Needs Analysis: The Case of Ivorian Military Students' Communicative Needs in English at Ecole Nationale des Sous-Officiers d'Active of Bouake.

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Abstract

The issue of teaching English for specific purposes in foreign language context has always been preoccupying. Number of foreign language teachers are most of the time confused with how to deal with an ESP course given the complex nature of needs analysis which is an essential step in ESP course design. In that respect the present paper aims at analyzing the communicative needs of the Ivorian military students in order to develop their communicative competence in English. The following question is addressed to achieve this objective: to what extent can the analysis of the learners' needs help develop the Ivorian military students' communicative competence in English? The answer to this query requires to adopt both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis in the conduct of the study. The findings of the study show that needs analysis is an effective method to cope with the learning needs of the military students at ENSOA of Bouake.

Key words: ESP, needs analysis, military, communicative needs, EFL.

Résumé

La question de l'enseignement de l'anglais de spécialité a toujours été préoccupante dans un contexte de l'anglais comme langue étrangère. En effet, bon nombre d'enseignants de langue sont très souvent confus quant à la méthode à adopter pour enseigner efficacement l'anglais de spécialité compte tenu de la complexité de l'analyse des besoins qui apparait comme une étape primordiale. C'est dans ce contexte que la présente étude vise à analyser les besoins communicatifs des étudiants militaires de l'ENSOA de Bouaké en langue anglaise en vue de les rendre plus productifs et plus efficaces le long de leur carrière professionnelle. Elle vise donc à répondre à la question suivante : à quel point l'analyse des besoins communicatif des soldats, en Anglais langue étrangère, peut-elle permettre de développer leurs compétences communicatives en anglais ? La réponse à cette interrogation requière l'adoption de la méthode de la triangulation pour conduire l'étude. Les résultats

obtenus montrent une contribution significative de l'analyse des besoins des apprenants dans le développement de leurs compétences en Anglais langue étrangère.

Mots clés : Anglais de spécialité, analyse des besoins, besoins communicatifs, langue étrangère.

Introduction

The end of second World War boosted a great expansion in scientific, technological and economic activities at the international level. This expansion made commerce and technology the most dominant forces of the world and its unstoppable progress then created the need of an international language T. Hutchinson and A. waters (1987). This prestigious responsibility is attributed to the English language thanks to the American economic, technological domination in Europe, who expected to expand their domination over the whole world. The expansion then created a world unified and dominated by two forces (technology and commerce). Therefore, the learning of English for Specific purposes (ESP) became so essential.

ESP is an approach to language teaching which is based on learner's need and the basis of all ESP is the simple question that is the why this learner needs to learn a foreign language (T. Hutchinson and A. Waters, 1987). In other words, ESP is an approach to the teaching of English that emphasizes the purpose for which a given learner may decide to learn the language.

In Côte d'Ivoire, English is mainly learnt and taught in secondary schools for general purposes. This type of English is not based on a specific purpose, even if we agree that there is no learning without a particular purpose. Indeed, given the place granted to English in the Ivorian educational curriculum, the Ivorian citizens are expected to learn English and be able to communicate with foreigners from English-speaking countries all over the world. Accordingly, with such a policy, when it comes to teaching English in Ivorian military schools for example, there is problem as regard the type of English to teach and how to teach it. There are situations in which English for specific purposes is emphasized, but this seems not to be the case in Ivorian military training schools.

From our (SADIA) personal experience as a student soldier at ENSOA, and later on as a professional soldier, we have experienced a certain number of situations, which appeal for an investigation of the field of teaching English to Ivorian army forces. Such an investigation can be a step in rethinking the teaching of English in Ivorian army training schools, given the importance of English in the military field.

The English language plays a dominant role in most occupational fields, including international business, technology, science, academic field and so on. One occupational field that is believed to place a few attentions on the use of English is the army. According to C. Orna-Montesinos (2013), the use of English for military affairs is relatively important as military operations are heavily associated with international cooperative actions, for instance, against global terrorism or conflict beyond national borders. It is inevitable that military personnel engage with foreign-armed forces and use English for communication because, more than mere national security, there are always exercises in which an exchange in information and knowledge between the allied nations takes place.

Côte d'Ivoire being member of United Nations plays an important role in international commitments including humanitarian missions in United Nations' peacekeeping operations, or joint-combat operations with foreign countries. In order to fill successfully the assigned missions and tasks, it is highly important for Ivorian military personnel to use the English language in a real communicative situation.

The focus on the personnel quality and capacity building is the main purpose of Ivorian military forces, which aim to move toward and to be one of the most modernized armies of the west Africa. This has led many Ivorian military training schools such as: Academie des forces Armées of Zambakro(EFA), Ecole Nationale des Sous-Officiers d'Active of Bouaké, Ecole Militaire Preparatoire de Bingerville, to integrate English in their instructional programs.

However, the current teaching practices of English in those military schools is still far from granting particular focus on ESP teaching in order to help soldiers be operational in real communication situations where the use of English is necessary. In other words, the needs of army forces are not put forward in the teaching of English. Thus, after their training at the army training school, professional

soldiers still experience difficulties to communicate in English when necessary. Such an unpleasant situation urges to reflect on the possibility to develop the Ivorian soldier's communicative competence in English. To do so, the main query of this paper is to know the extent to which the analysis of the learners' needs can help develop the Ivorian military students' communicative competence in English. Put another way, what are the difficulties experienced by Ivorian soldiers in using English in real communication situations? What didactic situation and pedagogic matrix can help develop Ivorian army forces' communicative competence in English as a foreign language? To answer those questions, the present case study employs both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis.

I. Literature review

1.1. Defining ESP

According to G. Mayo (2000), it is not an easy task to define ESP because it can be applied to any situation and depends on what learners are facing with. For D. Munby (1976), "ESP syllabus and materials are designed by the prior communication needs analysis of the learners" (D. Munby, p.2). This definition can be considered as an important starting point which reflects the state of ESP at a particular point in time.

Meanwhile, for the British council (1981: 07), LSP (Language for Specific Purpose) courses do not necessarily differ in kind from any other form of instruction including language courses which do not claim to be purpose specific. Therefore, it appears somehow difficult to draw a clear-cut line between ESP and what is known as General English on the ground given that all language teaching is said to be based on the learner's needs. Nevertheless, a kind of distinction can be made between them. In fact, ESP is an approach to language teaching and learning, specifically based on learners' personal needs and the reason why they learn a language. In an ESP course, the reason why an individual learns a language is the foundation of all teaching and learning practices.

To quote T. Hutchinson and A. Waters (1987, P.6), "Previously, the reason for learning English or (any other language) had not been well

defined. Knowledge of a foreign language has been regarded as a sign of a well-rounded education, but few had really questioned why it was necessary. ESP has then come into play, as an instinctive but strong movement to spread over the world its power and effects, granting a great deal of interest to the learners' reason for learning a foreign language. As T. Hutchinson an A. Waters (1987, P7) put it forward: "The general effect on all this development was to exert pressure on the language teaching profession to deliver the required goods. Whereas English had previously decided its own destiny, it now becomes a subject to the wishes, needs, and demands of people other than language teachers".

Dudly-Evan and S. John (1998) rather view ESP in terms of two main entities such as EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and EOP (English for Occupational Purposes). This categorization clearly shows that ESP courses are not only used in the academic training of learners but also to get them well prepared in order to achieve their professional tasks efficiently. This was part of our observation with the Ivorian military students who not only need EAP for their academic training, but also, and more importantly need to apply what they have acquired, on the ground during their professional career. This goes in line with what T. Hutchinson and A. Waters (1987, P16) say when they argue that no clear-cut distinction can be made between EAP and EOP. For them, people can work and study simultaneously and also, the language learnt for immediate use in a study environment will be used later when the student takes up or returns to a job.

The advent of ESP in language teaching and learning has importantly revolutionized the foreign language learning environment and made it more effective and meaningful. In this respect, B. Douglass (2002) argued that the language used in the different academic, vocational, in professional fields has become very precise. That is, ESP has contributed to make the communicative functions in those fields more specific in terms of syntax; morphology, semantics, vocabulary and discourse.

1.2. Needs analysis and ESP course design

For Iwai et al (1999), the term 'needs analysis' generally refers to the activities that are involved in collecting information that will serve as the basis for developing a curriculum to meet the needs of a particular

group of learners. However, if among the researchers in the fields, all agree that ESP is a need-based teaching approach, there still exist some discordances as regard the definition of the nature of the needs to be analyzed.

T. Hutchinson and A. Waters (1987, P55 for instance posit that "needs analysis consist in assessing the objective needs of the learners in terms of necessities and lacks". These authors identified three categories of needs such as needs as "necessities", needs as "lacks", and needs as "wants". The "lacks", as the first step of the analysis, represent the learners' current level of performance before the actual implementation of the course. The "necessities" represent the required needs by the target situation; that is the desired performance that the learners are expected to achieve at the end of the course. As for the" wants" they are viewed in terms of what the learners themselves desire, their own expectations that can motivate them during the course. This representation of the needs was shared by Macalister and Nation (2011) despite a slight terminological difference. In fact, contrary to T. Hutchinson and A. Waters, they refer to the "lacks" as "discrepancies".

For Basturkmen (2010), "Lacks are referred to as the present situation analysis: identification of what the learners do and do not know and can or cannot do in relation to the demands of the target situation" (P.10). In other words, the lacks are the gaps or limits in learners' current knowledge. As can be seen, the authors quoted above, emphasize an analysis of the objective needs of the learners as explained in T. Hutchinson and A. Waters (1987). Nevertheless, number of researchers would put forward the learners' subjective learning needs that can also contribute to the effectiveness of the learning process.

In that respect, S. Huda and Z. Sadia (2016, p. 89) posit that "Learning needs include a list of information about their socio-cultural background learning, learning background, genre, age, background knowledge of English, attitudes towards English and culture of the English-speaking countries, appropriate or ineffective teaching and learning methods". Given what the learners' subjective needs include, it clearly appears that "needs analysis should not be seen as an entirely objective procedure" H. Basturkmen, (2010, p.19). To sum up, an integration of the two types of analysis would be advisable for a

complete and effective process of needs analysis in the context of English as a foreign language and more specifically in the Ivorian army training schools. That integration of the two types of analysis should be connected to the four characteristics of an ESP course design, as stated by D. Evans and S. John (1998) as follows:

1)   ESP is created to meet specific needs of learners
2)   ESP makes use of methodologies and activities of the discipline it serves
3)   ESP concentrates on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre.
4)   The samples of the ESP course should focus on the main aspects of situational syllabus such as taking a military history, writing a report on a given mission, using language for military actions, interacting with colleagues who speak English, discussing with foreign businessmen at the frontiers. In this respect, the check point of Gbinta (border of Côte d'Ivoire-Liberia) would be an illustrative example.

II. Theoretical framework

Given its objective to identify the communicative needs of the Ivorian military students in English as a foreign language, the present study is grounded into two theoretical views that are the principle of the communicative competence by Del Hymes (1972) and the theory of constructivism.

        The communicative competence, as conceptualized by Del Hymes (1972) and later on revised by Canal and Swain (1980), is an integrative theory of the four language skills such as writing, reading listening and speaking. It promotes the communicative aspect of language and represents the main goal of the communicative language teaching approach. The analysis of classroom interactions is an important aspect in the communicative approach. Not only do they help the learner to interact in the foreign language, but also, they help them feel free when they are in the classroom situation. In fact, the communicative competence can be divided into four main dimensions as conceptualized by Canale and Swain (1980), such as the linguistic

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or grammatical competence, the sociolinguistic competence, the discourse competence and the strategic competence. According to these authors, the linguistic competence of a language learner refers to hic ability to use grammatically correct sentences; the sociolinguistic competence is the learner's ability to use the language in any social context of communication, while the discourse competence concerns his capacity to establish coherence and cohesion in his discourse. The final dimension being the strategic one, refers to the learner's ability to avoid communication breakdown to occur while using the language. All these dimensions of the communicative competence as explained, are connected to the communicative needs of the Ivorian soldier in English, as regard the context in which they are required to use the language.

The question of authenticity is another characteristic of the communicative approach. This issue is about the quality of the content of the teaching material. According to D. Bailly (1989) an authentic material is the one which deals with real situation of communication activities. Thus, with the teaching of English to the military forces, the activities should be based on the situations where the learners can use the English language in order to communicate with anyone who speaks it.

The theory of constructivism as conceptualized by Piaget, helps highlight the process by which people outgrow their current views of the world, and construct deeper understanding about themselves and their environment, as acknowledged. For Piaget, the construction of knowledge is possible when the individuals are involved in processes called "accommodation" and "assimilation". Through these processes, the individual learner tries to match his individual experiences and his internal representation of the world. In doing so he must reframe his mental representation of the world to fit new experiences. The constructivist theory of learning is a theory that encourages active learning or learning by doing. It gives the learner the opportunity of a mind-on, hand-on involvement in the learning process. Indeed, the constructivist theory offers the basis for learner-centered teaching (Taber, 2011). It is a theory of language that views the language learning process as learner-centered turning the teacher to act as a facilitator of the learning process rather than as a mentor.

From what precedes, the constructivist theory of learning emphasizes that learners' motivation is of paramount importance. The learners are guided by their personal interest while being involved personally in the process language learning. Thus, the instructor is viewed as a facilitator, a guide. He adopts the role of a facilitator and not that of teacher (Bauerfeld, 1995). From the constructivist view, the learner should rather be actively involved when having a mind-on, hand-on control of the learning process instead of being a passive learner.as a whole, it puts the learner at the center of the learning process through his active involvement as the communicative approach to language teaching and learning recommends it. This is what the teaching and learning process should look like with the Ivorian military students learning English as a foreign language.

III. Research methodology

III.1.Context of the study

The present study adopts a case study approach to capture the complex real-life dimensions in the Ivorian army context. The linguistic context is characterized by a linguistic environment dominated by the French language and other local languages spoken by most of the population. Concerning the learning and teaching of English at military training schools, it differs from that of the General English which is taught in the secondary schools. English is learned and taught for specific purposes. The learners are soldiers who are expected to go to countries where the use of English is required as means of communication in order to complete their training or in the frame of their professional career.

III.2. Target population and sample

This research aims to develop the English language communicative skills of the participants in the Ivorian military training schools. The participants include military students and teachers. All the three (3) teachers of English at ENSOA have been selected and, fifty (50) about one hundred military students were selected using a probability sampling methodology to take part in the study.

III.3. Instruments of data collection and analysis

Two main instruments of data collection were used to gather the data: the questionnaire and the interview. The questionnaire addressed to the military students at ENSOA was used to gather information regarding three aspects such as: *the implementation of the English language and Students' Motivation;* the *evaluation of the teaching Materials in Use, and their learning needs.* A structured interview was conducted with the three teachers in charge of the English classes at ENSOA. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis have been applied. The qualitative method of analysis was concerned with the data collected with help of the interview, and the quantitative method of analysis dealt with the data collected with the questionnaire. The data from the questionnaire have been treated with the help of software known as sphinx and represented using graphs and percentages. As for the analysis of the qualitative data, the teachers' reactions were interpreted on the basis of verbatims and draw implications as regard the object of the study.

IV. Data presentation and analysis

IV.1. Result of the data from the interview with teachers

One of the central research questions that the present work attempts to answer was: What are the learners' needs as perceived by the teachers? The semi-structured interview was then administered in order to answer that question. The teacher informants' perception of the needs of the students can be summarized in the following lines.

Some of the respondents emphasized that learners were at their initial stage in the military field where they are mobbed with strange unfamiliar military terms. Such learners needed great access to get familiar with the long-complicated lexicon. Military Lexicon, which is the accepted international terminology of the discipline and the profession, is a prime need of the ESP learners in army. As Dudley – Evans (1984: 296) puts it "Some ESP practitioners have suggested the use of subject specific materials for the English programme so that the students can get some practice as to how to tackle their specific materials in the field of their specialization". Others suggested that general English material be introduced as this type of English has

twofold utilization. On the one hand, it enables the ESP learners to operate smoothly in their subject of specialization, because EGP is the foundation of ESP (Edward, 1974). On the other hand, it helps the ESP learners to interact outside the field of their discipline where day-to-day English is required. (Mountford, 1988: 78). A combination of pure military English and English for general purposes was recommended by the teacher informants as they felt that combination of these two would meet the total academic, professional and further educational needs of the learners. The recommendations related to the teacher informants' reactions are displayed in the table below.

Table 1

Recommendation	Details
Professional	Implement training programs in ESP methodologies tailored for military contexts.
Curriculum development	Create a curriculum focused on operational English relevant to military situations.
Resource Allocation	Improve access to relevant teaching materials and textbooks for both teachers and students.
Foster student engagement	Encourage English use through immersive activities and discussions to reduce reliance on French.

IV.2. Results from the questionnaire addressed to the learners
The questionnaire addressed to learners is structured into five sections which respectively present the identification of the participant, the participant's attitude and motivation toward English as a foreign language, their participation in English classes, their perception of the implementation of English at ENSOA, and their learning needs as regard the English language.

Section 1: Identification of the participant

This part is concerned with general information about the individuals involved in the study. The information provided are related to the participant's gender, academic degree and experience in the military

profession. These variables have been included because they are deemed to possibly account for the effectiveness of the learning process.

Table 2

	CATEGORIES	ABSOLUTE VALUE	RELATIVE VALUE
GENDER	Male	90	72%
	Female	19	15%
	No answer	16	13%
DEGREE	BEPC	40	32%
	BAC	53	42.4%
	BA	16	12.8%
	MASTER	02	1.6%
	Other	14	11.2%
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	1 - 5	125	100%
	6 - 10	00	0%
	More than 10	00	0%
TOTAL		125	100%

According to the table above, 90 participants are males. They represent 72% of the whole population. 19 of them are females, corresponding to 15%. 16 participants, representing 13%, did not answer the question. As for their academic degree, the figures show that all the participants have an academic diploma. 53 participants held a baccalaureate degree corresponding to 42, 4%. Forty of the respondents have the BEPC degree that corresponds to thirty 32%. Only two participants have a master degree representing 1, 6%. Finally, fourteen of the participants held vocational certificates corresponding to 11,2%. The data in the table also show that all the participants are beginners since they all have from one to five years of experience as soldiers.
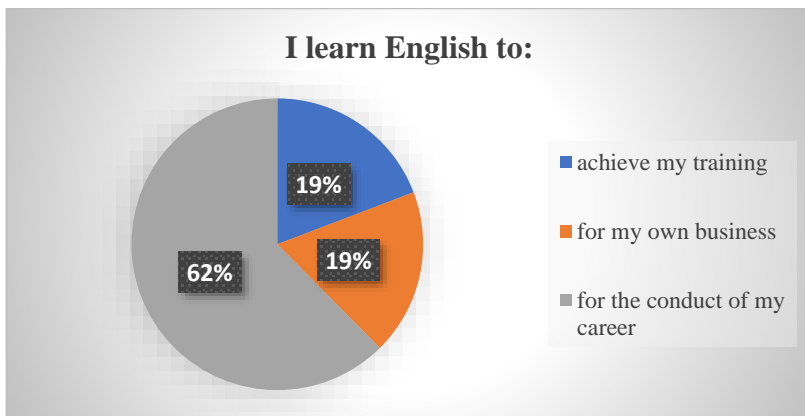
<u>Section 2</u>: Learner's relation with the English language.

<u>Graph 1</u>: Learners' perception of the English language

Do you like english?

- yes
- no
- no answer

8 1%

91%
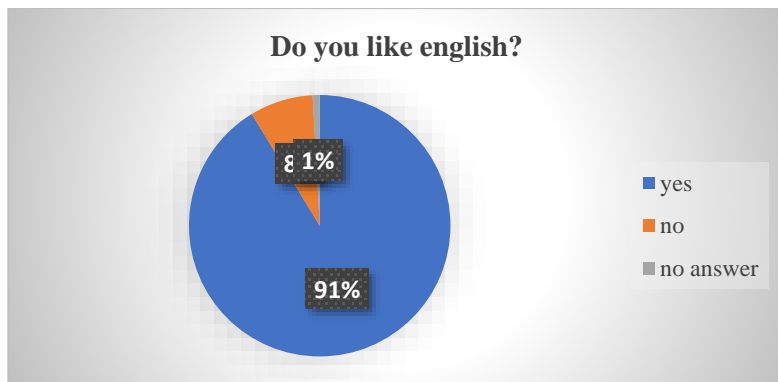
The figures show that most participants (91%) enjoy learning English, and (8%) of them dislike it. only one (1%) of the participants did not answer the question.
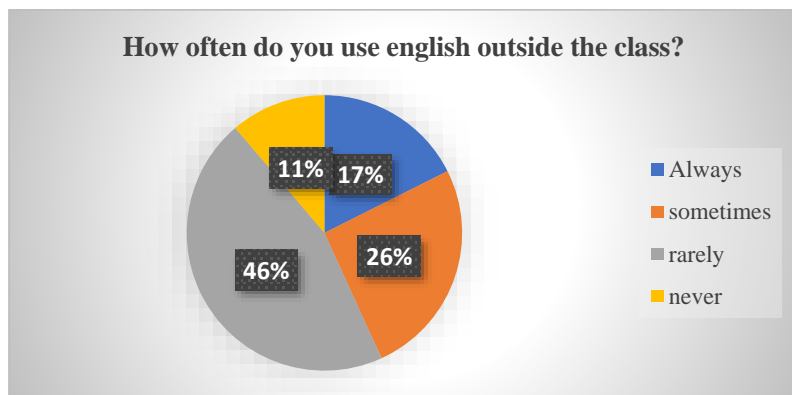
<u>Graph 2</u>: The reason why they learn English

I learn English to:

19%

19%

62%

- achieve my training
- for my own business
- for the conduct of my career

More than half of the participants (62%) declared that they learn

English because of its importance in their professional career. 19% of them learn English just for the sake to fill their training sessions while 19% argue they learn English for their own business.

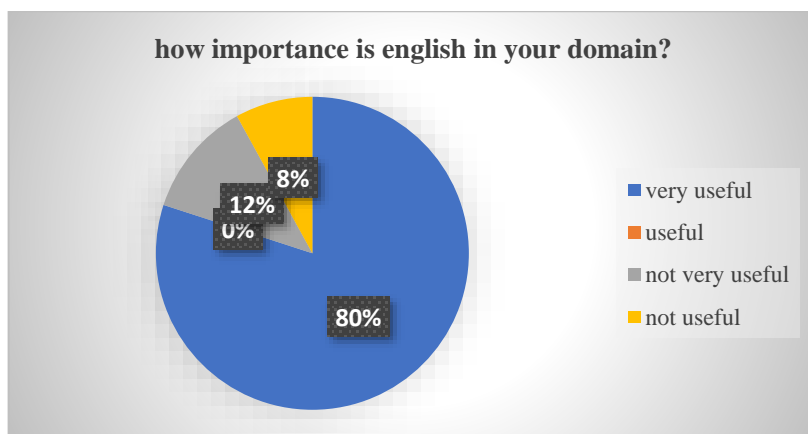**Graph 3:** **Learners' practice of English out of the class**

How often do you use english outside the class?

- Always
- sometimes
- rarely
- never

17% 11% 26% 46%

The figures displayed above show that just twenty-two (17%) report they always practice English outside the classroom. Thirty-two respondents (26%) esteem they do it sometimes and fifty-seven (46%) state that they rarely use English outside the classroom. Fourteen of the participants (11%) never use English outside the classroom.

Graph 4: Learners' difficulties in English

Which of these skills is more difficult for you?

- reading
- writing
- listening
- speaking
- no answer
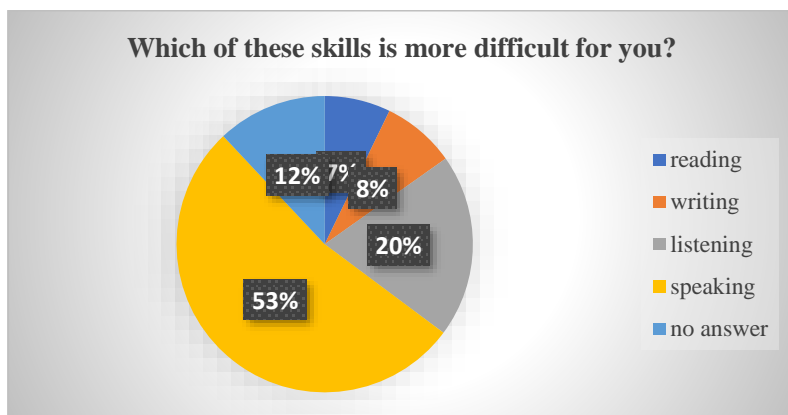
The figures from the graph show that 53% of the respondents have difficulties to speak in English. Those with difficulties in listening are twenty-five and correspond to twenty percent (20%). 8% have difficulties in writing skills while the reading skill is rated at 7%. 12% did not react.
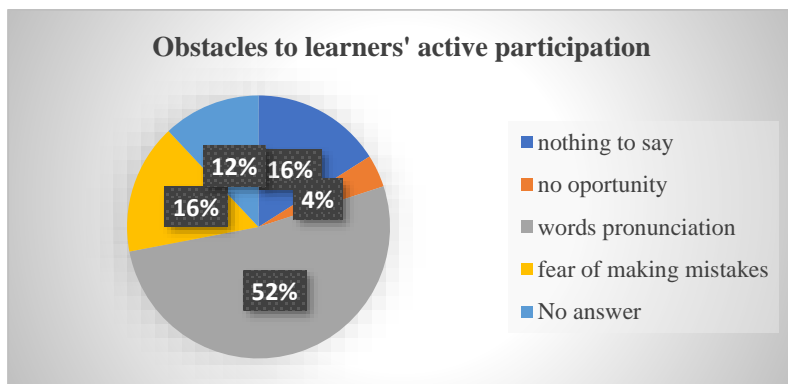
Graph 5: Importance of English for army forces

how importance is english in your domain?

- very useful
- useful
- not very useful
- not useful

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The figures show that **80%** of the participants found English very useful for their study and also for their professional career. **12%** asserted that English is not very useful, and **8%** considered English to be useless for them.

<u>Section 3</u>: learners' involvement in the learning process.

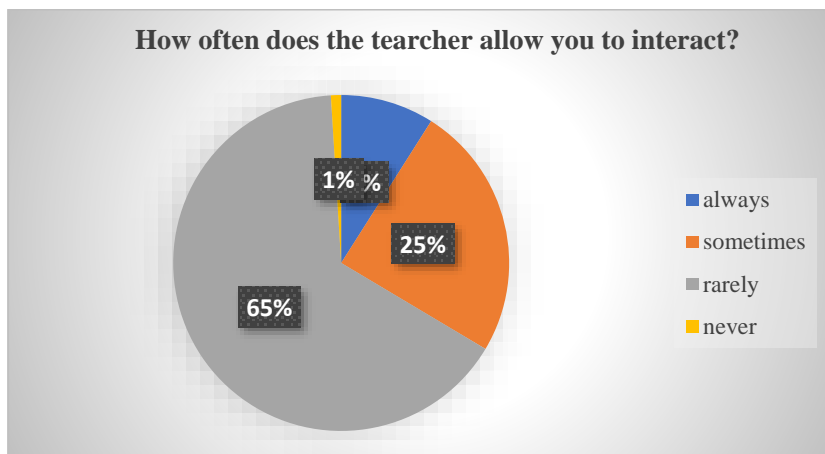<u>Graph 6</u>: active participation in the English Class?

Obstacles to learners' active participation

- nothing to say
- no oportunity
- words pronunciation
- fear of making mistakes
- No answer

The data displayed in the table above show that twenty respondents (16%) don't participate in the English class because they lack ideas. Five respondents (04%) argued that the fact of not being given the opportunity makes them have a low participation in the class. The most dominating reason for their non participation in the class is the difficulties in pronunciations with a rate of 52%. 16% of them are feared of making mistakes, and 12% didn't answer this question.
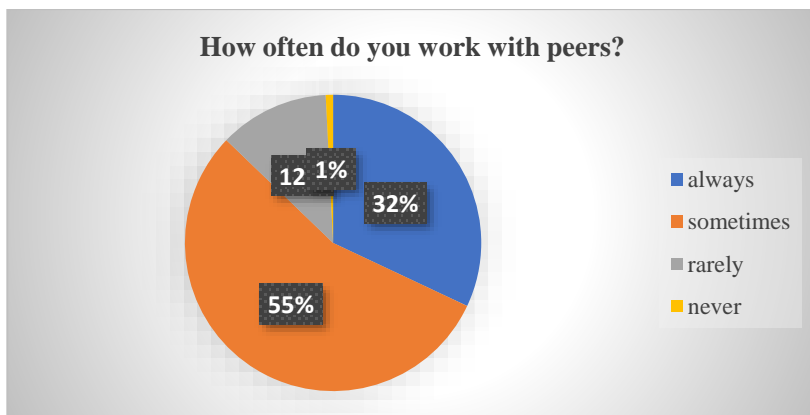
The data related to the issue of peer collaboration, as explained in the table, indicate that 32% of the participants always work with peers. 55.2% work sometimes in groups. Only one (0.8) participant asserts that he never works with peers while 12% of them rarely do activities with peers.

Graph 8: **classroom interactions**

How often does the tearcher allow you to interact?

- always
- sometimes
- rarely
- never

1% %

25%

65%

This question is interested in the opportunity given to learners to communicate among them. And the related data show that only 8.8% of the participants always have opportunity to interact among themselves. 24% are sometimes given the opportunity to do so. 64% rarely are given opportunity to interact, and only 3.2% declared that the teacher never gives them the chance to interact in class.

Graph 9: Teacher and learners' interactions

Teacher answer students' questions

- always 32%
- sometimes 50%
- rarely 17%
- never 1%
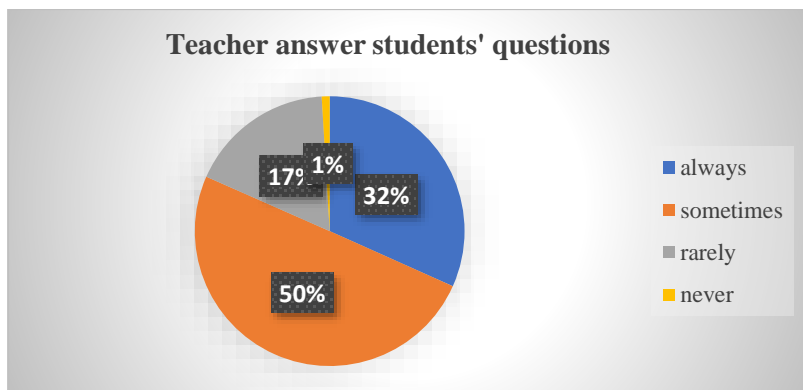
Globally speaking, the data in this table show that teacher and learners' interactions are given more importance in the conduct of the English classes at ENSO. 32% of the respondents argue the teacher always interacts with them. 50.4% state the teacher sometimes interacts with them while 17.6% assume he rarely does so.
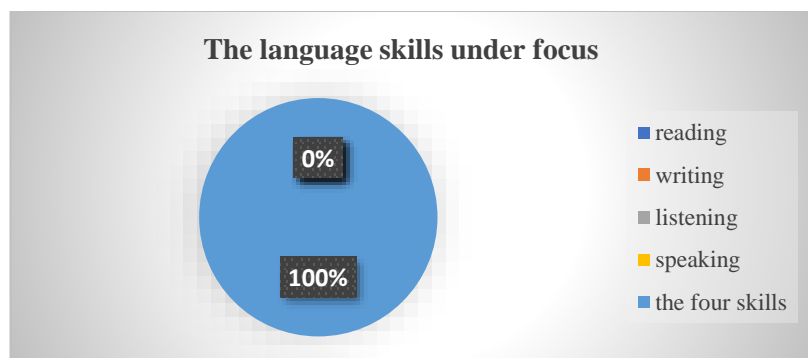
Section 4: implementation of English at ENSOA.

Graph 10: Type of English taught at ENSOA
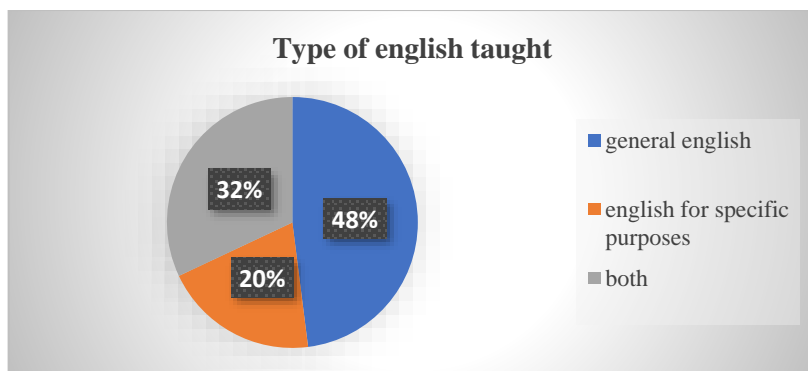
The table displays that the teaching of General English (GE) at ENSOA is rated at 48%, while ESP covers only 20%. Those who argued that at ENSOA, both general and ESP are taught to them represent 32%.
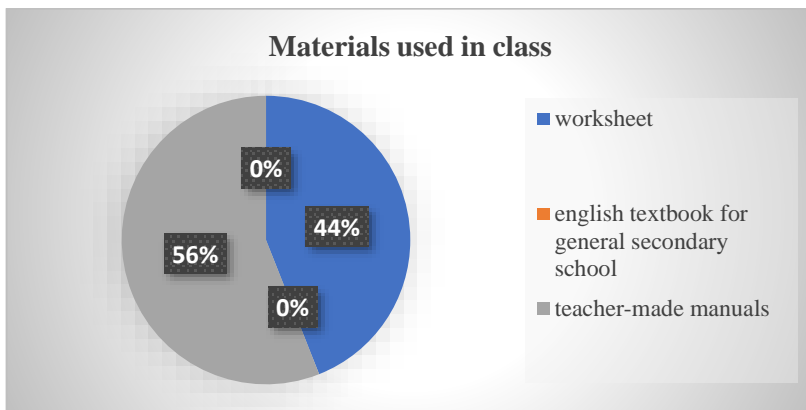
Graph 11: the language skills

This question was aimed at identifying the language skill the focus is put on when teaching English to the future soldiers at ENSOA. And

the figures in the table show that all the four skills are equally considered in the teaching of English.

Table 12: The teaching material in use for the English courses at ENSOA

The table shows that the teaching materials used to implement English lessons at ENSOA are not authentic ones. Indeed, the most used materials are teacher own designed books with 70% of the responses registered. **55%** of the participants argue they are taught English using worksheets as course material. None of the respondents recognizes the use of textbooks designed for the teaching of General English, nor that of specific textbooks designed by the military institution for this purpose.

Section 5: the learning needs to improve the communicative skills

To answer the second research question, this part reveals the findings on the participants' learning needs using a J. Likert scale (level of agreement) to learn about their perceptions of English language learning as regard the four main language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).

Before going through the primary results of this part, the participants were basically asked to choose one language skill that should be given more importance in their learning process. This is to find out which of

the language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, should be given priority in the participants' view.

Graph 13: the four English language skills in terms priority in the learning process
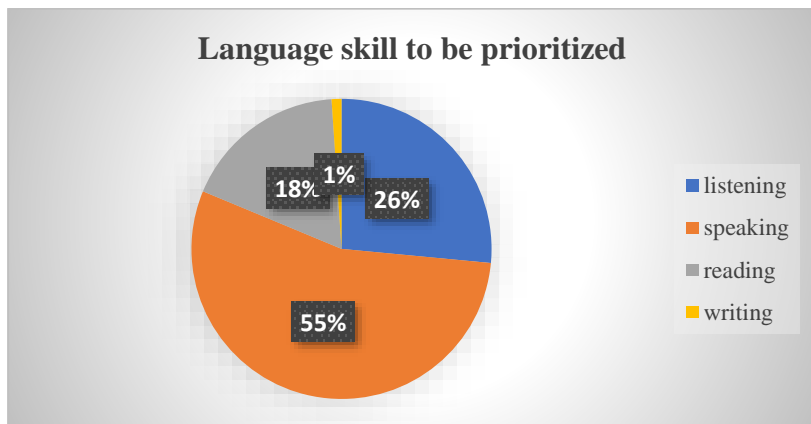
As shown in this Table, speaking is ranked the 'Most important' skill (59.2%) in the participants' opinion. This was followed by listening as 24% rated this skill as 'Important'. Reading was the third skill, ranked 'Quite important' (16%). The 'Least important' skill for them was writing, as most of them marked their answer in this way (10, 4%). The priority of importance in the main English skills was thus ranked as reading, listening, speaking, and writing respectively. This could indicate their learning preference for the receptive skills over the productive ones.

The following results are given to further identify the participants' perceptions about why they need to learn the main four skills. The details are separately described in the order of listening, speaking, reading, and writing respectively.

<u>Graph 14</u>: types of classrooms activities in terms of priority?
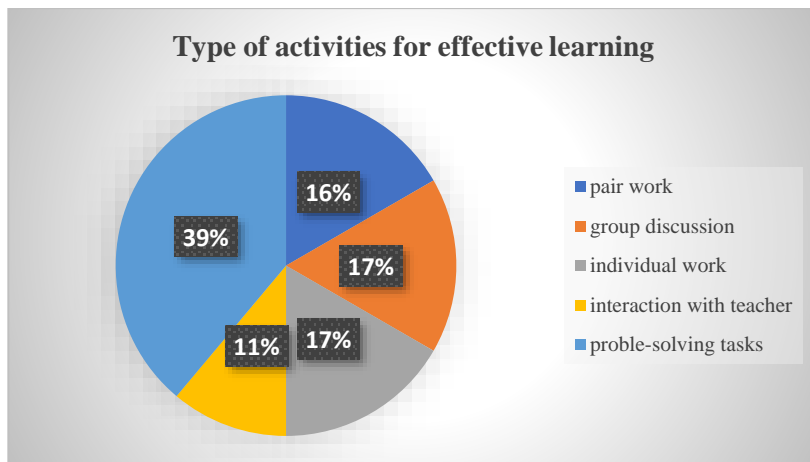
As displayed in the graph, most of the respondents assume to prefer problem-solving activities rated at 39%. Group discussion and individual work activities are equally considered by the participants with 17% of the total number, while pair work activities are appreciated with 16% and activities that imply more interaction with teacher with 11%.

V. Discussion of the results and recommendations

V.1. Discussion

The findings show that the Ivorian military students are aware that learning English language will enable them to play a full and effective role in their local and international missions (peace support operations, and humanitarian assistance as well). It also shows their awareness of the benefits of learning English in order to participate in abroad courses, conferences and other military activities. There is no doubt that learning English for military purposes gives substantial, specific and immediate military advantage to Ivorian military students. It gives them a chance to master military technology items,

technical devices and commanding subordinate personnel. It also helps them conduct required specialized operational missions and administrative tasks. This, in turn can open the doors wide for them to rotate between overseas assignments as attachés and security-assistance military students with assignment which are not possible without having knowledge of English language.

The serious national security challenge requires English language skills that the soldiers need. This corroborates with what Mrs. Gail H. McGinn (2007 P 37) Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Plans in USA Army states:

> *"*Current military operations demand different skills than those that were mastered to win the Cold War. Today's operations increasingly required our forces to operate with coalitions and alliance partners and interact with foreign population, making identification and achieving victory more difficult".

This clearly shows how important is the English language for military students of ENSOA. With reference to the above-mentioned responses, the Ivorian military students are ready to learn general English language and English for military purposes specifically to meet their needs of military demands in the English language. As a whole, foreign language skills and cultural expertise are critical capabilities needed by today's military to face the challenges of our present security environment. But, very few of Ivorian military personnel are proficient in English as a foreign language.

Many difficulties account for the ineffectiveness of the teaching and learning of English in the Ivorian military training schools. For example, learners background knowledge in English is very poor. Most of the teachers interviewed ascribed the students' weaknesses in English to their background knowledge in English since secondary school, that is generally marked by a limited exposure to the language, lack of adequate textbooks, non-adapted methods and techniques of teaching. All this requires to emphasize the learners' needs in ESP teaching context if we expect them to use the language

effectively in their professional career. As Brindley (1989) posits:

> "One of the fundamental principles underlying learner centered systems of language learning is that teaching/ learning programmes should be responsive to learners' needs. It is now widely accepted as a principle of programme designing that needs is a vital prerequisite to the specification of language learning objectives" (Brindley, 1989: 63).

Brumfit (1977) adds assuming that: "It would be a pity if ESP programmes were treated as an independent aspect of language teaching, which would not be appropriate because language teaching is indivisible" (Brumfit, 1977 P 15).

This means that the teaching of ESP should not be considered as something separated from the teaching of English as a whole. What actually matters is the degree of importance devoted to the identification of the learning needs, and more importantly the communicative needs of the learners, throughout the teaching and learning process. in this respect, some recommendations are necessary, in the frame of the present study, to render the practice of ESP courses more effective for Ivorian military students.

V.2.Recommendations

In the light of the discussion of the findings, some recommendations have been made for an effective implementation of ESP teaching in the Ivorian military context. Training programs in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) methodologies tailored for military contexts ought to be implemented in the curricula of the army training schools in Côte d'Ivoire. This will necessarily lead to the equipment of teachers with the tools to address the specific language needs of military personnel. When emphasizing operational language for example, teachers can better facilitate communication skills crucial for the completion of military tasks.

Training should also incorporate contemporary pedagogical approaches such as task-based learning, which encourages practical application of language in real-life scenarios. This relevance can

enhance both teaching effectiveness and student engagement. In addition, ongoing professional development is to be encouraged to ensures that instructors remain informed about best practices and emerging trends in ESP. this is so important given that well-trained educators are more likely to deliver high-quality instruction, leading to better student outcomes in language proficiency. Teachers equipped with ESP methodologies can create more engaging and relevant lessons, fostering a positive learning atmosphere. Create a curriculum focused on operational English relevant to military situations.

A curriculum aligned with operational needs would lead to higher levels of student engagement and improved language acquisition. Structured progression through language skills helps students make meaningful connections between their learning and their military responsibilities. Improve access to relevant teaching materials and textbooks for both teachers and students. Ensuring access to high-quality, context-appropriate materials allow teachers to deliver more effective lessons. This can include textbooks, digital resources, and multimedia content. Implementing these recommendations can significantly enhance English language instruction in military training in the Ivorian context.

Conclusion

This study aimed at suggesting ways to develop the Ivorian soldier's communicative competence in English. To achieve this objective, the main query of the paper was to know the extent to which the analysis of the learners' needs can help develop the Ivorian military students' communicative competence in English. Put another way, what are the difficulties experienced by Ivorian soldiers in using English in real communication situations? What didactic situation and pedagogic matrix can help develop Ivorian army forces' communicative competence in English as a foreign language? From those queries, we hypothesized that when the communicative needs of the Ivorian military students are given relevant importance in the teaching and learning process, they will communicate effectively in English where necessary. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis have been employed to conduct the study, grounded in the theoretical framework of the communicative

competence and the learning theory of constructivism. The study showed the learners' awareness of the importance of the English language in their professional career and then the necessity to learn it efficiently. It also displayed that problems related to the teaching practices such as lack of relevant teaching materials, lack of qualified teachers for the ESP courses render the task more difficult. Nevertheless, if those military training school take relevant decisions as regard the teaching of ESP courses to the military students, they will acquire a communicative competence in English and be able to face the new challenges and more importantly, those related to national security and collaboration with foreign military forces. This will still not work as an effective solution if the teachers' in-service training is not emphasized in order to help implement more effective ESP courses in their teaching. This necessarily calls on the Ivorian military authorities' attention as regard the educational policy in the field.

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