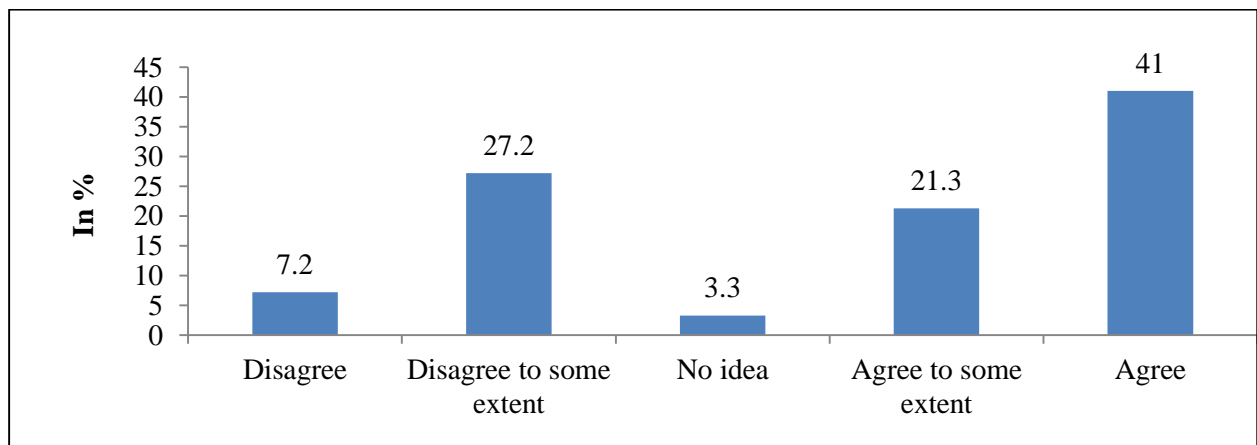
Data from respondents reveal that the group which thought that the syllabus was over crowded believed that too much stress was given on grammar. Teacher hardly considered any class activities due to time constraints. Teachers could not give individual attention to understand the unfamiliar concepts included in the syllabus as the teachers had to follow certain lesson plans. It was of little help as students who have undergone their schooling in the vernacular medium (mostly Assamese and Bengali) found the syllabus meaningless as it did not include real life issues. They are of the opinion that they hesitate to speak in English fearing mispronunciation due to mother tongue interference and lack of adequate practice in speaking English. In schools they had little oral English practice. Maximum students opted for a skill based lighter syllabus. This shows that the students find the syllabus overcrowded as it does not give the scope to cope up with the language tasks and real life scenario which are not provided in the management classroom. This statement 'English syllabus is overloaded to be completed in the time-duration provided' seeks to look into the previous language learning background of respondents. Needs

analysis through written questionnaires or formal discussions may be conducted and the syllabus modified to make it flexible to suit the needs of the learners. (Long, 2002; Jasso, 2005).

As per the data collected from the students' questionnaire survey the opportunity for improving Listening , Speaking , Reading and Writing skills in language classes were examined in Items 4,5,6 and 7. Out of the four skills, exposure to speaking skills were most neglected.25.6% disagreed and 39.3 % marked disagreed to some extent since they were of the view that they were not given enough practice in speaking skills. They do not think that their speaking skills improved and 3% were not sure. They had no idea whether their speaking skills improved or not. They were not completely happy in the progress. It may explore that students are shy in speaking English. Teachers should emphasize in cultivating English speaking environment. Students also disagreed that teachers use audio visual aids for the teaching of Business English. It may explore that there is deficiency of audio visual aids in colleges for teaching Business English. This was followed by writing skills. One of the important goals of the Communicative English course is to equip the students with proper communication skills for effective usage in everyday situations and also to manage future workplace situations. Students disagreed that they were given enough practice in writing technical documents. Students mentioned that they gained little practice in drafting technical documents as 34.4% agreed and 19.7% agreed to some extent and 27.5% disagreed to some extent and 10.8% had no idea regarding confidence in handling technical documents. The students were somewhat satisfied for improvement found in their listening skills abilities, 42.6 % agreed that their listening skills improved considerably since they are keen to listen to English songs and watch English programmes in television .Some also give credit to their Business English classes. 14.8% agreed to some extent that there was a slight improvement in their listening skills but for this they do not want to give credit to the Business English course. Students reported that neither guidance nor any activities were conducted to improve reading skills. Among Items 4, 5, 6, and 7, Item 5- need of speaking skills, Item 7-need of writing skills, Item 4-need of listening skills and Item 6-need for proper practice in reading skills, maximum students opted for the need for proper practice in speaking skills, as given below.

Figure 3: Extent to which the need for speaking skills was fulfilled
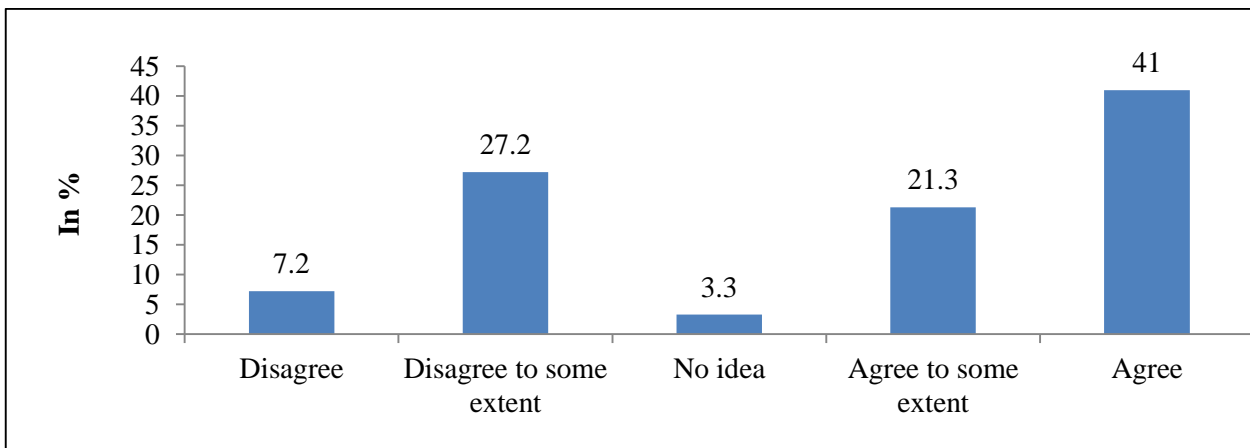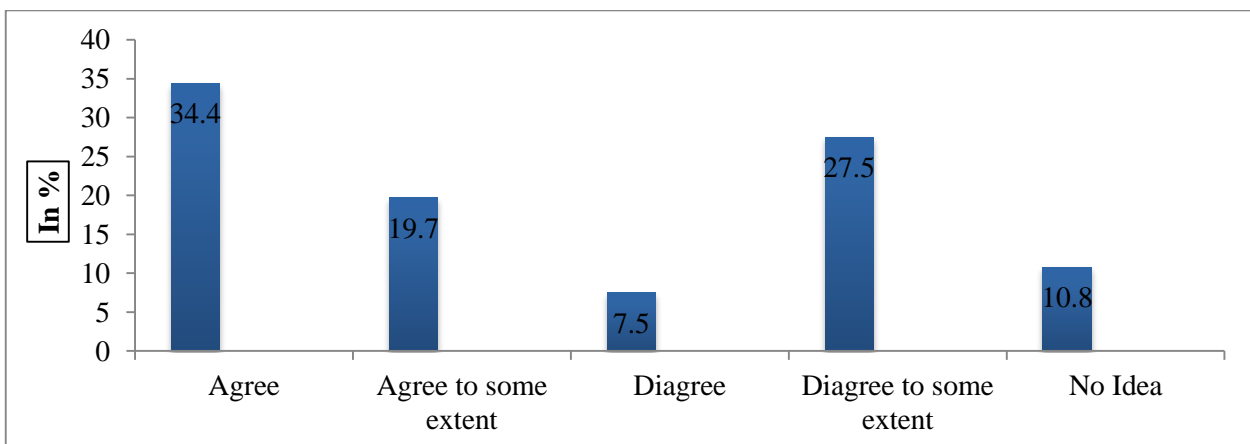

Figure 4: Extent to which the need for written skills were fulfilled

It was found that the majority of students were not satisfied with the kind of practice they were given in writing technical documents. 34.4% marked agree and 19.7% agree to some extent that they were given enough practice in writing technical/business documents and they mentioned that they needed practice in writing technical/business documents. While 7.5% disagreed to the statement and 27.5% disagreed to some extent.10.8% had no idea, this actually showed that they were not sure about the writing assignments given to them as precise instructions were not given to them. Written assignments were obsolete and it was not based on real life situations. As writing business documents is one of the key aspects for future job prospects of managers they were looking for some logical and practical written assignments which would help them in near future. Hence management students would benefit much if they are exposed to business report writing. Among the eleven questions this scored as one of the major need along with Item 5 which is enough practice in speaking skills and confidence gained in speaking English after attending Business English classes. The reason is perhaps due to globalization clients may be from any part of the world which include countries like USA and UK with whom India has a trade friendship. Most of the students are not exposed to written communications except personal / business letter-writing formats. Items 8, 9 and 10 were how far students preferred theory classes, language lab classes, the need of a learner-centered curriculum and relevance of English language respectively. The importance for lab classes were given due importance in comparison to theory classes. The need for continuation of language lab classes throughout management education was\highly sought after. Most of the students desired a learner centered curriculum. Item 9 probes the preference of the students for practical classes. In response to the statement that if the language lab sessions should be continued throughout the management programs, around 116 students (33.8%) agreed with this proposition. The data show that the students understood the benefit of lab classes and were in favour of getting practical exposure to learn English skills throughout the semester in the language laboratory. However it is found that most of the colleges do not have language labs. Many management institutes claim to have one on paper, however it is really hard to find a functional language laboratory. Sometimes it can be really frustrating for the students. Even more some labs have obsolete soft wares and incidentally properly trained teachers to handle language laboratory are not to be found or not effective due to lack of exposure. Ironically 23.3% students had no idea about a language laboratory as it never existed or it was never functional. The study discloses that the students are more involved in laboratory activities than in theory classes. Team activities and undertakings can be also promoted in the labs and students enjoy it if properly implemented. Students also learn to take ownership of what they do, learning becomes more effective this way. Peer teaching can really help in elevating the quality of learning. It also delivers opportunities for evolving leadership skills, negotiations skills decision making skills, team spirit and cooperation. Role-plays, performing skits, puzzles, quizzes, slogan writing, creative writing, mock interviews, group discussions on current topics etc. are examples of useful lab activities that can help students acquire leadership and communication skills without a computer system or internet connection. Among the statements Item 8 (preference for the need of theory or lab classes), Item 9 (need of language lab activities throughout the semesters) Item 10 (need of a learner centered curriculum), statement whether English is relevant in a professional course like management, maximum students opted for Item 11(English is relevant in a professional course like management.) - by marking agreed that came up to 71.8%. 33.8% needed interactive sessions in language lab throughout the semesters, and statement 10 - 39.3% showed the need of a learner centered curriculum. It is indispensable to set attainable goals for students and reassure the students in self-directed approach to learning. The teacher's role is to style the relevance of a task clear to the students and provide a suitable environment to solve a problem at his/her own pace. Methods of instruction are to cater to the varying groups of learners, not the 'fit for all' mode, Michael Long, (2002), being followed now. Item 10 English classes need to be learner-centered, 38% believed that teacher preparation should comprise learning as much about the learners' professional field as the teacher can: research before the course; vigilant and strategic planning of the language and problems that are likely to come up in a lesson; strategies to deal with vocabulary problems that can't be solved during the lesson; and a commitment to teach empathetically, actively considering learners' needs in terms of their backgrounds. The teachers' should know the learners' specialisation in order to be more prepared next time. Teachers need to be confident that they have the skills that will help their learners, such as knowledge of how to make learning successful, how to make language memorable, and how to motivate learners. In other words, a Business English teacher with strong methodology but limited subject knowledge may be more effective than a subject specialist with no knowledge of methodology (although of course a subject specialist with strong methodology would be even better.Figure 5: Need of language laboratory From Item 11 the researcher wanted to find out if English is relevant in a professional course like management.71.8 % students felt that English is highly relevant in a professional course. 14.4% agreed to some

extent. The ability to speak and write in English is considered very important by the recruiters at the time of recruitment. The expectations of corporate world in this regard are high. Companies want people who can basically read and understand written words in the form of instructions, reports, letters, memos, notices and other any form of official documents. The aptitude to express formal communication in oral as well as in written form is equally considered important by the potential employers. As one moves higher in the vertical direction in the organizational hierarchy, it becomes naturally necessary for an employee to be good presenter, negotiator, and convener of meetings. The mastery over the English language will not only boost confidence but also will help a person to conduct his duties efficiently. One of the important deficiencies found by the employers and recruiters in candidates for different jobs are the lack of oral as well as written communication skills. Many candidates don't know how to answer to the point at the time of the interview and can't frame a simple formal letter or report. It becomes a handicap for the candidates who have good domain knowledge. Interviewers will be in dilemma when they encounter such candidates who have technical expertise, but poor communicational skills in English. Left with no other choice they may take the candidate, but will make sure that they are groomed and trained properly.

Students' Views on the academic and professional needs in the language learning context:
The qualitative data collated from Item 30 - How you would like English to be taught in your college.' of the students' questionnaire analyzed to draw certain conclusions on how far the academic and professional needs had been fulfilled in language learning context. Data was drawn from students through the questionnaire with the help of an open-ended question, given at the end, Section 4, Item 30.The responses were qualitatively analyzed which revealed the students' preferred needs related to academic and professional needs. The needs interpreted as academic and professional from the responses of open ended question are mentioned as per the maximum responses towards each need identified. The students views on BE class hours, skills, readings, exercises, or resources etc. The areas where maximum students wanted improvement are as follows: Personality development - 69.2% reported that they wanted the English classes to assist them in improving their personality. Interview skills -60.3% reported that they wanted improvement in this skill. Provision of adequate learning resources -53.4 % reported that they wanted more help from their faculty and the administrators on this aspect. Positive learning environment - 9.5% reported that they wanted more help from their faculty and the administrators on this aspect. Learner autonomy - 62.3% reported that they wanted more autonomy. Assessment patterns and Constructive feedback - 55.1 % reported that they wanted better assessment patterns and wanted more constructive feedback from their teachers. Spoken English -39.3% reported that they were not given enough inputs on improvement in this skill. The need of students need to be given freedom and variety of options in doing written assignments and students need to be oriented to take responsibility of their personality development has been stressed as the most needed academic need followed by learning Business English skills and exposure to job situations as the most preferred professional need. Practical exposure towards learning BE was considered to be a vital need of the management students.

Need of Skills Development Activities (Academic Needs):
Activity-oriented teaching like role-plays and conversation practices in pairs or with peers are rarely conducted or properly assessed. They expressed the need of pre-presentation practices before oral/written assessments as it is not provided in most colleges. The need for resources in the language classrooms were also mentioned, as also the need of authentic texts, published materials etc. and technology integrated resources of which maximum students expressed their needs for the latter. This shows that students of this generation are digitally literate and so selecting materials and designing activities for them need to be based on online resources available. This has been supported by data collected in response to Item 14 - need of understanding and enjoying activities conducted, Item 17 - need of learner autonomy, Item 19 - role plays to be conducted and Item 20 - opportunities to participate in different team activities like group discussions and meetings in the language lab. Thus the most important academic needs identified were the need of proper instruction of activities conducted followed by constructive feedback.

Need of Appropriate Teaching Patterns (Professional Needs):
Most students who participated in this study acknowledged that there is some enhancement in their disposition after experiencing the English course but they do not feel it was adequate enough to meet the challenges of their future professional career in a highly competitive setting. This has been supported by the quantitative data collected from the Item 21, Item 22, Item 23, Item 26 and Item 27.

Table 3: Professional Need

Category	Low Professional Need		Medium Professional Need		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Rural			77	25.2	77	25.2
Urban	2	.7	128	42.0	130	42.6
Semi-Urban	3	1.0	95	31.1	98	32.1
Total	**5**	**1.6**	**300**	**98.4**	**305**	**100.0**

It has been found that there is no high professional need among rural, urban and semi urban. This shows that the expectation of the students is limited to low and medium. Only 42% from the urban background have medium professional need as compared to rural which is only 25.2%.

Table 4: Professional Fullfilment

Category	Low Professional Fulfillment		Moderate Professional Fulfillment		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Rural	20	6.6	57	18.7	77	25.2
Urban	26	8.5	104	34.1	130	42.6
Semi-Urban	22	7.2	76	24.9	98	32.1
Total	**68**	**22.3**	**237**	**77.7**	**305**	**100.0**

The purposes of this study were to delineate the needs of the students and how far the teachers are near in fulfilling those needs. The characteristics of effective English in terms of subject matter knowledge, pedagogical and didactic knowledge, socio-affective skills, perceived teachers and students, and to kindle further discussion of the topic both in and outside of Assam was the objective of the study. For these purposes, a questionnaire was prepared and it was found that there was no high professional fulfillment among the students irrespective of different backgrounds. English teachers are different from those perceived by the students. The study found that the teachers' characteristics including being knowledgeable of world events and knowing students and teaching them in ways which they learn best were missing somewhere. The characteristics of the teachers including knowing the subject well and encouraging students to learn independently received lower ratings from student respondents.

Table 5: ANOVA test of students from different areas

Category		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	F	Sig.
Academic_PC	Rural	77	70.4604	10.83369	2	.204	.816
	Urban	130	70.9371	12.86642	302		
	Semi-Urban	98	69.9072	11.87571			
	Total	**305**	**70.4858**	**12.03268**	**304**		
Prof_need_PC	Rural	77	50.8912	7.38670	2	2.427	.090
	Urban	130	51.7666	6.44599	302		
	Semi-Urban	98	49.7255	7.16128			
	Total	**305**	**50.8898**	**6.95715**	**304**		
Prof_fulfil_PC	Rural	77	38.6296	7.94837	2	2.260	.106
	Urban	130	41.0981	8.45990	302		
	Semi-Urban	98	40.1337	7.63913	304		
	Total	**305**	**40.1651**	**8.10890**			

The above f-test table calculated the p-value (sig) at 95% or <0.05
The above table calculated the p-value (sig) at 95% or <0.05. There was no significant difference in academic, professional need and professional fulfillment from students of different backgrounds which was found in the ANOVA test. The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used to determine whether there are any significant differences between the means of three or more independent (unrelated) groups. The researcher has also a paired t-test to compare professional needs and professional fulfillment. There was a significant difference in score for professional need and professional fulfillment. The significant level is at P<0.01 (99%)

and the score is at .000 so it is significant. The mean and SD of professional needs is 50.8±6.9 and professional fulfillment is 40.1. ± 8.1. The t=18.7, df=304

Table 6: Paired t-test

Category	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Professional need	50.8898	305	6.95715	10.72470	9.97207	18.782	304	.000**
Professional fulfillment	40.1651	305	8.10890					

**Significant level is at P<0.01 (99%)

CONCLUDING REMARKS:

The findings of the study indicate that management students need not only linguistic competence in English, but also certain life skills and managerial skills related to language learning that need to be included into the syllabus to handle real-life situations on completion of their management course. This study thus probed the fulfillment of ELT related goals with reference to the context of management studies in rural, urban and semi-urban India. The existing syllabus of Business English course fulfills the goals and objectives only partially and the needs are to be addressed immediately to improve the quality of ELT in the management programs.

Overall, the researcher found that there was some dichotomy between the perceived important needs of communication skills for students and their fulfillment amongst them. The skills which were considered to be more important were less on the scale while the skills which were considered to be comparatively less important by the faculty were high on the scale.

Possession of spoken communication skills was found to be lower than the possession of same components in the written skills. It can be thus concluded that the students across India basically rural areas are weak in possession of spoken skills. This is despite the fact that most of the delivery of the Business English course is pre-dominated by written skills alone. This gap needs to be further addressed through research. Deliberations whether or not spoken skills can be taught have already begun. The study also identifies that the business management teaching community feels that the course of Business English should be taught in either two or four semesters as opposed to the course being presently taught in one semester in most B- schools. Teaching English in India has its own potential problems due to the lack of authentic language input. Moreover, other problems like poor instructional planning contribute to this process negatively. With these potential hindrances, the present study aims to seek what other challenges incapacitate the teaching/learning of English. Results show that poor institutional planning is the main cause of challenges experienced by English language teachers. Besides this, instructional and socio-cultural/economic problems are the other challenges for teaching English. The faculty also opined that the Business English classes are not taken very seriously by the students. This hinders learners in their mastering English in a short time. It takes a lot of time to improve upon the language and students are of the view that it is more important for them to concentrate more upon their specialization than English. The teachers are also not effective in delivering what the students seek. A few other central reasons that emerged were that the Business English classes very often convert into English speaking classes in most B-schools and the course fails in appropriately challenging the heterogeneous batch of students. This looks to be a very substantial feedback for the business communication course instructors across B-schools. Research has already started debating whether English usage should or should not be included in a Business English course (Plutsky & Wilson, 1996).8.

Implications of the study:

The study would have some mind-boggling implications for Business English instructors. The findings could help Business English instructors to classify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities towards a continuous improvement of Business English education. Second, teacher effectiveness in teaching English as a second language at the secondary level schools in India needs to be checked. Third, since the respondents are from across Assam's business management institutions , the findings would enable the Business English instructors in India to customize their curricula towards improvement, according to the demand.

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